

# *Park and Recreation Commission*

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## **Minutes**

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, April 13, 2009 in the City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

By roll call, members present: John Walsh, Beverly Moran, Red Clynch and Andrew Cota. David Mikos arrived at 7:08 p.m. James Benanto and Nick Serednitsky were excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present. Athletic Director Joseph Orazetti was excused.

### **ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:**

Nothing was presented.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A motion was made by Beverly Moran and second by Andrew Cota. Move to accept the minutes of March 9, 2009, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

### **PUBLIC PORTION:**

No public came forward at this time.

### **CORRESPONDENCES:**

Nothing was received.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director's Report:** Mr. O'Connell reported that Little League opening day is Saturday April 18<sup>th</sup>. The upper teams have partnered with Shelton to play games and the minor teams will be partnering with Beacon Falls. Babe Ruth has a thirteen year olds team of 15 players. He is still working on forming the fourteen and fifteen year olds. They will be playing in a regional league that extends from Watertown to Milford. He noted that the other towns are seeing lower participation numbers as is Derby.

Soccer is set to start soon. They will be using Witek Park at least four days a week and have exclusive use of Witek Park.

Shelton and Derby will be overseeing the skate park. They were unable to secure an outside source to oversee the park. The opening day has yet to be determined.

Work on the Little League fence should be starting soon. The original contractor awarded the bid was found to not meet standards of the specifications. Mr. O'Connell is communicating with the other bidders to determine their proposals and the bid will be awarded soon.

The backstop at the softball field is almost done.

As the fiscal year end is approaching, Mr. O'Connell will be approaching the Board of Apportionment and Taxation for transfers. The YankeeGas account is a concern as it was underfunded due to the comparison of the previous year which had included an unanticipated credit. He will be watching the

other accounts and seeking transfers as needed to maintain the overall budget. He presented the 2009-2010 budget to the Board of Apportionment and Taxation and they were receptive to the proposal. He will be presenting the capital requests to the Capital Planning Commission.

Mr. O'Connell noted that the Little League field house is in need of a new roof. He was unaware of this need until recently when shingles unexpectedly flew off during a storm. Cost estimates are approximately \$4,200. This item was not included in the capital requests but will be presented to the Capital Planning Commission.

Motion was made by Andrew Cota and second by David Mikos. Move to empower the Recreation Director to present the request for the Little League roof replacement to the Capital Planning Commission in lieu of the request for the Little League backstop replacement. Motion carried unanimously.

**High School Athletic Director's Report:** Mr. Orazetti was excused. Mr. O'Connell indicated that the High School spring sports are underway. A long jump pit was prepared for the participants of the track program. He indicated that he communicates regularly with the Athletic Director and everything seems to be progressing adequately.

**NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

Ms. Moran asked about the Pop Warner lights on the Capital Plan, she understood that they were going to install them with the help of volunteers and the lights are already donated. Mr. O'Connell indicated that Pop Warner tried to accomplish the project themselves but the scope of the project was beyond their means. They have requested assistance from the Parks and Recreation Commission. In terms of the capital requests Mr. O'Connell indicated that the highest priorities are the football lights and the replacement of the field groomer. The lights have diminished in brightness greatly, making night games difficult. With the change to the NVL it is hopeful that there will be increased interest in the games, bringing more people to the games. The existing groomer is more than a decade old and is a vital piece of equipment for the maintenance of the fields.

Ms. Moran questioned the status of the Men's soccer leagues. Mr. O'Connell indicated that one team is authorized to use Bradley School on Sunday mornings playing six games during the season and other requests have been denied. Members discussed resident participation in the teams. There is interest in adult soccer and some local businesses do sponsor teams. Mr. O'Connell indicated that he does request rosters so as to ascertain Derby resident participation. The adult leagues have requested use of Witek Park, but it has been determined that the youth programs have the exclusive use. Due to limitations of facilities and the efforts to try to preserve all the fields, overall use of the fields has to be managed. It was noted that the Board of Alderman may be looking to draft language about out of town requests for field use.

Mr. Mikos noted that there is an Over 35 men's softball league (wooden bats) playing in Shelton that is all Derby residents. He asked if there would be field space available if the league needed it as the Shelton field schedule is intense. Mr. O'Connell indicated that there are two fire department teams playing in Derby as well as the Girl's youth softball program but it would be doable to work out the schedule.

Mr. Clynch was curious about the Derby/Ansonia breakup of regional playing. Mr. O'Connell indicated that when the Ansonia Parks and Recreation Commission decided to move away from Pop Warner and enter a different youth league, they did not feel that Derby cooperated with their decision so they chose not to participate with Derby.

Mr. Clynch understood that Pop Warner registration is \$100 for residents and \$125 for non-residents. He was curious about the increase in the fee and whether this will effect their participation numbers and their ability to field their teams.

Motion was made by Beverly Moran and second by David Mikos. Move to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,  
Karen Kemmesies, secretary

*These minutes are subject to the Commission's approval at their next scheduled meeting.*