



## Board of Parks & Recreation

Meeting Minutes

September 30, 2009

***Please be advised that these minutes are in DRAFT form and will not become "Public Record" until they are formally approved by the Board of Parks and Recreation at their next regularly scheduled meeting planned for October 28, 2009.***

**Board Attendees:** Will Dunster, Rick Capozza, John Craine, Nancy Caplan , Ric Wellington, and Scott Johnson

**Not Attending:** Catherine Weisenburger, Robert Oca, and Winston Robinson

**Ex-Officio Attendees:** None

**Staff Attendees:** Joseph Siciliano, Tom Greco, Bruce Spaman and Peter Mandras

**Guest Attendees:** Rob Sterling, Sean Broderick, Camille Broderick, Caroline Hunter, Karen Ayoub, Jim OBrein, Anita Keefe, Toni Wyman, Greg Islan, Stephen Walko, Michael Mason, Nancy Chapin, Fred Camillo, Erf Porter and Karen Sadik-Khan

- I. Meeting called to order at 7:02 P.M.
- II. **Motion made, seconded, and approved to accept the Minutes of the July 29, 2009 meeting. 6-0-0.**
- III. **Monthly Topic**

### **CIP Update, Tom Greco**

Mr. Greco began by reporting that each department was asked to give back 5% of non-salary accounts which equates to \$90,000 for which the department is on target.

Mr. Greco distributed and reviewed the CIP as it currently stands; Mr. Greco reported he will meet with each Superintendent to review the 2010/2011 capital appropriations to be requested, changes will be made. The next stage will be to finalize the 15yr plan, document, justify need and submit to the First Selectman's office by October 20<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Caplan inquired if the Bruce Museum expenditures will be removed from the Town books

Mr. Siciliano responded the Management Agreement between the Bruce Museum and the Town indicates the Town has a responsibility to maintain the collection. Eventually the agreement will run out or the museum may request a change in the agreement at which time some other arrangements may be made.

There was some further discussion on the CIP budget.

### **Parks and Trees Update, Bruce Spaman**

Mr. Spaman reported the following:

- The department worked with the Student Conservation Association on some improvements in Pemberwick Park.
- Eagle Scout candidate, Sean Broderick reconstructed a much needed trail section on the Tuchman and Pinetum properties.
- There will be a daffodil planting project at Binney Park Annex property facilitated by the Greenwich Parks Alliance.
- There will be a series of “open houses” in the parks as recommended by the Historic Landscape Report.
- The park lighting project will break ground in October for Binney, Byram, and Bruce Parks.
- The Department also worked with Social Service’s Greenwich Youth Conservation Project volunteers to accomplish improvements in the parks.
- There is still an ongoing backlog of tree work, the department is working to eliminate the backlog.
- The Tree Division is continuing to plant trees on streets, schools and parks.
- The appeal to Stamford Superior Court for the decision for the tree at 410 Greenwich Ave. is unresolved.
- The Organic Turf Program began this summer, with in-house staff.
- OGRCC has committed monies for improvements and reconstruction of a portion of Binney Park’s athletic fields to begin after RTM and BET gifting approvals.
- Playground inspections have begun for school and park playgrounds and equipment.
- New playscapes have been completed for Bruce, Byram, Loughlin Ave. Parks, Island Beach and Greenwich Commons.
- The Greenwich Tree Conservancy and the GHS Beautification Committee of the PTA are assisting with a tree planting project designed to help screen GHS from Hillside Ave.

Mr. Greco announced the department is looking into the customer service computer system the Board of Education uses. This program is inexpensive and will be helpful in responding to customer issues.

Mr. Wellington expressed his concern for the backlog of tree calls. His concern is that the backlog will continue to grow, and become more serious.

Mr. Spaman reported there are currently 350 high priority tree removals in backlog.

Mr. Siciliano added there is an arbitration hearing set for November on the outsourcing plan for tree work.

Mr. Greco expressed his passion for the youth and acknowledged Sean Broderick, Eagle Scout Candidate as a future leader.

#### **IV. Director's Report, Joe Siciliano**

Mr. Siciliano reported there are currently 1,034 hours sold, 26 hours of giveback and 165 hours of open for sale of ice time at the Dorothy Hamill Rink.

Mr. Siciliano added the Rink Committee in partnership with the department worked well to tweak the ice allocation process. There are two groups who have not returned their contracts; Greenwich High School and Greenwich Academy.

Mr. Siciliano thanked Mr. Johnson for his assistance with the turf field #7 at Greenwich High School. There was fault in the seams; the installer honored their warrantee agreement and the repairs have been completed. Additional rubber crumb was also installed. The turf is now is safe to play on.

Mr. Siciliano expressed his condolences for Dave D'Andrea's mom who passed away. If anyone would like to send cards his address is 129 Hamilton Avenue.

#### **IV. Committee Reports**

##### **Golf Report, Joe Siciliano**

Mr. Siciliano reported the following:

- Carts, play, and range were down 10% from last year
- 25" of rain since May 1<sup>st</sup>
- Membership is down 9%

Mr. Siciliano reported the golf staff met to discuss trimming the budget. The plan is to manage the budget on a month-to-month basis beginning now.

The Golf User Group will meet on October 5, 2009.

The Golf center building is 55% complete, expected to be complete by December.

Mr. Siciliano introduced Fred Camillo, Jim O'Brien and Caroline Hunter to talk about the historical information on the Deluca property, with the goal of renaming the property to "Dumpling Pond Park".

Ms. Caroline Hunter reviewed the history of the property.

Mr. Siciliano added "Dumpling Pond Park" would remain in the parks and Recreation inventory under open space. The renaming process would require approval of the Board of Selectmen and the RTM.

Upon discussion, the following motion made by Mr. Wellington seconded by Ms. Caplan was approved:

**RESOLVED, that the Board of Parks and Recreation endorses the renaming of the Mianus River Park to Dumpling Pond Park 6-0-0**

### **RTM, Ric Wellington**

Mr. Wellington reported he attended the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting where two items were taken up and approved by the committee; a gift acceptance of \$25,000 for waste receptacles on Greenwich Avenue and child safety zones.

### **Turf Committee, Scott Johnson**

The committee met, there was a consensus on tests of the existing samples; the committee is trying to dovetail with the state study expected to be complete by next spring. The budget for the state study is \$250,000.

### **Waterways Management Study, John Craine**

Mr. Craine reported the Waterways Management Study is 2/3 complete. In July there were 4 public sessions to solicit public feedback; there was a fairly limited turnout. Letters went out to yacht clubs, commercial marinas, and property owners to solicit additional feedback, only 6 responses have been received. There will be one more public meeting to review what has been learned through these efforts; date to be determined.

### **VI. Chairman's Report, Will Dunster**

Mr. Dunster expressed his disappointment in the "new" Greenwich Time; it appears that they have a vendetta against Town employees. He feels that people should communicate with the Town to resolve issues rather than the newspaper.

Mr. Dunster reported at the time the Parks Alliance group presented their proposal several months ago, there was no quorum; therefore the Board did not take a position. Mr. Dunster asked the Board Members to review the proposal.

Mr. Siciliano suggested the discussion be taken offline. There are some issues that must be resolved.

Mr. Wellington added public/private partnerships are opportunities for funding support, and feels that this group deserves the Board's attention.

Mr. Siciliano responded that he is willing to make the commitment to having the discussion and feels basic ground rules need to be established.

Mr. Dunster called for a volunteer to be part of a committee to work with the department and the Parks Alliance on a plan that works. Ms. Caplan Volunteered.

### **VII. Greenwich Civic Center Committee, Karen Sadik-Khan, Erf Porter**

Mr. Porter reported the committee went before the Board of Selectman in August and before the B.E.T. on September 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Porter reviewed the five steps:

1. The GCCC will update the assessment of Town needs (last done in 2006 by the GCCC) for a community center on the site of the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center;
2. The GCCC will provide the selected pre design architect, Roger Ferris Partners (RFP), with the results of the updated assessment from which they will implement pre design work on a pay as you go arrangement;

3. The GCCC will actively solicit Town wide broad based private financial support for the pre design phase including the updated needs assessment;
4. The GCCC, upon completion of the pre design phase, will hold a series of public forums at which Roger Ferris Partners will present alternative designs for a new facility;
5. The GCCC will, depending upon public response, proceed to work with the Town to determine if and how such facility should be built and the terms and conditions of ownership and operation.

Mr. Siciliano stated the department has a successful history in working with public/private partnerships and he is encouraged by the inclusion in the activity of the committee.

Mr. Siciliano added there is no active plan currently on the table; the Board of Selectman at the time Chartered the Board of Parks and Recreation to produce the plans for the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center. There are plans that were completed in two phases. Mr. Siciliano reported he'd be happy to share these plans with the Board.

Mr. Siciliano expressed his concern for the 10,000 programs hours utilized at the EGCC, where would they go if the building is closed?

Mr. Stephen Walko, chairman of the BET stated the BET has not taken a vote on this item, however stated last year the BET denied the \$750,000 for the roof. His sense is that the BET is not going to be willing to spend a lot of money on this facility without a plan. The BET will seek guidance from the department on their vision and how they plan to pay for it.

Mr. Walko added he would not like to see the building closed without a plan to move forward.

Mr. Dunster called for a meeting between the Civic Center Committee, Board members and Mr. Siciliano before the next budget meeting to define their direction to present to the BET.

Upon extensive discussion, the following resolution was adopted, motion by Mr. Wellington, seconded by Ms. Caplan:

**RESOLVED, that the Board of Parks and Recreation endorses the 5 steps of the Greenwich Civic Center Committee as outlined above. 6-0-0**

## **VI. Unfinished Business**

## **VII. New Business**

## **VIII. Public Comment**

## **IX. Meeting adjourned 9:02 pm.**