



**Board of Parks & Recreation**

Meeting Minutes

December 8, 2021

***Please be advised that these minutes are in DRAFT form and will not become "Public Record" until the Board of Parks and Recreation formally approves them at their next regularly scheduled meeting planned for January 26, 2022.***

**Board Attendees:** Nancy Chapin, Tracy Freedman, Rick Loh, Frank DiVincenzo, Scott Johnson and Mike Bocchino

**Staff Attendees:** Joe Siciliano, Greg Kramer, Sue Snyder, Blaize Levitan, and Brian Kerzner

**Guest Attendees** Bill Drake, Jane Pimentel, Benjamin Ferris, Miriam Kreuzer and Sue Baker

- I. Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. at Binney Park.
- II. **A motion was made by Ms. Chapin and seconded by Mr. Loh to approve the transcript from the October 27, 2021 virtual Zoom meeting. 6-0-0.**

III. **Director's Report, Joseph Siciliano**

The Eastern Greenwich Civic Center (EGCC) specifications and drawings are complete. There will be an RFP out on the street shortly. Invitations to bid will be sent out to potential bidders. The bid closing is anticipated sometime in January. Once closed, the bids will be evaluated. There is an appropriation \$18.6M for construction, with a subject to release. If the bids come within the \$18.6M, it will go before the BET for release of the funds. If the bids do not come within the \$18.6M, the Town will work with the project scope to come within the amount appropriated. There will be a pre bid conference to meet with any potential contractors where they will have an opportunity to review the project and ask questions. This procedure is standard and all questions go through the Purchasing Department and all are posted on the website for all potential contractors to review.

At the last meeting, the Board took an action to endorse the naming of Eugene Morlot Memorial Park. The park consists of three components, the general park area, the Strazza Field and the Byram Veterans Memorial Tree Grove. The naming was approved by the Board of Selectmen (BOS). The Park will be filed with the Land Records and will be posted to the website. While the park had carried the name for a number of years, the administrative part had never been followed through on.

Mr. Johnson reiterated that at the October Meeting, the Board was presented with the site plan, there was a discussion and the Board sent a resolution to the Selectmen endorsing the naming of the park.

Mr. Siciliano added that the Board's resolution was presented to the Board of Selectmen, there was some discussion, the BOS ultimately approved the naming. Included in the resolution is a clause that protects the area of the memorial trees (13). While construction may take place throughout the park, this area will be preserved.

Mr. Siciliano reported that it is budget season and the Department is preparing the operating budget to be reviewed with the Town Administrator. The Capital budget has already been submitted. The

Department has been working on several reports including, the Annual report, Operations Plan, Golf Audit and proposed fees.

The Department plans months out, and is currently preparing for the spring.

The department will present the proposed fees for next year to the BOS at their meeting scheduled for December 23. The BOS will take a vote at their first meeting in January.

Ms. Snyder reported that there will be a field users meeting on December 9 via Zoom to go over field user policies and procedures for the coming year. The end of January is the deadline to return field applications. The registration lists are due in February. Donald will start preparing field schedules in early February.

Mr. Siciliano advised that the Field Study report has been refined and he is planning to present the report to the Board of Estimate and Taxation (BET) before their budget hearing in March.

Upon extensive discussion regarding the Field Study Report and the 15-year Capital Plan derived from the report, Mr. Siciliano stated he will present the 15-year field capital plan to this Board prior to the BET.

#### **IV. Parks and Recreation Foundation, Scott Johnson**

Thanks to Sue Bodson, she's really good with public relations and as a result, there have been some sizable donations coming into the Foundation. The goal is to raise money for administrative fees to offset the cost to run the Foundation, this will prevent the need to assess administrative fees across fund balances.

#### **V. Chairman's Report, Scott Johnson**

Mr. Johnson stated that he's been contacted in the last couple of months from organizations that want to make year-end contributions for projects that don't exist. Projects must be reviewed and approved before any donations can be accepted.

Mr. Siciliano added that the Foundation does not circumvent the gift acceptance process for the Town, sizeable gifts have to go to the BOS, RTM and BET.

The Tree Conservancy has a resolution in the budget document that allows the tree plantings to happen without having to get approval for each tree, the money does not go through the Foundation. Mr. Levitan added that this is what the department wants to do for the memorial bench program.

Mr. Johnson suggested the bench program use recyclable plastic benches. Mr. Siciliano responded that the recyclable plastic benches were not favored. Mr. Siciliano added that the Department currently gets sponsors for the benches through the memorial bench program, they pay a flat rate of \$2,500 which includes the purchase of the teak bench, a plaque, installation and maintenance.

Mr. Johnson reported he was approached to review and respond to a proposal by the Harbor Management Commission (HMC). The proposal includes the Army Corps of Engineers requirement for dredging permits and expenditures relating to federal or state money. The various conditions on the use of marina facilities, the federal anchorage area, and the federal channel. It is a really complicated legal subject and is extremely important. There will be a subcommittee consisting of Mike Bocchino, Rick Loh and Scott Johnson will meet with the Mr. Siciliano and the HMC to go over the details. Scott expressed his view that there is a lot more to be thought about... what happens if we don't get the money? what if the condition goes in the direction of the beach lawsuit and all marine facilities are all open to the public? Mr. Johnson advised that he talked to Aamina of the Law Department at length. The subcommittee will produce a recommendation that will go to HMC and then BOS.

Mr. Siciliano added in 1985, the Town was approached by the Army Corps of Engineers about the open access policy, it affected Greenwich Harbor and Cos Cob Harbor and both launching ramps in those locations. They would not provide the money to dredge the channel until the Town had an open access policy for the launching ramps at both locations. Further review is required to determine if this is worth doing, or are there alternatives to the proposal.

**VI. Greenwich Community Sailing, Joe Siciliano**

Mr. Siciliano stated he was surprised to read on social media that Greenwich Community Sailing/Longshore Sailing was leaving. Mr. Siciliano added that there is a lot of misinformation going around. He reviewed the facts about what happened. Upon discussion with Ms. Pimentel and Mr. Ferris, Mr. Siciliano advised that there was a current Request for Proposal out for a Sailing School/Boat Rental Operator and advised that Greenwich Community Sailing submit a proposal if they wished to be considered.

**VII. Dorothy Hamill Rink Sub-Committee, Rick Loh**

Mr. Loh reported that a lot of progress has been made. The pre-application was presented to P&Z by Alan Monelli on December 7. The pre-app. identifies a requested site for a new rink within the park. Most agree with the need for a new rink, the opposition is to the location that has been recommended for the new rink.

Mr. Bocchino added that there is a lot of intricate detail coming in from community members, organizations and outside groups. There was a lot of opposition that came out of the pre-application meeting. Mr. Bocchino expressed his opinion that a couple of alternate sites should be looked in to.

Upon discussion, Mr. Loh advised that the Rink Committee was appointed by the Selectman with representatives from all over Town. With Gus Lindine retiring, there is a vacancy on the committee. Mr. Siciliano responded that the new Athletic Director should fill the vacancy.

**VIII. Binney Park Advisory Committee, Nancy Chapin**

Ms. Chapin reported that Pete Uhry is leading the charge to get the Friends group up and running. There was a meeting to discuss members' interests and what they want to do. They are trying to model the group after the Friends of Greenwich Point. The intent is to use the Foundation for donations. The group would like to setup a time to talk with Mr. Siciliano about moving forward.

**IX. Pinetum-Pomerance-Tuchman, Nancy Chapin**

Ms. Chapin reported there was a great volunteer day. The volunteers worked on invasive remediation and plantings. Ms. Chapin added that she is happy working with such great staff.

**X. Unfinished Business**

None

**XI. New Business**

None

**XII. Public Comment**

None

**XIII. Meeting adjourned 8:25 p.m.**