

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF
THE NEWTOWN PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN HALL SOUTH
AUGUST 13, 2013**

These minutes are subject to approval by the Newtown Parks and Recreation Commission.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Marks called the meeting to order at 6:22 pm.

Commission Members present: Marks, Boritz, Crick Owen, and Barczak

Commission Members absent: DiNicola, Gianni Jr., and Brookes

Staff present: Mangold and Reggiano and Chelsea Seres (Summer Intern)

Staff absent: Samuelson

Public: Howard Lasher, David Merrill, Curt Symes, Dane Mayclim, DarylAnn Sudlow, Karen Kuzio, Brian Gray, Ike Kuzio and Kevin Cook.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Tabled.

TRAIL COMMITTEE REPORT

- It was reported that Scott Coleman went to the Police Commission for permission to have signs made for potential bike routes in Town. The Police Commission was not in favor of the routes presented. They were concerned with increased liability to the Town and that no road studies have been done for suitable bike routes. Chief Kehoe was concerned that both locations were not ideal for bike traffic. More work must be done to find suitable bike routes.
- The Commission will be working hard on getting the Fairfield Hills trail moving.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- Kevin Cook, Recreation Supervisor from Westchester County Parks spoke to the Commission as President of Westchester Recreation and Parks Society (WRAPS). Mr. Cook presented the Commission and the department a check for \$6,000.00 to go towards the new playground at Dickinson Park. The funds were raised in memory of those lost on 12/14/12. The following members of WRAPS were also in attendance: Dane Mayclim, Superintendent – Town of Lewisboro Parks and Recreation; DarylAnn Sudlow, Assistant Superintendent – Town of Bedford Parks and Recreation; Karen Kuzio, Recreation Supervisor – Village of Briarcliff; Brian Gray, Superintendent – Town of Yorktown; Ike Kuzio, Recreation Supervisor – Westchester County. Mr. Cook asked the Commission that the members present be invited to the opening of the playground. With their donation the playground can proceed as planned. The Commission thanked Mr. Cook and the other members of WRAPS for their efforts and support.
- Howard Lasher, 68 Dodgintown Road, Newtown. Mr. Lasher has a 9/11 memorial painted on 6 maple trees in his front yard that were painted by artist, David Merrill. Mr. Merrill presented the Commission with an idea for a memorial to be eventually painted on branches of trees for the victims of 12/14. The memorial would include 20 morning doves with each child's name on it sitting on 6 branches representing the six educators lost that day. Chairman Marks told Mr. Merrill that it was an honor to meet him and that his memorial plan idea would be a great tribute. He also explained that the Town needs to provide approval and that the Cultural Arts Commission is handling the intake of request at this point. Mr. Merrill is presently working on the Veterans Memorial in Town.
- Curt Symes – Chairman of the Commission on Aging was in attendance to observe a Parks and Recreation meeting. Mr. Symes explained that his vision is to have his Commission and the Parks and Recreation Commission move forward collectively if possible towards a new Community Center that would be beneficial to both the senior's in Town and the Parks and Recreation. The senior population is 18% - 20% of the Town population. Mr. Symes explained that some of the seniors are having trouble going back to the present Senior Center due to its close proximity to Sandy Hook School; a new location for the seniors would have tremendous psychological benefits. Chairman Marks, Mr. Symes and Director Mangold all agreed to meet before the September Commission meeting.

CORRESPONDENCE

- None.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Chairman Marks reported on a "Letter to the Bee" about the Town spending \$500,000.00 on replacing a turf field when money is needed for Cultural Arts projects. Chairman Marks pointed out that it is not understood that the Treadwell Turf replacement was paid for with user surcharge fees and not with Town money. Director Mangold will respond to the gentleman who wrote the letter.
- All the funds have been raised for the 26 benches. The next step is to demonstrate progress in the next couple of months. Parks and Recreation needs to find locations for the benches. Chairman Marks would like to speak with Assistant Director Samuelson about potential sites. Director Mangold will mention the benches to the First Selectman.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- Finance Director, Robert Tait sent Director Mangold the CIP (Capital Improvement Plan) calendar. She will meet with First Selectman Llodra and Mr. Tait in October. The CIP would be for years 2014-2018. The Commission will review the current CIP with Director Mangold at the September Commission meeting. The 2nd phase of the Fairfield Hills Trail is in the CIP for 2014-2015. The third phase is in year 2016/2017. The Commission would like to help the trail plan along the way. The Commission members should have more on the Fairfield Hills Master Plan by the September meeting and this will include future projects.
- Commissioner Crick Owen and Director Mangold spoke about the one year anniversary of 12/14/12. They are concerned that the Annual Ram's Pasture Tree Lighting will be an even larger event than it already is this year. They would like to talk with the Tree Lighting Committee about keeping the event as close to traditional as possible.
- Director Mangold reported that First Selectman Llodra wants to see a reduction in events surrounding 12/14. We will no longer be giving services away. The request by Sandy Hook Promise to reserve Dickinson Pavilion for free was turned down by the Commission. The Commission had voted previously (before 12/14/12) that everyone who uses/rents the pavilions at the parks would have to pay.
- Dickinson Park Playground – the United Way is donating \$100,000.00 towards the Dickinson Park Playground project. We can now build the whole playground as originally planned. Because the playground is over \$500,000.00 the project has to go to a Town meeting then they can award the bid. Director Mangold is working on having the meeting scheduled. Chairman Marks would like to see the playground completed by Memorial Day next year. A sign would have to be made to close the playground with an announcement in the newspaper that the playground will be closing in the fall.
- Victory Garden – Harvey Pessin has been working with August Hoffman on arranging to have fruit trees planted at the Victory Garden. The trees will be planted on October 5th. There are about 30 volunteers coming from Minnesota to plant trees that day. We will also need volunteers to help plant the trees. There will be a ceremony at 11:00 am that day and this will all be tied into the Annual Harvest Fest which will also be held that day.
- Director Mangold reported that she met with Peter D'Amico, (owner of Newtown Youth Academy), who is trying to build a professional stadium on the Fairfield Hills campus. He has also been looking at other locations in Town. He asked Director Mangold if he paid for bleachers at Tilson Turf Field would Parks and Recreation charge him to hold 8 games per year during May – June. This would be a division 3 soccer team. He would need lights, locker rooms, concessions, etc. The Commission asked how many hours? What nights? Who would be displaced? It was suggested that Mr. D'Amico come to the Commission with his request as a new user group. (They would not be all Newtown players on this team.)

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PARKS – PARKS AND FIELD REPORT

- See report from Assistant Director Samuelson.
- Chairman Marks reported that the new turf at Treadwell is being used and sod is being planted around it. The project was completed on time and on budget.
- Lighting project at the High School – poles have been installed and the project is on course to be completed by the beginning of September on time and on budget.
- The basketball court is done at Treadwell Park.
- Work is being done to finish up the sidewalk project at Treadwell Park.
- Parks and Recreation's part of the work to start the dog park had been completed. We are waiting on the contractor to begin.

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF RECREATION – RECREATION REPORT

- Assistant Director Reggiano reported that Day Camp was fabulous – the last week was packed. Last week retired NBA players came to day camp and the kids loved it. The players also donated a check for \$2,000.00 to go towards the basketball court at Treadwell. Carnival Day was last Thursday, it was great! Both Treadwell and Dickinson Camps had a talent show on Friday. There was also a BBQ that day. The parents and children all left with smiles on their faces and lots of thank yous for the staff. Everything at the camps went well – the training everyone received was implemented and will be added to next year’s training handbook for counselors. There will be new counselor and CIT evaluation forms next year. Assistant Director Reggiano would like to have a training session in December. Assistant Director Reggiano would also like to look at raises for the counselor’s next year – they have not had one in three years and she doesn’t want to lose good counselors. The numbers were up for camp this year. Treadwell 2012 – 335 campers, 2013 – 583 campers, Dickinson 2012 – 237 campers, 2013 - 412 campers. The counselor to camper ratio worked out well this year. A new rain policy was handed out this summer. We gave more refunds this year than usual for camp because some children just didn’t want to leave home. The security guards at the camp were a nice feature but they were really not needed. They will not be requested again for next year. They will talk about maybe having one at Treadwell Camp but if one is used it will reflect in the fee charged for camp. The social workers at camp were an asset – they were very valuable. They would like them again next year but would only request two instead of the three we had this year. Newtown Youth and Family Services will try to pay for them every year.
- We are working to have the fall book out by September 1st.
- Newtown Youth Wrestling has been moved to the Middle School “B” Gym. The wrestling program was housed in the Sandy Hook School gym. The 30’ storage container that goes along with the wrestling program will be painted and have a Newtown logo on it.
- Basketball is trying to incorporate into their fall schedule a spring league (Mon – Fri, March 24 – June 25). They need paperwork to be considered and this should be done right away.
- Scott Larsen’s AAU Basketball team worked out very well.

OLD BUSINESS

1. DOG PARK UPDATE

- See above.

2. EICHLER’S COVE MARINA SURVEY

- Tabled.

3. NEWTOWN YOUTH FOOTBALL AND CHEER - request for temporary lighting

- The Commission agreed that this would not be necessary since the lighting project at the high school will be completed by September.

4. COMMISSIONER’S OUT AND ABOUT

- Tabled.

5. OTHER

- Renovations on the tennis courts at Treadwell could begin this fall. Bids need to go out.

NEW BUSINESS

1. OTHER

- Chairman Marks will reach out to Commissioners to get a facilities tour together.

(m/s/c: Crick-Owen/Barczak) “Motion to adjourn.” The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting ended at 8:09 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Donna Benson



TOWN OF NEWTOWN

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

PARKS AND FIELDS REPORT

TO: Newtown Parks and Recreation Commission,
Amy Mangold, Director

FROM: Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director – Parks

DATE: August 13, 2013

RE: Monthly park update and field report

An incredibly busy summer is winding down with much progress to report. We have selected a new maintainer candidate who will hopefully round out our staff after meeting with Pat Llodra. We have completed many large projects this summer and are planning a few more moving into fall.

The following is a highlight of items completed this past month, aside from our normal day to day tasks.

- Basketball court completion at Treadwell Park with lights.
- Treadwell artificial field replacement complete and open.
- Treadwell tree planting and slope stabilization complete.
- 26 Birdhouses installed at Orchard Hill Nature Center.
- Jimmy Fund field prep and tournament grooming complete.
- Victory garden fencing, and temporary irrigation complete.
- Oakview water service installation complete.
- Fertilization of all athletic fields
- Eichlers cove tree pruning complete.
- Door install complete at FFH shop.
- Trees planted between our property and neighboring property.
- Daily day camp clean up and maintenance.
- Concrete floor at FFH shop to replace wood floor is complete.
- Dog park site work complete, waiting for installation contractor.
- Newtown High School Irrigation vault renovation complete.
- Set up and break down for Newtown Reunion as well as support for Big Time Rush Concert.
- Vandalism repair on baseball field at NHS

Items we have started/continued work on:

- Working with volunteer contractors to complete Peewee field #1.
- Plantings for Dickinson Stream restoration.
- Fall Field lining
- Lighting project at NHS underway, poles are all up, only wiring left.
- Treadwell sidewalk installation 75% complete, will be finished by school opening
- Various fencing and backstop repair work.
- Fall field use meeting and scheduling underway.
- Fall field aeration and over seeding

On the horizon:

- Tennis court replacement at Treadwell Park
- HVAC renovation at FFH shop
- Fun Space replacement

Staff:

- 376 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury/discipline hours were used out of 2080 potential work hours in the past month. This represents a 18% loss in workforce or 1.8 employees per day.