

# *Park and Recreation Commission*

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## **Minutes**

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, April 11, 2011 in the City Hall.

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

By roll call, members present: Andrew Cota, Beverly Moran, Nick Serednitsky, David Mikos, Red Clynch and Ronald Sill. James Benanto was excused.

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

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

Motion made by Red Clynch and second by David Mikos. Move to accept the agenda, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion made by Ron Sill and second by Beverly Moran. Move to accept the minutes of March 14, 2011, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

### **PUBLIC PORTION:**

No one from the public was present. Members did question whether Little League was invited, as discussed last month. Mr. O'Connell noted that opening day is this weekend and being that registration is complete for this season, he felt it best to postpone the invite until a latter meeting.

### **CORRESPONDENCES:**

No correspondence was presented.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director's Report:** Mr. O'Connell reported that Little League opening day is April 16<sup>th</sup>. He invited the members to attend. He noted that the player numbers are down. There have been some issues regarding whether it should be Public Works or the Little League preparing the field. Compounded by weather, the work has been delayed. Historically, the coaches and parents have always maintained the field on their own. Being that the number of teams is greatly reduced in comparison to past years the number of available volunteers is also dwindling. Public Works feels that the responsibility remains with Little League. When the Little League directors are invited to attend, this matter may present itself as an issue along with the discussions regarding the registration fees.

The skate park remains closed. The State is working on the bridge and there is no timeline when or if the park will be opened.

Drafting players for Babe Ruth continues. As the age group will be high school age, the program will not start until the High School Athletic Baseball season is over in June. The Derby team will be playing teams within the New Haven league.

Witek Park is open as of last week. In house Youth Soccer will be practicing a few nights a week. There are two travel teams who will practice during the week and play their games on the weekend. One adult

league will continue to play on Sunday mornings. At times when there is nothing scheduled, the gates will remain locked so as to deter any potential vandalism.

At Bradley School the Middle School girls softball and Middle School boy's baseball will be playing on the fields. The Fireman's League has four teams and their play is scheduled for Monday nights.

The new equipment for the Derby Veteran's Community Center has been okayed and Mr. O'Connell is awaiting the release of the funds. The existing universal machine will be brought up to the High School. Mr. O'Connell indicated that the vendor for the new equipment has graciously offered to dismantle the old universal machine and deliver it to the High School. Mr. O'Connell will have to find someone to reassemble the unit. He indicated that there will be some expense for repairs to bring the unit into full working order.

**High School Athletic Director's Report:** Mr. Orazetti was excused.

**NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

**Capital Budget:**

Members discussed the proposed capital projects for 2011/2012.

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1	Ryan Field Visitor Bleachers	\$47,000	New installation
2	Coon Hollow - Basketball & Tennis Courts	\$15,000	Resurface courts and consider replacing one tennis with a basketball court
3	Replace Ryan Field house roof	\$15,000	Roof is a flat roof over 15 yrs old. Sagging and cracking has been identified.
4	Jacuzzi/Whirlpool replacement	\$10,000	Unit is very popular and widely used by older members. 15 years old and requires increasing maintenance.
5	Field Groomer	\$11,200	Replace existing machine due to age
6	Ryan Field Bleachers	\$62,000	Finish section to complete the overall project
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$160,200</b>	

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It was noted that the field groomer is an essential piece of equipment and there has been problems with it recently. Mr. O'Connell may have to consider raising the priority on the groomer.

The items included in the Capital Plan are items that Mr. O'Connell and the members feel will have the greatest benefits to the programs. Regarding the visitor bleachers, the old bleachers had been removed for safety reasons and the new ones are in order to allow for the separation of fans to avoid potential conflict, verbal abuse, assault and to better accommodate larger crowds. In addition it keeps fans on the same side of the field as the teams they are supporting. The Coon Hollow Basketball court is heavily used on a daily basis and numerous people from a young age to adults have to wait in order to play. The proposal requires the removal of one tennis court but the huge success of the basketball court has become a priority. Outside basketball has become huge in the past few years, giving many kids the opportunity to occupy themselves with physical activity which is the desire and intent of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The resurfacing is important because the ground gets slippery when wet because it is worn. The Ryan field house is over 15 years old. The harsh winter has caused the roof to sag. With the sagging the water is pooling on top and not draining further raising the risk of collapse. The Jacuzzi/whirlpool at the Derby Veteran's Community Center is very popular especially for older members and it is used all day long. It is 15 years old and the ability to keep repairing it is limited. The home side bleachers have been partially completed and this request is to complete the second half.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that he will be having Beletti Tree Service look over the trees in the Ryan Field Complex to assess whether necessary work is paramount. He will also be seeking their opinion on what weather conditions may warrant the cancellation of a game. This cost is unclear and at this time has not been included in the capital plan.

Other business:

Ms. Moran questioned who monitors the advertising signs at the Ryan Field Complex and Little League. Mr. O'Connell recalled the Board of Alderman authorizing a fundraising program a number of years ago to benefit the school programs. Little League has been posting sponsor signs for years. Mr. O'Connell indicated that the Parks & Recreation Department receives no funds from their placement. Little League generally takes the signs down seasonally. The High School does not seem to have a plan for removal on a seasonal basis.

Motion was made by David Mikos and second by Beverly Moran. Move to adjourn at 7:59 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

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