

**NEWINGTON PARKS & RECREATION  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
TUESDAY, October 13, 2015**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Don Woods called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm

**II. ROLL CALL**

Board: Eileen Francolino, Mary Udice, Ed Marchion, Jen Win-Johnson, Don Woods, Bill DeBlasio, Beth Manke, Mary Beth Kelliher, Michael Camillo

Board Members Absent: Richard Khentigan

Staff: Superintendent William DeMaio, Sharon

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF September 15, 2015**

**Eileen Francolino made a motion to approve the amended minutes of the September 15, 2015 meeting. Bill DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed with a 9-0 vote.**

**IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**Mady Kenny of 53 Crestview Drive** – Thank you to all of the Board Members for their support of the tree project on Crestview Drive, the street is going to be beautiful once again. The stakes are in the ground, just waiting for the trees to be planted. Mady Kenny mentioned that when this was brought to Council, Mayor Woods mentioned a possible committee to be formed at some point in the future to move this project forward into the town and planting trees on one or two streets a year.

Bill DeMaio in response to Mady Kenny: The trees are coming from South Carolina; the rain has delayed the delivery but will be here in a couple of days.

**V. CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS**

From the Superintendent, Bill DeMaio:

- Staff is doing a wonderful job.
- The Charlie Brown movie is coming Friday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. All 417 tickets have sold out in two days, waiting list of 50 people, huge success and a lot of support from the residents of Newington. It will be a fun night filled with contests and prizes, the Mayor will also honor Cornelius by proclaiming it Cornelius Uliano day in Newington. Cornelius is a 30 year resident of Newington, he is co-writer and producer of the new Charlie Brown movie.
- Programs have begun, brochures have been sent out. All programs are filling up; the preschool programs continue to be successful.
- The sports fields continue to get a lot of work. The lights were out at the NHS soccer field recently which was caused by Eversource. They were underground at the time on Willard Avenue, hit a wire and had to shut the power off. The issue was fixed within a day. The soccer field lights are back up and running.
- Irrigation system continues to be fixed by Parks & Recreation Department crew, underground pipes are breaking and deteriorating, in the process of digging up a lot of pipes that are over 20 years old. Bill DeMaio is making a strong push for the Board of

Education to put the irrigation system in their CIP. Bill DeMaio will give the Board of Education some national names to get bids on what it would cost to have the system fixed.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

### **Kellogg-Eddy House Rentals:**

Bill DeMaio met with Historical Society and Art League. He took a tour of the facility and thought the house was very nice. Both groups would like to work with the Parks & Recreation Department and rent out the facility which will make some additional income for the Parks & Recreation Department and for the Historical Society. Bill DeMaio's verbal proposal to the Historical Society is to hire a college student at approximately \$10.00 per hour to set up the facility one hour prior to an event, stay during the event, clean up after the event is over and set trash out to be picked up by the Parks & Recreation crew. The rental charge for the facility will be approximately \$100 for a four hour time period. There will be an additional \$50.00 charge for a docent to give tours in the museum rooms of the house. The \$50.00 would be a donation made to the Historical Society from the Parks & Recreation Department. Charges for the rental will be worked out in the coming weeks. These figures will be looked at again and tweaked after a couple events have taken place to see if any other expenses need to be covered, at which time a written formal policy will be issued for the rental charges and presented to the Board Members.

Mary Udice asked if the docents tour includes the second floor. Bill DeMaio responded yes. Eileen Francolino asked if the facility handicap accessible. Bill DeMaio responded no, it is not accessible. The way the house was built it cannot be converted.

The second floor of the Kellogg- Eddy House is dedicated to the Art League. Bill DeMaio has offered them the use of the Community Center's art room, which is handicap accessible, two Monday's a month when staff is there, free of charge. If they were to have an art seminar with an admission fee at the Community Center, then Parks & Recreation Department would charge a \$15.00 fee for the use of the multipurpose room at the Community Center. Bill DeMaio has also offered the Art League use of the senior disabled center.

### **Sign at Clem Lemire Recreation Complex:**

Bill DeMaio is currently working on trying to get replacement signs for downtown CVS and Clem Lemire. Sharon is researching to find proper designs for the signs. Don Woods mentioned looking at the Beech tree that is in the planting with the sign in the center of town. The scale of the tree is currently off with the rest of the planting and needs to be trimmed. Ed Marchion is going to look at the tree to give Bill DeMaio some options.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

### **Memorial Rose Bush/Laurie Soucy:**

Laurie Soucy was a bus driver for Newington who passed away over the summer. The bus drivers would like a rose bush dedicated in memory of her. Bill DeMaio will have a rose bush planted in the mulched area of the rose garden near the waterfall in the spring time in memory of Laurie Soucy.

### **Wishing Well At Stew Leonard's for 2016 Extravaganza Fireworks:**

Stew Leonard's has agreed to allow the Parks & Recreation Department to have a wishing well at the store starting June 15<sup>th</sup> for two weeks for the public to make donations for the Extravaganza fireworks show. Stew Leonard's is letting the Parks & Recreation Department keep 100% of the proceeds that are collected.

Eileen Francolino mentioned that we should try and keep this partnership with Stew Leonard's during the Churchill Park redesign which could possibly lead to future sponsorship or donations by Stew Leonard's for the park.

### **Churchill Pool Redesign:**

Bill DeMaio is currently reviewing the design with the Architect and Engineer firm, Milone and MacBroom. They are taking into consideration everything that was mentioned by the public at the hearing and at the Parks & Recreation meetings to make sure the park meets the wants and needs of the community. Bill DeMaio showed the Board Members Churchill Park in its current state via a slide show. The pictures show the significant problems with the parks current design that he would like to improve on and restructure. These issues include the location of the parking lot, the brook that runs alongside of the park, the existing pond, trails that need to be resurfaced to make them handicap accessible, pavilion roofs in need attention, tennis and basketball courts that need improvements. The pool has out lived its life expectancy and is losing 20,000 gallons of water per day, Bill DeMaio is very concerned and fearful one of the walls could collapse and cave in at any time. Other areas mentioned in the slide show was updating of the bath house, and the softball field which is improperly orientated and collects water in the second base area. The entire park is in disrepair.

A presentation was made by Bill DeMaio with a few different blue print layouts showing the new improvements to the park which included the parking lots and additional parking spaces, updates to the design of the pond giving it a more natural look, adding depth to it and an island with gazebo in the middle and boardwalk and seating around pond for passive recreation use. Five pavilions will be placed around the park surrounding the playground and exercise equipment which will be accessible with sidewalks to get from place to place. The pool will become a family destination pool with a lot of different features such as zero depth entry to the pool; there will still be an area that will have six lanes for competitions, bump outs in pool for a diving board, slide and climbing wall. The bath house will be updated to ADA regulations. Also a lazy river and splash pads will be added to the pool area. The splash pads will be fenced in, no life guards will be needed and will be open longer than the eight week pool season. The volleyball and basketball courts will be well lit and located near the parking lot for easy supervision by police officers. A multipurpose room has been added and is planned to have large window overlooking the park at a higher elevation, this room can be used year round. The softball field will be reoriented and have a synthetic field. It will also be able to accommodate soccer and lacrosse. The park will be able to accommodate more summer campers; and will bring more revenue to the town with the lazy river and additional pavilions.

Don Woods mentioned that he likes the new look of the park; still have to look at the costs. This presentation needs to be approved by the Board Members, then go to the Council where they will meet with the Architects to go over the plans at which point the cost analysis will be done.

Beth Manke asked what the potential time line would be to build the park. Bill DeMaio's response: one year. He does not think the pool at Churchill Park will be able to be open next year due to the major deterioration. He would like to see the summer campers moved to high school while this project is going on if that is possible; he would still have to discuss that with the Board of Education. Mary Beth Kelliher would like a copy of the blue print plans. Jen Win-Johnson recommends when endorsing this project to focus on positive aspects of the park when presenting to the public.

**MOTION: A motion was made by Eileen Francolino that the Board endorse the renovation of Churchill Park as presented. Bill DeBlasio seconded the motion; all were in favor with a 9-0 vote.**

Don really likes this plan for the park and hopes the town embraces it and sees the value of a new modern park in town. He really hopes that the Parks & Recreation Board Members can get the town behind it. The pool could collapse, the pool could be closed which will change the dynamics for the summer programs and quality of life in Newington.

## **VIII. Reports**

### **Crestview Drive Trees**

The trees should be arriving within the next day will be planted soon after they arrive.

### **Electricity at Clem Lemire & Newington High School**

Bill DeMaio mentioned in the monthly report that Eversource took full responsibility for the outage.

### **Little League Appreciation**

Kathy and the Little League held a luncheon appreciation for the Parks & Recreation crew in the Teen Center last Friday. The food was from Joey Garlic's. The luncheon was well received. Everyone had a nice time, it gave an opportunity for everyone to share ideas and make friendships, the Town Manger and Chairman were also in attendance.

### **Waterfall Festival**

The first time Parks & Recreation had a booth at the festival. Took in 60 email addresses, had some contests and gave away gift cards to programs. It was a success. Support service was given to trash pick-up and set up at the festival.

### **Mill Pond Playground**

An architect has been hired to design a drainage system underneath the existing playground. The Park & Recreation crew will be digging up areas around the playground. The Department has purchased catch basins and drainage pipes that will be put in and connect to an existing storm water pipes that are in the parking lot and monitor this during the winter and see if it will get rid of some puddling that is happening on the north side of the playground. The water has become forceful and is pushing concrete forms inward and buckling the underground subsurface. Once that work has been done Bill DeMaio would like to bid out the work for the proper subsurface to be installed and also drainage around the circumference of the playground and lay a new rubber surface around the playground and that will take place in the spring or summer.

Don Woods' concern: Is it a good idea to resurface the playground with old playground equipment? Does it make sense to put new floor in with old equipment?

Bill DeMaio's response: He spoke to a salesman who had a look at the current playground equipment and said it was in good shape, some panels need to be replaced and Bill will be adding some spring animals to the playground.

There is a Girl Scout that is going for her gold star. She will be redesigning the sensory garden.

### **Ambulance Building**

Parks & Recreation crew have taken out 20 Ewes and replaced them with 25 Junipers at the Ambulance Building.

### **Cemetery Eagle Scout Project**

The Eagle Scout has finished a beautiful project in the veteran section of the cemetery. Eight flag poles were put up along with a planting and the area was mulched. Parks & Recreation Department has developed a good partnership with the Eagle Scouts. Steve of the Park & Recreation crew helped out did a great job with it as well.

## **IX. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

**Jeanne Picklesimer of 97 Vincent Drive** – Jeanne Picklesimer would like to confirm the time line of the park rehab and what will the access to the entrance of the lazy river will be like.

Bill DeMaio's response to Jeanne Picklesimer: It will take one year to build the new park but this project needs to first be accepted by the Town Council and put on the Capital Improvement Program which is a budget created for the next five years. If this project is accepted by the Town Council, it could happen any time during the next five years. The Town Council will need to decide which year this project will take place.

Response to the entrance of the lazy river: It will have close to a zero depth entry.

**Eric O'Neil of 47 Kirkham Street** – Eric O'Neil works for the Parks & Recreation Department and expressed how much he likes the idea of the new park including the new look of the pond and bringing back the slides and diving boards to the pool. Eric thinks it will be a much better environment for the kids. Eric worked on the motor for the Churchill pool this year, fixed it to get through the season, he thinks it could be a real possibility this pool will not open next season. He has seen first-hand, the deterioration of the pool at Churchill Park and mentioned that the concrete shell of the pool is breaking down and could cave in. Eric also asked about the sports field dimensions and if they will be regulation size.

Bill DeMaio's response to Eric O'Neil: He does a great job for the Parks & Recreation Department; everything he does is high quality and really cares about the community.

Response to field size: Yes the fields will be full size.

**Theresa Claffey of 420 Churchill Drive** – Theresa asked if the pool is closed this coming season due to its condition would that speed up the process of the new park being built or will this project be similar to other renovation projects that were to happen in this town that keep getting dragged along and is it possible we could be without a pool for a few years.

Don Woods's response to Theresa Claffey: Don said the best way to speed up this project is public outcry. The public should come to these meetings and show support, otherwise if the public stays silent then the project could be delayed. If the public is outraged they will find the money and time and it will get expedited.

**Extras:**

- Welcome Mike Camillo new member to the Parks & Recreation Board.
- Don showed his appreciation to the current Board Members and recognized all of their hard work. Special thanks went out to Bill DeBlasio and Jen Win-Johnson for all their efforts made while they were on the Building Committee for the new Community Center building.
- October 30<sup>th</sup> Halloween special at the Mortensen Community Center.
- December 5th is Holiday Christmas special.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION: A motion was made by Mary Udice to adjourn. Bill DeBlasio seconded the motion, all were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:46pm with a 9-0 vote.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Nancy Jay