



**TOWN OF NEWTOWN**  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL**  
**BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a special meeting on Tuesday, August 20, 2019. At 5:00 p.m., the Commissioners met with the Board of Selectmen for a site walk at Dickinson Pavilion at 50 Elm Street, Newtown, CT. At 6:00 p.m., the meeting began in the Conference Room, 3 Main Street, Newtown, CT.

**Commissioners Present:** Edward Marks, Linda Hess, Vincent Yanni, Jr., Clinton DePaolo, Rance Thompson

**Commissioners Absent:** Patrick Barczak, Warren Spencer

**Staff Present:** Amy Mangold, Carl Samuelson, RoseAnn Reggiano

**Public Present:**

Newtown Youth Football & Cheer	Gary Poutore (no address) Rich Guman (no address)
Dog Park	Kathryn Simonds, 58 Riverside Road, Sandy Hook, CT 06482
Newtown Pickleball Ambassador	Jan Brown, 15 Lori Lynn Circle, Newtown, CT 06470

Mr. Marks called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. He invited the public to come forward for issues outside of the Capital Improvement Program and Newtown Youth Football, which were scheduled for later in the meeting.

**Public Participation**

Kathryn Simonds spoke representing “Park and Bark.” She wanted to express her gratitude for the lights that were installed at the Dog Park. Ms. Simonds pointed out that the ground entrance to the Dog Park is still incomplete and winter is approaching, so she wanted to make sure it was on Mr. Samuelson’s radar.

Yvonne Landolfi said that the hydrant’s spray feature seems to be malfunctioning. Mr. Samuelson explained that the Dog Park is at the very end of the Fairfield Hills campus, and a pressure reduction valve was installed on the campus to avoid issues of pipes becoming over-pressurized and bursting. A pump could ameliorate this problem. Mr. Marks inquired the cost of a pump, but Mr. Samuelson wasn’t sure. Ms. Simonds commented that only one out of the five water features were in operation. Mr. Samuelson said there was a conscious decision to only use two or three of the water features to reduce the mud. He reported that he had received no complaints about mud this season as a result. Mr. Marks felt that the cost of a pump could outweigh the man-hours of having to constantly go down to adjust the water pressure. Mr. Samuelson agreed and said he would price the pump.

Mr. Marks said fixing the front area of the Dog Park was the responsibility of Public Works, so he would communicate with them to try to get a commitment that it would be done by fall. Ms. Simonds asked about flooding/overflow, and if Parks and Recreation could install larger boulders, a catch basin, or adjust the berm to diverge the water flow into different directions. Mr. Samuelson suggested placing riprap along the brook, but Ms. Reggiano was concerned that dogs might cut their paws if it was too sharp. Mr. Marks encouraged Mr. Samuelson to return with an update

Ms. Reggiano passed around two photos of potential areas for installation of the benches (**Attachment #1**). Ms. Reggiano said she still needs to price them, but she will have them ordered this week.

The Landolfis and Ms. Simonds expressed how grateful they are for the work Parks and Recreation has done to improve the Dog Park.

Jan Brown requested that the nets of the Fairfield Hills pickleball courts be raised to 34 inches in the middle and 36 inches on the sides. She also wondered about lighting the courts at Dickinson, which was discussed at last meeting. Mr. Marks replied that a discussion with First Selectman Rosenthal had taken place, during which Mr. Rosenthal expressed he was not inclined to include pickleball as part of his plan for the coming year. Mr. Rosenthal felt it was too soon after pickleball had been voted down in the referendum, but he had not necessarily made a decision on the matter. Mr. Marks said that in reviewing the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) priorities tonight, the Commission would discuss pickleball infrastructure. Mr. Marks wondered if Ms. Brown had been to the high school pickleball courts, but she said most pickleball players just go to Treadwell. Mr. Marks thought it would be a good idea to bring this up during an upcoming meeting with representatives from the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Mangold pointed out that one of the reasons the pickleball referendum failed may have been that there was not enough time to introduce players to the sport, which Ms. Brown agreed with, stating that the pickleball community is in the process of growing. Ms. Reggiano pointed out that there are tennis lessons in the fall at Dickinson which may be a complication to line courts for pickleball there.

Mr. Marks asked if the staff had reached a consensus as to which pickleball court location would be the focus of Parks and Recreation driven infrastructure improvement. Mr. Samuelson suggested Dickinson, but Ms. Mangold was still holding out for new courts on the Fairfield Hills campus. Mr. Marks requested that the staff discuss this issue, while being sensitive to the needs of tennis players and other residents, and come back next month with a recommendation.

Ms. Brown also pointed out that the portapotties are very remote from the pickleball courts on the Fairfield Hills campus. Mr. Marks stated that they could provide seasonal portapotties by those courts.

### **Acceptance of Minutes**

Mr. Marks tabled the approval of the minutes until next meeting.

### **New Business: Newtown Youth Football Field Usage**

Mr. Samuelson explained that many years ago, Parks and Recreation was trying to move Youth Football off of Hawley's turf field during August, and as such allowed them to use Treadwell. Mr. Samuelson said that he had just recently discovered that Youth Football has been using the back field at the High School as well as Treadwell during August. It is imperative to preserve natural fields. Mr. Samuelson stated that the field use administration policy says the fall sports season begins the Tuesday after Labor Day.

The surcharge being paid for football field usage does not cover the cost of painting the field during August. As such, Mr. Samuelson suggested that Youth Football pay a prorated surcharge for the three weeks in August before the fall season starts.

Rich Guman and Gary Poutore spoke on behalf Newtown Youth Football. Mr. Guman explained that he has many complications scheduling field time, especially as it gets closer to the actual season. Mr. Samuelson asked if they cannot use Treadwell, could they instead use Hawley as opposed to using the back fields of the high school? Mr. Guman said he is purposefully not putting people on Hawley to preserve the field for home games, with Mr. Poutore contributing that the poor lighting at Hawley casts a shadow.

Mr. Poutore explained they are paying \$5-6,000 dollars for the fields, \$8,000 for the temporary lights, and along with other costs they spend up to \$47,000 per season. Mr. Poutore commented that the football fields do not look like the soccer fields, but Mr. Samuelson said that's due to the intensity of football's use. Mr. Marks stressed that the main issue is scheduling, because of the high demand for artificial turf fields.

Mr. Samuelson pointed out that if they are going to be applying a prorated “out-of-season” surcharges to the Youth Football, the same fee structure should be applied to anyone else using the field outside of the season.

Mr. Guman, Mr. Poutore, the Commission went back and forth trying to identify any other field that has lights, goalposts, and proper turf.

Mr. DePaolo asked how much it costs for the football players to register, and Mr. Poutore replied \$330 which includes everything but cleats. The amount of players is around 240. Mr. DePaolo pointed out that prorating the fee for August would increase the cost to join football and therefore reducing the number of families who could afford for their children to participate. Mr. Poutore explained that Youth Football is spending significant money.

Mr. Samuelson has stressed to the Board of Education that getting artificial turf on the back lighted field would mitigate most of the wear and tear that is put on natural turf, but it is unlikely that this will happen.

Mr. Marks stated that he was not in favor of requiring a prorated August surcharge for a season that has been in place for years and years. Ms. Hess suggested using Tilson for some of the practices. Mr. Guman agreed that it was possible to organize the schedule so some practices were at Tilson. Mr. Thompson wondered if smaller kids could be given time on the sensitive fields to reduce the wear and tear, and Mr. Guman appreciated this suggestion as he felt it could be quite effective.

Mr. Marks pointed out that, as Mr. Poutore and Mr. Guman had expressed, starting the practices for the football season in August is a requirement by Shoreline Conference, so the timing cannot be adjusted. Mr. Marks said it is a long term problem that the Commission will be working on over the course of this year in anticipation of next season.

Ms. Reggiano said the cheerleaders have called her for scheduling indoor practice space, but they are considered an outdoor sport since they are technically part of Newtown Youth Football and Cheer. As such, they cannot take priority over the basketball team for indoor practice space.

### **Old Business: Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)**

Ms. Mangold referenced the three projects that Mr. Rosenthal has already approved: Treadwell artificial turf and lighting, Rail Trail - Batchelder Park, and Lake Lillinonah Park improvements. If Parks and Recreation had any other projects they wanted to add to the CIP, they would need to bring them forth to Mr. Rosenthal in a presentation. As such, the Commission set out to prioritize the capital items on their list. Ms. Mangold distributed a list of 11 items that had been cut from the CIP (**Attachment #2**), and Mr. Marks began by asking if there were any projects the Commission did not see on the list that they wanted to be addressed.

Mr. Samuelson pointed out that Ross Carley, Chair of the Fairfield Hills Authority, continues to approach Parks and Recreation to solicit collaboration for putting a band shell in the area where the white houses once were (near the Fruit Trail). The Commission discussed this, but agreed that this concept would be better served by the Cultural Arts Commission and Fairfield Hills Authority, and that Parks and Recreation had enough other projects to work on.

Ms. Reggiano suggested the costs for the Dickinson splashpad could be supplemented by the Day Camp surcharge. Mr. Marks pointed out that he doubted the Town would support two splashpads, so they would be competing with the Community Center, and Mr. Thompson agreed that a splashpad would get approved more quickly there. Ms. Mangold expressed that she has heard feedback from people who are disappointed that there is not a splashpad available at Dickinson. After a discussion about the Community Center’s likelihood of requesting CIP funds for a splashpad, she stated that the Commission should focus on Parks and Recreation’s own projects regardless of what other departments may be doing.

Mr. Marks suggested making the Dickinson Park pavilion renovation the number one priority, putting it in the 2020/2021 fiscal year, and moving Fairfield Hills pickleball courts to 2021/2022 or 2022/2023. Ms. Mangold also pointed out that Eichler's Cove bathrooms are important because a survey showed that many people wanted them. Mr. Marks stressed that the bathrooms is the final thing on the list of the improvements that Parks and Recreation wanted to make to Eichler's Cove, and the Commission agreed that it would be ideal. The cost is around \$250,000 and the Parks and Recreation Department would be funding the project. No bonding is needed and it is already approved.

Mr. DePaolo wondered if there was a way to piecemeal the Maintenance Yard Improvements so that there would be less of a "sticker shock" factor. Mr. Samuelson said that itemizing the improvements could certainly be done, maybe changing the name to "Maintenance Yard Abatement and Regulatory Compliance," and the Commission agreed.

Mr. Marks was contemplating moving the Teen Center renovation up and moving the Dickinson splashpad back, but Ms. Mangold pointed out that Mr. Rosenthal said he didn't want to do any bonding in year 2024/2025. As such, Mr. Marks suggested leaving Lake Lillinonah where it is but not doing bonding, and then moving the Treadwell artificial turf and lighting replacement to year 2025/2026.

Ms. Reggiano suggested changing the name of "splashpad" to "water playground" because what they're actually proposing is on a much grander scale than what most people picture as a "splashpad." The Commission was in agreement.

Mr. DePaolo wondered if the Treadwell playground could last until the 2027/2028, given that a lot of the equipment is outdated enough that parts cannot be replaced. The Commission discussed how important it was to maintain Town parks, even if they are already in better shape than surrounding areas. Mr. Samuelson also pointed out that in the future there is a maintenance budget item (not CIP) for surfacing at Treadwell. The Commission thought getting vendors to give actual quotes for the playground would be beneficial.

The result of the discussion was that the following amendments be made to the Parks and Recreation Department CIP Summary Worksheet (**Attachment #2**):

Move **Dickinson Park Pavilion Renovation** to Fiscal Year **2020/2021**

Move **Fairfield Hills Pickleball** to Fiscal Year **2021/2022**

Change wording from Maintenance Yard Improvements to **Maintenance Yard Abatement and Regulatory Compliance**, and move to Fiscal Year **2022/2023**

Move **Teen Center Renovation** to Fiscal Year **2023/2024**

Move **Lake Lillinonah Park Improvements** to Fiscal Year **2024/2025** and remove bonding

Move **Treadwell Artificial Turf and Lighting Replacement** to Fiscal year **2025/2026**

Change wording from Dickinson Park Splashpad to **Dickinson Park Water Playground**, and move to Fiscal year **2025/2026**

Motion: Mr. DePaolo made a motion to accept the above amendments to **Attachment #2\***, which will be presented to the First Selectman as a ten-year schedule of Capital Improvement Projects for Parks and Recreation. Mr. Yanni seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

\***Attachment #5**, created the morning after the meeting, represents a final draft of this approval.

## **Bikeshare Program**

Mr. DePaolo is working with Ms. Mangold to create a children's bikeshare program for Fairfield Hills (**Attachment #3**). They have researched other programs, though those seem to be mostly geared towards adults. Concerns include: helmets and high visibility vests as costs, scheduling bike usage, adult supervision expectations, and limiting interference with walkers in the area. The lack of a fenced-in area poses an additional challenge. Mr. Marks wondered how this program would be staffed. Mr. Thompson suggested a reservation schedule. Mr. DePaolo said that the rentals could be only on weekdays, with weekend features that are centered on programs such as bike safety lessons. Mr. Yanni suggested the helmet policy should be strictly bring your own. Ms. Mangold and Mr. DePaolo will continue to meet and flesh out the program. The Commission thanked Mr. DePaolo for his efforts.

## **Directors' Reports**

The Commission decided to table the directors' reports, though Ms. Reggiano had a brief announcement. Abelardo Garcia has been hired as the Lake Lillinonah Warden, and he has been doing a good job of regulating and managing the rules of the facility. He has also taken pictures to get the ramp repaired. He emails Ms. Reggiano a quality weekly report. Ms. Reggiano and Ms. Mangold have been very impressed with the work he is doing.

Mr. Samuelson submitted his report in written form (**Attachment #4**).

## **Adjournment**

Motion: Mr Yanni made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 pm. Mr. Marks seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 10, 2019 at 6:00 pm – location to be determined.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Christine O'Neill, Clerk*











Parks and Recreation Commission 8.20.19  
Attachment #2 (1/1)

Town of Newtown  
Department CIP Summary Worksheet  
For the Ten Fiscal Years 2020/2021 to 2029/2030

DEPARTMENT: **Parks & Recreation**

Item #	Capital Item	PROJECT COST - TOTAL / BONDED									
		2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025	2025/2026	2026/2027	2027/2028	2028/2029	2029/2030
Item # 1	Fairfield Hills Pickleball	230,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		230,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Item # 2	Dickinson Park Pavilion Renovation	-	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	200,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Item # 3	Maintenance Yard Improvements	-	-	670,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	670,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Item # 4	Dickinson Park Splashpad	-	-	-	850,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	850,000	-	-	-	-	-	-
Item # 5	Lake Lillinonah Park Improvements	-	-	-	-	500,000	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	500,000	-	-	-	-	-
Item # 6	Treadwell Artificial Turf and Lighting Replacement	-	-	-	-	800,000	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	250,000	-	-	-	-	-
Item # 7	Teen Center Renovation (ask about Phil Clark)	-	-	-	-	-	465,000	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-	465,000	-	-	-	-
Item # 8	Rail Trail -Batchelder Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,400,000	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-	-	1,400,000	-	-	-
Item # 9	Treadwell Park Improvements	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,000,000	-	-
Item # 10	Fairfield Hills Recreation Plan Phase 1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,350,000	-
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,350,000	-
Item # 11	Duplex/Plymouth Hall Renovation (Remediation)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000,000
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10,000,000
Item # 12		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Item # 13		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Item # 14		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Item # 15		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Item # 16		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Item # 17		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
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Item # 18		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL COST OF ALL PROJECTS		230,000	200,000	670,000	850,000	1,300,000	465,000	1,400,000	1,000,000	1,350,000	10,000,000
TOTAL TO BE BONDED		230,000	200,000	670,000	850,000	750,000	465,000	1,400,000	1,000,000	1,350,000	10,000,000



Newtown Park and Recreation Fairfield Hill Children Bike Share

- Programs seem to fall into different categories:
  - Resort rental
  - Private/public rental (i.e. citi-bike in NYC)
  - Track/trail specific rental
  - Public commuting program rental (rent a bike to riding around town)
- A lot of free programs seem to be public education loan programs and college health programs
  - Require some form of home contact
  - We may want to require deposit or license/valuable
  - We may want 18 or older sign out requirement
- Children need helmets in order to ride
  - Can bring from home
  - A lot of programs offer helmets with the bike loan program
- Should we also insist or provide reflective bike vests for visibility?
- Some free loan programs push on the notion of suggested donations to help with helmet maintenance and bike maintenance
  - A lot of bike share programs seem to have a usage fee or a cheaper monthly subscription
  - Can Park and Rec budget handle the cost of maintenance and/or helmets? Bike share sub-committee to help raise funds for a special fund to maintain bikes and provide helmets?
  - Plaque program
    - People can buy bike garage plaques with the money going into a bike gift fund to provide maintenance or helmets
- Children orientated bike programs seem to be centered around bike parks/pump tracks (contained area under supervision)
- Various community centered programs:
  - Redwood City has grant through 2020 to fund their bike activities
  - Germantown, MD has online registration program that requires credit card on file to access free bike use program
    - 2 hours free then \$3/hour up to 24 hours
    - 18+ program (helmet is optional)
  - Georgia State University charges \$1/day
  - Gloucester, NJ offers free program.
    - Need to use electronic lock/app with credit card on file
    - Maintenance fund was initially set up with grant then town assumed funding there-after
- Typical usage limit seems to be 3 hours
  - When signing out should we ask for expected bike time block? (i.e. person only expects 2 hours rather than a full 3)
  - Set a maximum time allowance?
- Most programs start seemingly smaller than intended (Mid-America Regional Council) then scale up as needed. Decreases the amount of maintenance needed and helps program respond to demand

- Release waivers will be needed
- Posted bike rules
  - A signed waiver [that you know/read the rules] as well as several signs posting the rules of riding ("speed limits", good biking practice, expectation of how to behave on the walking trail)
  - Adult accompanying child at all times? (most rental programs require adult with children under 14 at all times)
  - Maybe signs at areas that could be problematic (tops of hills to warn about excessive speed, blind corners to warn of people/animals, warning about areas with cars)



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CARL SAMUELSON  
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PARKS

## **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, 2019

**RE:** Monthly park update and field report

In the past month we have completed the Eichlers ramp as much as possible, completed the landscaping at the Community Center, event set up and break down, removed all of the construction fencing from Tilson field, wrapped up from both day camps and started preparing for fall sports.

We also hosted a very successful annual parks field day this past month with over 180 attendees.

**Dickinson Park:** Tree removal that has been promised for a long time has commenced. Pavilion and camp clean up, as well as buffer zone mowing have all taken place this past month. The softball field lips have been removed and the zip line parts finally came in and were installed.

**Newtown Middle School:** Both baseball and softball fields were weeded and lipped here.

**Orchard Hill:** The poles for the gate have been installed. The gate leafs will be installed as soon as the concrete cures some.

**Lake Lillinonah:** The boat launch has been repaired and pot holes in the parking lot were patched. The property perimeter has been cut back as well.

**Glander Fields:** Glander 2 and 3 has been lipped for fall ball.

Parks and Recreation Commission 8.20.19  
Attachment #5 (1/1)

Town of Newtown  
Department CIP Summary Worksheet  
For the Ten Fiscal Years 2021/2021 to 2029/2030

**PROPOSED PARKS & RECREATION CIP PROJECTS - P & R Commission Approved 08/20/19**

<u>DEPARTMENT:</u>		<u>Parks &amp; Recreation</u>										
		<u>PROJECT COST - TOTAL / BONDED</u>										
<u>Item #</u>	<u>Capital Item</u>	<u>2020/2021</u>	<u>2021/2022</u>	<u>2022/2023</u>	<u>2023/2024</u>	<u>2024/2025</u>	<u>2025/2026</u>	<u>2026/2027</u>	<u>2027/2028</u>	<u>2028/2029</u>	<u>2029/2030</u>	<u>Total</u>
Item 1	Dickinson Park Pavilion Renovation	225,000										225,000
		225,000										225,000
Item 2	Fairfield Hills Pickleball Courts		230,000									230,000
			230,000									230,000
Item 3	Maintenance Yard Abatement & Regulatory Compliance			670,000								670,000
				670,000								670,000
Item 4	Teen Center Renovation (property sale issue)				465,000							465,000
					465,000							465,000
Item 5	Lake Lillinonah Park Improvements					500,000						500,000
						0						0
Item 6	Treadwell Artificial Turf & Lighting Replacement						800,000					800,000
							250,000					250,000
Item 7	Dickinson Park Water Playground						850,000					850,000
							850,000					850,000
Item 8	Rail Trail - Batcheldor Park							1,400,000				1,400,000
								0				0
Item 9	Treadwell Park Playground Replacement								1,000,000			1,000,000
									1,000,000			1,000,000
Item 10	Fairfield Hills Recreation Plan Phase 1									1,350,000		1,350,000
										1,350,000		1,350,000
Item 11	Duplex/Plymouth Hall Renovation/Remediation										10,000,000	10,000,000
											10,000,000	10,000,000
TOTAL COST OF ALL PROJECTS		225,000	230,000	670,000	465,000	500,000	1,650,000	1,400,000	1,000,000	1,350,000	10,000,000	17,490,000
TOTAL TO BE BONDED		225,000	230,000	670,000	465,000	0	1,100,000	0	1,000,000	1,350,000	10,000,000	15,040,000