

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

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

The Parks and Recreation Commission held an in-person meeting on Tuesday, September 14, 2021 with an opportunity for phone – in public participation, in the multipurpose room of the Senior Center, 8 Simpson Street, Newtown, CT

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Clinton DePaolo at 6:10 pm

Present: Clinton DePaolo, Aaron Britton, David Payne, Warren Spencer

Staff Present: Amy Mangold, Carl Samuelson

Absent: RoseAnn Reggiano, Jim Parker, Rance Thompson, Vincent Yanni

Public: Mr. Ehab Farah- 34 West Street, Newtown, CT 06470
Ms. Jenn Padilla- 32 Glen Road, Sandy Hook, CT 06482
Mr. Dan Grossman- 62 Pine Tree Hill Road, Newtown, CT 06470
Ms. Christine Tisi- 1 Megans Circle, Newtown, CT 06470
Ms. Jenn Larkin- 10 Marlin Road, Sandy Hook, CT 06482
Mr. James Twitchell- 4 Rooster Ridge Road, Newtown, CT 06470
Mr. Michael and Kristen Bonacci- 12 Meridian Ridge Drive, Newtown, CT 06470
Mr. Michael Hynd- 53 Mohawk Trail, Sandy Hook, CT 06482
Ms. Laura Ormision- 10 Sleep Hallow Road, Sandy Hook, CT 06482
Ms. Claudia Beard- 19 Cherry Street, Sandy Hook, CT 06482
Mr. Pat McCleary- 10 Main Street, Newtown, CT 06470
Mr. David Stott- 3 River Run Road, Newtown, CT 06470

Public Participation:

- Mr. Ehab Farah, president of the Newtown Tennis Association, came to the meeting to discuss the fees for their event at Treadwell Park on September 18th and 19th. He asked the commission if it would be the same fees as last time. Mr. Clinton DePaolo told him they decided on rates for tennis court rentals would be \$50 a day per court for residents and \$100 a day per court for non-residents. Mr. Farah also told the commission a net at Treadwell has a broken net and expressed his concern for safety for the people who use the court. He also shared that court #5 at Dickinson has a broken bolt that won't allow it to be tightened. Mr. Carl Samuelson told Mr. Farah that the piece to fix the net at Dickinson has been ordered and should be here in a few weeks.
- Ms. Jen Padilla shared her concerns about the trouble with softball and the issues with scheduling. She mentioned that she had come to the commission before almost a year ago to share concerns and has not seen any resolution to those issues. She also shared how upset she was that there are 30+ girls with no place to play because Thunder was denied the waiver for their U11 rec team and said they would be going to another town as a result.
- Mr. Dan Grossman shared that he has been a rec coach for Thunder for a year and that their U8 rec team is 100% residents. He expressed that Thunder offers something unique

in comparison to Babe Ruth Softball. He requested that the Thunder U11 rec team be reinstated for the fall, if not, in the spring.

- Ms. Christine Tisi questioned the 80/20 rule and asked where to find the information for the Babe Ruth Softball rosters, she was told that is FOI and she would just need to ask the office. She also asked if there was any oversight to how the programs are run and how we can make it a better program. She also shared that Newtown Thunder tried filing paperwork with the Babe Ruth Softball association in Connecticut but never heard anything back. Additionally shared that she was a coach at Newtown Babe Ruth Softball at one time and never knew where the money was going and how it was being spent.
- Ms. Jenn Larkin has a daughter that has been with Thunder for the past 4 years and doesn't understand why her team cannot play anymore. Ms. Larkin hopes to come to a resolution with both teams so they can coexist in Newtown.
- Ms. Kristin Bonacci shared that she has been with Thunder for 5 years now and is just confused as to why Thunder was limited.
- Mr. Mike Bonacci expressed his disagreement with the article put out by The Bee and the minutes from the special meeting held on August 26th to discuss the softball issues. He said they were jumbled up and not clear.
- Mr. David Stott phoned into the meeting to show his support of the Newtown Thunder and express how programs like Thunder exist because of the oversight of issues in groups such as Babe Ruth Softball. He shared that he thinks it is run as a monopoly and it leaves families dissatisfied with the sport and causes them to look for different options. He shared that he had this issue with Babe Ruth Baseball as well and had to go to another town because Newtown wouldn't offer a travel baseball team.
- Mr. Patrick McCleary, president of Newtown Babe Ruth Softball, explained that there are reasons why towns only have one Babe Ruth group, one of them being that it is done geographically. He also mentioned that people tend to find other places to play once girls hit age 13 because they want more travel rather than rec. He also told those asking about where the funds go that all their information like tax returns are public information.
- Mr. James Twitchell, president of Newtown Thunder, shared that he and Mr. Pat McCleary have agreed to sit down with Mr. Carl Samuelson and Commissioner Warren Spencer to try to work together to come up with a solution this winter to be ready for the spring. Mr. Twitchell also explained that girl's sports are dwindling and that he would like to try to keep girls in Newtown and try to find common ground between the two groups.
- In response to Mr. Carl Samuelson explained that he is going to have a meeting with Mr. James Twitchell and Mr. Patrick McCleary, along with Commissioner Warren Spencer because of his experience with the issue from Babe Ruth Baseball. He also mentioned they will be creating new bylaws that allow transparency and longevity to the group. The goal is to keep resident teams in Newtown as long as possible, long term.

Acceptance of Minutes:

- July 13, 2021- *Tabled until next month*

- **Acceptance of Minutes:** Commissioner Warren Spencer made a motion to accept the minutes of the August 10, 2021 commission meeting. Commissioner David Payne seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the acceptance of the minutes.
- August 26, 2021- *Tabled until next month*

OLD BUSINESS

- *Softball Discussion:*
 - Mr. Clinton DePaolo explained that both Newtown Thunder and Babe Ruth Softball have components of not meeting the 80% resident threshold to be using fields as surcharge. He then clarified the motions that were made at the special meeting held on August 26th.
 - Mr. Carl Samuelson explained that the Thunder Rec team was denied because it didn't serve a unique purpose.
 - Mr. Aaron Britton stated that the issue is more that families do not want to play with/for Babe Ruth Softball after playing with Thunder for so many years. He went on to open a motion to grant a waiver for the U10 Thunder recreation team, the motion was not seconded and failed.
 - Mr. Warren Spencer explained that the issue is greater than Newtown Thunder and if they allow the variant for an additional rec group it opens more issues with other sports groups as well.
 - Mr. Clinton DePaolo recalled the very similar issue with soccer a few years ago and stated that the commission can only do so much.
 - Ms. Amy Mangold reminded everyone that the field use manual has outlines of what groups need to be an organization.
- *CIP Discussion:* Mr. Clinton DePaolo reported that there aren't going to be any changes to the CIP this year but suggested to start thinking about things that may need to be replaced in the years to come such as the Treadwell Playground and Dickinson Pavilion.
- *Bicycle Playground:* Mr. Clinton DePaolo mentioned that it was still marked out and suggested everyone go take a look at it if they hadn't already. Ms. Amy Mangold reported that she reached out to Ross Carly who is part of the Fairfield Hills Authority and asked if there are any updates on if the revised location is okay so they can move forward with going to Planning and Zoning. There is a Planning and zoning meeting on the 27th of September that Ms. Mangold is trying to get on the agenda for and be able to hear the discussion on if they can move forward with the project. Mr. David Payne suggested that construction wouldn't begin until the spring. Mr. DePaolo also explained that they cannot start fundraising or collecting funds until a location is secure and approved.

NEW BUSINESS

- *Dickinson Visit:* Mr. Clinton DePaolo reported that it was good to see what has been discussed and that they were able to take a look at the pavilion. Mr. DePaolo suggested that the pavilion be added to the CIP list in the future. Mr. Aaron Britton discussed the deterioration of the pavilion and expressed his concerns about camp in the summer and said it is something that needs to be addressed soon. Ms. Amy Mangold discussed the chairman's den in honor of Ed Marks and the time he gave to Parks and Recreation over

the years while serving as chairman. Mr. Carl Samuelson suggested that it be placed in the corner by the volleyball court and the shed at Dickinson.

- *Dickinson Pavilion:* Mr. Clinton DePaolo reported that he spoke with First Selectman Dan Rosenthal about the pavilion who agreed it needs to be repaired. The pavilion gets rented out which provides revenue to the Parks and Recreation Department. There was discussion on whether the pavilion needs a complete renovation or if it just needs repair work. Mr. Carl Samuelson shared that he is looking into having an engineer come to assess and give feedback on what they think would be best. Mr. Samuelson suggested Bennett and Sullivan because they had worked with Parks and Recreation for the pool house, but also said he would look into a variety of service engineers.
- *Temporary Pickleball Courts:* Ms. Amy Mangold shared that she had a meeting with members of the pickleball association Jan Brown, Ed Miklaszewl, Larry Haskel, and First Selectman Dan Rosenthal about requesting to make improvements to the temporary pickleball courts on the Fairfield Hills Campus. Mr. Carl Samuelson created a budget of how much the improvements would cost, totaling \$13,300. Mr. Clinton DePaolo commented that the improvements would be a great gateway to more permanent courts elsewhere on the campus. 2 motions were made regarding the funds that will be used;
 - Commissioner Aaron Britton made a motion to use \$3,000 out of surcharge towards improving the pickleball courts on the Fairfield Hills campus. Commissioner Warren Spencer seconded the motion, all were in favor.
 - Commissioner Aaron Britton made a motion to use \$10,000 from the parks and recreation budget towards improving the pickleball courts on the Fairfield Hills campus, contingent on the pickleball association paying into surcharge through lessons and special events as well as that they put forth \$2,000 to contribute to the improvements. Commissioner David Payne seconded the motion, all were in favor.

Correspondence:

- Ms. Amy Mangold reported that she received an email from Patrick Barczak, a former commission member, regarding the additions being put in at Dickinson playground (*Attachment #1*).
- Ms. Mangold also shared a letter received from Howard Lashers lawyer informing her of his generous inclusion of Newtown Parks and Recreation in his estate plan (*Attachment #2*).

Chairman's Report:

Clinton DePaolo, Chairman Newtown Parks and Recreation

- Mr. Clinton DePaolo didn't have anything to report but expressed a thank you to the commission members for their involvement in Parks and Recreation and commended them for the great job they are doing.

Directors Report

Amy Mangold, Director of Parks and Recreation:

- Ms. Amy Mangold reported that they have extended the summer concert series with a mini fall series on Sundays at Dickinson Park. She told how it has been a great collaboration with the seniors and Natalie Jackson's team. Kate Geerer who is no longer at the front desk, has been kind enough to keep doing the concerts.
- This past weekend was grandparents weekend which was kicked off at Dickinson on Friday with Survivors Swing Band, a visit from Newtown Hook and Ladder and the Newtown Police Department. Sunday was Echoes of Sinatra for the concert.
- The Economic Development and Parks and Recreation will be having the 2nd annual scarecrow contest on the Fairfield Hills Campus this year.
- Ms. Mangold expressed her appreciation for the Lion's Club for the ADA equipment that is being installed at Dickinson playground along with the support of Selectman, Legislative Counsel, and Board of Finance. It will be a great addition to the Fun Space and she is looking forward to working on the project.
- The Thomas Capozziello memorial stone was unveiled at the Skate Park on Saturday, September 4th along with the repairs and additions to the park. Ms. Mangold thanked the park crew for helping get the park ready and for the generous donation from the Capozziello family.
- There was also a ceremony held for suicide prevention on Sunday, September 5th. Selectman Ms. Maureen Crick Owen asked Ms. Mangold to thank the department for their support with planting and caring for the tree.
- Ms. Mangold reported that they have decided on a general area to put the chairman's corner in at Dickinson Park, by the volleyball court and white shed. The area was scoped out at the Dickinson tour prior to the meeting.
- Ms. Mangold reported that she received the \$25,000 funds from the summer enrichment program grant and put it into the 175 account. The funds are a great supplement to cover costs for recreation and additional programming.

Assistant Director's Reports:

RoseAnn Reggiano, Assistant Director of Recreation

- None

Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director of Parks:

- See Attachment #3 & #4

Commissioners out and about:

- None

Motions:

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- Commissioner Aaron Britton made a motion to use \$3,000 out of surcharge towards improving the pickleball courts on the Fairfield Hills campus. Commissioner Warren Spencer seconded the motion, all were in favor.
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Adjournment of Meeting: The meeting was adjourned at 8:34 pm

The next regular meeting is scheduled of Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at 6:00 pm in the multi-purpose room located at 8 Simpson Street, Newtown, CT unless changed to virtual due to COVID restrictions.

Submitted by,

Victoria Weimann, Clerk



Attachment #1

Amy Mangold <amy.mangold@newtown-ct.gov>

Playground photos

1 message

Patrick Barczak <patrick.barczak@snet.net>

To: Amy Mangold <amy.mangold@newtown-ct.gov>

Fri, Sep 10, 2021 at 3:42 PM

Hi Amy,

How are you and hope all is well with you and your family?

Saw the article about the new additions to Dickinson playground and glad that will happen soon.

Happened to take a walk at a park near our townhouse in Canandaigua and saw this banner for a new playground that is being put in up here. Place is huge and seems to be along same idea of the new Dickinson additions.

Hopefully you can see some of the details and maybe they will provide some ideas for the future.

BTW, this park we walked also has a small outdoor fitness set-up from Life Trail. Will try to send some pictures of that next time I am there.

Enjoying my subscription to the Bee and pass along my regards to everyone.

Regards,

Pat

Sent from my iPhone

3 attachments



image0.jpeg
130K

image1.jpeg
168K

RICKY J. WEISS, P.A.
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IN
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ADDITIONAL OFFICES:
AVENTURA
BOCA RATON
WESTON

September 9, 2021

Newtown Parks and Recreation
Camp Scholarship Fund
c/o Amy E.W. Mangold
3 Primrose Street,
Newtown, CT 06470

Re: Estate Planning for Howard Lasher

Dear Ms. Mangold:

I represent Howard Lasher with regards to his estate planning. Mr. Lasher has asked me to advise you that he has included your charitable organization in his estate plan.

His gift to your organization will take effect upon his death.

Please contact me with any questions. Thank you for your consideration.

Very truly yours,


Ricky J. Weiss

cc: Mr. Howard Lasher

TOWN HALL SOUTH
3 MAIN STREET
NEWTOWN, CT 06470
TEL. (203) 270-4340
FAX (203) 270-4333



Attachment #3
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: September 14, 2021

RE: Monthly park update and field report

We hosted a very successful field day last month in conjunction with CRPA with over 120 attendees. Fall sports have begun, the pool is now closed for the season. Fall aeration and seasonal cultural practices have begun. We completed installing new door hardware at various locations to replace failed key pads. The guys helped cut up and remove debris so that the construction for the permanent memorial could begin.

Dickinson Park: Vandals once again struck here and broke into the camp room. They took all of the paint used for crafts and painted the bathrooms, pavilion, asphalt and camp shed itself. The vandals were caught and arrested however over 56 labor hours were required to clean up and repair the facility.

The skate park renovation is complete. Our staff completed the landscaping and seeding once American Ramp Company completed the concrete work.

Newtown Middle School: Fall sports have begun. The required fields were laid out and painted for the season. Fall fertility has been applied here. The emergency access trail was cut here as we normally do seasonally.

Orchard Hill: No new news here. Regular mowing and cleanup on a regular basis continues.

Lake Lillinonah: The lake has had drastic highs and lows in the past month due to forecast storms and excessive rain. All of the driftwood near the ramp, as well as the wood from the dead Ash tree has been removed.

Oakview: Fall field lining has been completed. Some of the hedges have been pruned here with more to go.

Tilson Field: Field Turf and Liberty landscapes will be on site tomorrow to finally complete

the depression that formed after the resurfacing.

Attachment #4

Treadwell Soccer/Softball: Fields are lined for fall sports and in good shape.

Glander Fields: The dugouts here are complete. Fall ball has begun. These fields are in good shape and ready for play.

Liberty Fields: Fields are all set for fall softball. Some fencing repairs are needed on upper liberty.

Walnut Tree: Fall fertility has been completed and the field is ready for fall use. The portable backstop was removed from here for use at Watertown 2.

Fairfield Hills: We set up and broke down for movie night. The Holley bushes were all pruned/hedged. The pickle ball courts have been taken down and put back for various campus events. Some dead trees have been removed here. We have cut inside and outside of some fencing for prospective investors, State water inspections and other campus events. A new cross country route was laid out and cut for the BOE. The new bicycle playground location was marked out.

NHS Fields: All of the fields have been laid out and lined for fall sports. Regular mowing and grooming continues here. These fields are open and in good shape and ready for fall sports.

Sandy Hook School: The field here has been laid out for fall sports, otherwise no new news here.

Hawley School Fields: The emergency evacuation trail was cleared here for the start of the school year. The football and baseball fields have been laid out for fall sports. Weekly lining mowing and grooming will continue here through the fall.

Eichlers Cove Marina: A lot of driftwood has been removed which gets caught in the docks following big storms. The swim ropes were also reset following the storms. The lifeguard chairs will be removed for the season soon.

Dog Park: The Girl Scouts are having an on-site work day here on Thursday afternoon. The will be hanging the holders soon after. The kiosk was renovated and a new hand sanitizing station was installed here. The water valve was replaced on one of the fountains here.

Treadwell Park: The pool is closed for the season. We have begun pressure washing and sanitizing playground equipment here as well as adding certified playground mulch, as we do seasonally. We had removed the pool and tennis shade structure canopies prior to the forecast Hurricane Henri, which were put back up immediately after

Pole Bridge Preserve: No new news here

Watertown Field: These fields are all set for fall ball. We have removed the construction fencing and put a temporary portable backstop at Watertown 2 so we can open the field. We will install a permanent backstop here as soon as prices moderate some.

Staff:

- 176 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury/discipline hours were used out of 2000 potential work hours in the past month. This represents a 8.5% loss in workforce.