



Board of Parks & Recreation

Meeting Minutes

February 25, 2009

Board Attendees: Richard Wellington, John Craine, Rick Capozza, Winston Robinson, Nancy Caplan, Scott Johnson, Robert Oca and William Dunster

Staff Attendees: Joseph Siciliano, Tom Greco, Fred Walters and Bruce Spaman

Guest Attendees: Sue Baker, Cathy Weisenburger, Rob Sterling, Karen Chaplin and Gary Staab

- I. Meeting called to order at 7:03 P.M.
- II. **Motion made, seconded, and approved to accept the Minutes of the January, 28, 2009 Meeting, 8-0-0.**

III. Chairman's Report, Ric Wellington

Mr. Wellington reported he, Mr. Oca and Mr. Johnson will meet with the Greenwich Civic Center Committee Board in the next two weeks.

Mr. Wellington congratulated Mr. Craine on completion of the work as Chairman of the Coastal Resources Task Committee. The committee has been transitioned into the First Selectman's Coastal Advisory Committee.

Mr. Wellington announced the Board of Selectmen's Meeting scheduled for February 26th will take up the issue of Artificial Turf.

Mr. Wellington reported he is pleased with the updated changes to the Plan of Conservation and Development dated January 19, 2009.

IV. Director's Report, Joseph Siciliano

Mr. Siciliano distributed copies of the Town-wide stimulus package.

Mr. Siciliano distributed copies of the report made for the BET on the EGCC. The report is a chronological look at the building since 1997. Outline of user groups, in-kind services, and operating and funding issues.

Mr. Siciliano announced the EGCC roof has been cut out of the budget for next year.

Mr. Siciliano distributed a document prepared by the department for the BET on the budget cuts. The document covers a headcount reduction of 12 full time equivalent employees, and a reduction of services that will be implemented this spring based on the headcount reduction.

Mr. Siciliano stated in the beginning of 2005, the department was staffed at 126 full time employees, and is currently staffed at 102 full time employees. The department is learning how to adapt to the reduction and work smarter with a lot less people.

Mr. Siciliano noted the 3.7m in revenue is projected to be up 7.9% in this budget cycle due to increased fees. He also anticipates attendance and participation for all programs will increase, due to the economic climate; more people will stay local and use facilities.

Mr. Siciliano reported he has requested permission from the Town Administrator to hire temporary staff for the upcoming beach season. The department has prepared 15,000 beach card applications ready to be mailed, but have not gotten the ok to hire Beach Card Staff to process applications. The staff costs \$40,000.00 a year; however beach cards generate \$850,000.00 in revenue. The in-house staff is insufficient for processing. The May 1st beach card deadline is in jeopardy.

Mr. Siciliano reported the Boater User Group wanted 7-day coverage at all marinas, the department was working towards that, now the department has been asked to cut their budget.

Mr. Siciliano suggested the department work in conjunction with the Board on an allocation of services and prioritization of what the department wants to produce for the public. There were 4 positions cut from the Tree Division in 2007, and the department has not been successful in obtaining an outsource contract. The contract is stuck in arbitration. As of December there was a backlog of 300 tree calls. The Division is prioritizing as best as they can with their current manpower.

V. Board Elections, Robert Oca

Mr. Oca expressed sincere appreciation to Mr. Wellington on behalf of the Board; Mr. Oca thanked him for his wisdom and hard work as Board Chairman.

Mr. Oca called for a nomination for Vice Chairman, Motion by John Craine, seconded by Winston Robinson:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Parks and Recreation nominates Nancy Caplan as the Vice Chairman of the Board. 7-0-1

Mr. Oca called for a nomination for Vice Chairman, Motion by Scott Johnson, seconded by Nancy Caplan:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Parks and Recreation nominates William Dunster as the Chairman of the Board. 7-0-1

VI. Committee Reports

Charter Review Committee, Robert Oca

Mr. Oca reported the committee met and reviewed recommendations and decided to make revisions. It is the goal of the committee to have the revisions complete prior to the March Board Meeting.

Coastal Resources Committee, John Craine

Mr. Craine reported the committee met with Geoff Steadman, the Town's Waterways Management consultant. Geoff conducted a multi media presentation concerning the current status of the Waterways Management Study. Geoff described some of the unique and diverse characteristics of the 27 miles of the Town's coastal waterways.

Mr. Craine reviewed the new mooring rules, regulations and fees. The feedback was extremely positive.

Mr. Craine reported the initial meeting of the First Selectman's Coastal Resources Advisory Committee will be held 5pm, February 26th.

Mr. Craine added the proposed plans for the Grass Island docks are pending review by the Harbor Master, per CT DEP guidelines.

Mr. Siciliano added Geoffrey Steadman's contract expires June 30th. Mr. Steadman is bound to the contract and the scope of work outlined in the contract. Mr. Siciliano expressed concern about the expectations in managing the contract due to the newly formed First Selectman's Coastal Resources Advisory Committee.

Hamill Rink, Nancy Caplan

Working to coordinate a standing meeting beginning March through June.

VII. Monthly Topic

Parks and Trees, Bruce Spaman

Mr. Spaman reported he met with "stakeholder groups" for each of the formal parks; Bruce, Binney, Byram and Pinetum to solicit feedback from each group that will aid in the future planning for the parks by looking back at the history of each of the parks and see how they have evolved.

There were historical landscape reports conducted and presented to each group by Architect, Martha Lyon. A final report and presentation are forthcoming.

Mr. Spaman distributed the executive summary of the Organic Turf Management Plan conducted by consultant, Osborne Organics. Mr. Spaman reported he obtained a proposal from a contractor based on the recommendations in the report, the plan is estimated to cost \$400,000.00.

Mr. Siciliano added the program is being funded 100% by the BET, it has been recommended by the Board of Selectmen to be funded. Mr. Siciliano reported he will meet with the Director of Labor Relations and discuss how to move the outsource contract. The goal is to start the preliminary work for organic program done in July and be up and running in September. The longer this takes the more exposure the fields will have to crab grass, weeds, etc. which may create playability issues.

Mr. Spaman reported the Tree Division is working on the backlog of tree removals. The damage due to wind storms takes priority, 30 calls came in for the February 12th wind storm.

Mr. Spaman added he hopes to have the tree ordinance on the call for the June RTM Meeting. The ordinance is currently being reviewed by the Legislative and Rules Committee.

VIII. Unfinished Business

Mr. Dunster distributed and reviewed the resolution that the Environmental Task Force would like to pass on artificial turf fields.

IX. New Business

Two potential candidates for Board membership were present; Cathy Weisenburger and Karen Chaplin, each took a minute to introduce themselves.

X. Public Comment

Rob Sterling expressed concern about how the Cos Cob Power Plant field access would be allocated. Mr. Siciliano replied the department will use the Field Allocation Policy and permit process.

XI. Motion to adjourn unanimously approved at 8:31 pm.