

**NEWINGTON PARKS & RECREATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2009
MEETING MINUTES**

I. CALL TO ORDER

Neal Forte, Vice Chairperson, called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.

II. ROLL CALL

Board: Jeff Hedberg (arrived at 7:34), Jonathan Boni, Eileen Francolino, Robert Tofeldt, Mary Udice, Neal Forte, Don Woods
Board Members Excused: Bill DeBlasio, Kenneth Leggo
Board Members Absent: Jeff Perillo
Staff: Superintendent Bruce Till and Special Events Coordinator Jodi Lee
Town Council Liaison: None Present

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 18, 2009

MOTION: Mary Udice made a motion to approve the minutes of August 18, 2009. Bob Tofeldt seconded the motion, all were in favor and the motion to approve the minutes of August 18, 2009 was unanimously approved with a 7-0 vote.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

NCTC – Performing Arts Theatre, Darren Farrington, Executive Director (743 North Mountain Road) and Tina Lenares, NCTC Board Member, (76 Stonehedge Drive) spoke to the group about starting a working relationship with the Parks & Recreation Department. They are interested in publicity in our brochure and possibly teaching classes through the Parks & Recreation Department. They have acting classes and dance classes as well as the theatre groups. Darren spoke to the Board on the history of this non-profit organization. Bruce suggested they set up a meeting with the Parks & Recreation Department to discuss this further.

V. CORRESPONDENCE/COMMUNICATIONS/REPORTS

Eileen Francolino received a letter from Ted Fravel's family thanking the Board for their donation in memory of Mr. Fravel.

FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

Bruce reminded everyone that their September Monthly Report was in their packets.

Eileen Francolino asked Bruce if the Dog Days of Summer was a free event. She commented that other towns have these events and raise money for their Dog Parks. Bruce informed the group there is still a fund in Newington with a little less than \$1,000.

YOUTH SPORT UPDATES

Several meetings have been held with The Board of Education and Parks & Recreation regarding Youth Sports Groups. Until now, the Board of Education has been allowing some of these organizations to use school facilities for practices and games, meets and matches. They have been charged the discounted fee schedule. Parks & Recreation has been paying these rental & custodial fees. Now these youth organizations will have to follow Parks & Recreation guidelines and criteria. Some of the criteria will

include by-laws, coach screening, and certificates of insurance to name a few. Organizations that meet the criteria will continue to pay from the discounted fee schedule. Groups that don't meet the criteria will pay a higher rental fee. All costs will now be passed onto each individual organization.

Bruce also clarified that cheerleading falls in this category. Originally they were excluded as an oversight, they were thought to be grouped with midget football. Bruce has since met with them and they are all set. Travel Basketball is the one group that is still pending. They are very close to falling under the Parks & Recreation umbrella.

Jeff H. asked Bruce when the conversations started with the Board of Education. Bruce began communication with the Board of Education a few months ago. The Board was brought up to speed a few months ago.

Don commented that in the past, all these youth organization came to one Parks & Recreation Board meeting with their certificates of insurance and their financial records for approval. That ended when the Sports Council was created by Wendy Rubin. There has not been a Sports Council meeting in over a year.

ON-GOING PROJECTS

PARK EQUIPMENT UPDATE

The majority of the playground equipment at Beechwood has been installed. The landscaping has begun. The equipment for 5-12 year olds is complete. The equipment for ages 2-5 year olds will be complete soon. There have been many positive comments and phone calls from the neighbors. Work on Beacon and Starr Park will begin soon. An audit on our existing playgrounds was done. We will need to replace swing sets that are outdated and out of code. There is a grey area when it comes to playscapes at the school. The Parks & Grounds Department has updated the fiberwood flooring. Bruce is working with the Board of Education to see who maintains the playground equipment on school property.

CHURCHHILL PARK

Bruce has received many complaints over the duckweed problem. The gate valve has been installed in the pond. The problem seems to be fixed.

SYNTHETIC FIELD/CLEM LEMIRE UPDATE

Jeff Hedberg updated the Board on the sub-committee meeting for the synthetic field. There was a meeting last night with Milone & MacBroom who submitted two presentations: Schedule A & Schedule B. The menu of costs will follow. The priority of this sub-committee is to have the turf installed and then decide on extras. These decision will be made as a group. We may have an opportunity to build a "Class A" regulation field and add on bleachers, scoreboards, and other accessories later. This would allow for other organizations to rent the facility. Next steps are to review costs and discuss the direction the Parks & Recreation Board would like to go.

Jeff H. asked if there is a naming policy in place. This may be a way to raise funds for bleachers/scoreboards etc. The group agreed it is worth pursuing; however, the Town of Newington should own the equipment but sell approved advertising space. It is undecided at this point who and how this field/concession stand would be managed. The issue needs to be reviewed once the costs are presented. There was also some discussion on moving the skate park to Mill Pond Park if the larger turf field is built. No decision was made. Eileen asked what the line item was in the Board of Education Capital Improvement Plan for a turf field in three to five years. No one at the meeting could confirm that information or amount.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. IT UPDATE

Bruce met with Paul Boutot and the Parks & Recreation staff regarding on-line registration. The goal is to have this in place by next summer.

B. BUCKET TRUCK

Bruce and staff demoed a 41 foot bucket truck last week. Bruce had discussions with the Town Manager regarding the Department's needs. The Highway Department will also be involved with this decision. Bruce wants to be clear we will not do away with our working relationship with Wethersfield. Even with the bucket truck, we will not have the manpower in the Parks Department to work as a tree crew.

C. CEMETERY UPDATE

Don updated the Board on the progress of the cemetery. The final stages are being completed, including the paving, and the landscaping. The grounds look great.

D. PARKS & RECREATION FALL BROCHURE

The Fall Parks & Recreation Program Guide was mailed this week and Fall Registration is underway.

E. GROUNDS UPKEEP AT SCHOOLS

Jonathan Boni commented on the grounds upkeep at Ruth Chaffee School. He said the grass looks great but there are many overgrown weeds around the playscapes and swings. Bruce explained we are part of the Intergraded Pest Management System. We cannot chemically treat the elementary schools or the middle schools. Bruce will look into the concern and a non-chemical product called Burn Out.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mary Udice made a motion to adjourn, Don Woods seconded the motion, all were in favor, and the motion to adjourn was unanimously approved at 8:45 PM with a 7-0 vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Jodi Lee
Parks & Recreation
Special Events Coordinator