

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

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a regular meeting on Tuesday, February 14, 2017 in the conference room located at 3 Main Street in Newtown, CT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Marks, at 6:03 pm.

Present: Edward Marks, Patrick Barczak, Linda Hess, Warren Spencer, Vincent Yanni, Jr., PJ Yochum

Absent: Maureen Crick Owen

Staff Present: Amy Mangold, Carl Samuelson

Staff Absent: RoseAnn Reggiano

Public: Peter Cloudas, *The Trail Crew*; Cyntea Conway, *The Trail Crew*; Dylan Thomas, *The Trail Crew*; Paula Burton, *NEMBA*; Dee Davis, *President Newtown Bridle Lands*; Linda Zukauskas, *Voices*; Kendra Bobowich, *The Newtown Bee*

Public Participation: Mr. Cloudas from *The Trail Crew* came before the commission to introduce himself and his partner Mark Lurie and their initiative to implement a new program called the Trail Crew. Mr. Cloudas explained that there are many trails in Newtown that need work and ongoing general maintenance. Their goal at this time is to get the word out to the community and recruiting members that are interested in getting involved in a long term trail maintenance program. Mr. Cloudas described to the commission how the word intersectionality is used to describe the goal of The Trail Crew. Intersectionality is a map of many organizations with multiple agendas and creating an overlapping and interdependent system of shared interests. Mr. Cloudas has been meeting with many commissions to discuss possible Intersectionality. They want to work with different organizations that want to work with open space. The vision of the Trail Crew would be, to be available to these organizations that are interested in working on trails and help meet their goals. Chairman Marks stated that P&R has tried several times to get together trail sub committees and after some time these groups have lost momentum. Mr. Marks stated that the commission is very supportive of this idea and would be willing to work with The Trail Crew and offer resources if it is something that is part of the P&R commission vision. Mr. Marks stated that the commission is looking for a trail friendly environment. See *The Trail Crew* attachment

Ms. Dee Davis, President of Newtown Bridle Lands, came before the commission to discuss the association's vision. Newtown Bridle Lands Association preserves, protects and maintains riding and hiking trails in the community. Ms. Davis explained to the commission that the association is very concerned that Cherry Grove Farm on the market for sale and the possible impact new buyers could have on the trail system. Ms. Davis told the commission that every year for 39 years Newtown Bridal holds their annual Pumpkin Hunter Pace in October, with up to 300 horses from all over the Northeast, that come to race. Ms. Davis is concerned that if Cherry Gove Farm sells it will have an impact on the trails around the farm.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Commissioner Patrick Barczak moved to accept the Minutes from the January 10, 2017 Commission Meeting. Commissioner Vincent Yanni, Jr. seconded. Chairman Edward Marks noted a correction under *Acceptance of Minutes*: in second sentence the work Busniess was corrected to Business. A correction was noted under *Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director of Parks*: under the 5th bullet, the sentence was corrected to: At Treadwell, the staff is currently freshening up bathroom and locker room paint as well as servicing the pool filtration equipment. All voted in favor of the amended minutes.

Old Business:

- *Budget:*

The budget has already gone before the BOS. The capital budget was reduced from \$196,000.00 to \$136,000.00. This includes the elimination of the skate park project. In addition, the BOS moved \$44,000.00 out of P&R contractual services budget to Fairfield Hill Authority budget to cover the maintenance expenses at Fairfield Hills campus, like the mowing of the campus. P&R will still manage the mowing contract, but the expense will come out of Fairfield Hills Authority budget.

P&R is also still pushing for an additional maintainer. A concern that the commission has is that if the additional maintainer is not approved that the money goes back into the capital budget where it was taken from and not just cut from the overall budget. The next step is for the budget to go before the BOF on Thursday, February 16th. Assistant Director of Parks, Carl Samuelson explained to the commission that in 2008, P&R had justified the need for an additional maintainer and was not filled because of a hiring freeze. Mr. Samuelson went on to say that 16 items have been added to the parks department responsibilities since that maintainer had been approved and then been cut from the budget in 2008. Items added: Newtown Hook & Ladder, skate park, Dodgingtown Fire Department, Flat Swamp Cemetery, full management at Eichler's Cove, Victory Garden, Newtown Animal Control, new Ambulance Garage, Dog Park, Fun Space, Fairfield Hills Trails, Sandy Hook Donations (planting donated trees), bench installations and maintenance. With more activity at Fairfield Hills it has increased the need for more to be done at FFH, plus any town requests. Mr. Samuelson stated that the parks department has been able to streamline with more efficient equipment, but the capital keeps getting cut, so unable to get more efficient equipment and the current equipment is aging. The average age of the truck fleet is 15 years old. Mr. Samuelson feels that he doesn't have the staff or labor hours to keep the facilities as nice as they once were. BOS is supportive of an additional maintainer.

- *Community Center:*

Director Amy Mangold received an email from Geralyn Hoerauf with the advisory committee for the Community Center. The email was a team update from the past month. The project team is very involved with meeting with many facets regarding surveying, soil analysis, wetlands, excavating, etc. on all the locations that have been identified. Design teams are continuing to develop schematic designs, including potential location for senior center and exterior amenities. Project team expects to present a space program tabulation, alternative design concept more fully develop master plan to the BOS presentation on March 6, 2017. Advisory Committee will be meeting on February 24th to prepare for March 6th presentation.

- *Surcharge:*

Mr. Marks stated that the Tilson Field project is going to be approximately \$500,000.00, which is scheduled to be built the end of 2018. Mr. Marks requested from Finance Director Bob Tait a report of what was in the surcharge account and as of today there is \$388,000.00.

There was also discussion regarding Glander Field. There was some confusion on what was going to be covered and completed within the budget. Babe Ruth thought the entire field would be fenced and currently it is Fenced down the base line only. Babe Ruth has a list of things they would like to do, including: exploring putting in covered area (dug outs), score board and new batting cages to support 3 fields. In all, the expenses total \$54,000.00. Babe Ruth will look into paying for half, if they know it will be a shared expense.

Mr. Samuelson stated that there was an approval for \$10,000.00 from surcharge to work on the irrigation system at the back of the Middle School to run to softball field.

Mr. Marks wants to discuss surcharge again at next month's meeting when there is a better idea of incoming surcharge amounts and projections and then possibly take action.

New Business: None

Correspondence: None

Director's Report

Amy Mangold, Director of Parks and Recreation:

- Ms. Mangold reported that the Skating Party at Dickinson still went on successfully, amiss the lack of ice due to the warm weather. There was a DJ and Lucy the polar bear was popular again this year.
- The Little Miss Valentine dance was cancelled for Friday, February 10th, due to the schools closing for the evening, because of snow. The Dance is rescheduled for Friday, February 17th at the Sandy Hook School. This is a first time event for P&R and over 40 couples have purchased tickets.
- Spring and Summer brochure is due to be released on March 1, 2017.
- Ms. Mangold and Mr. Samuelson attended a training session through Tom Irwin, "*How To Think Like a CEO*". It was a seminar on good leadership and professional development tools. Tom Irwin is one of our vendors.
- Ms. Mangold and Ms. Reggiano went to visit the Ridgefield community center. They met with Paul Roche, Director of the community center and Robin Matthews, Assistant Director to learn more about the structure of a community center. The Advisory Group recommended that the Parks and Recreation Department research how a community center is staffed and runs.
- Ms. Mangold, Mr. Samuelson and Mr. John Moore went to visit the head of the maintenance at the Ridgefield Community Center to learn how the department was structured and study some of the day to day tasks.
- Ms. Mangold is a member of the Prevention Council and wanted to let the commission know that the council is sponsoring a workshop for parents on underage drinking and vaping in April. The Prevention Council is also going to do a workshop for seniors on opioids, because there is an increase in seniors becoming addicted to painkillers. There is also a free narcan training, which will provide a free kit to attendees.
- Ms. Mangold met with Jennifer Johnston with the Cultural Arts Commission. The Cultural Arts Commission is changing the format of the Arts Festival this year. They will be adding a stage for the bands and a large tent for vendors.

Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director of Parks:

See attachment

- Dickinson Park parking top coat is done. They were able to add an additional 4 parking spaces in the front lot.
- The maintainers continue to work on the retaining wall at Treadwell. With the paving of Treadwell, they will be able to widen the parking lot and add an asphalt sidewalk, so visitors will not have to walk through the parking lot.
- The maintainers are repairing a broken pipe underground at the parks garage.
- Mr. Samuelson stated that he facilitated a Field Use meeting today with the spring sports organizations. Matt Memoli, Director of Athletics attended the meeting and gave a brief overview of the High School sports and school field needs and usage for the spring.

Commissioners out and about: None

Motion:

Commissioner Warren Spencer made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 pm. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Linda Hess, which was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14, 2017 at 6:00 pm at 3 Main Street, Newtown, CT in the conference room.

Submitted by,

Gabriella Chernoff, clerk

The Trail Crew

The Trail Crew is (will be) a volunteer group of woodland trail users in the Newtown, CT area.

The group's mission is to:

- 1) Maintain and care for existing woodland trails responsibly;
- 2) Coordinate future trail building with appropriate landowners & regulatory authorities;
- 3) Engage legal trail building in a sustainable manner;
- 4) Discourage illegal trail building;
- 5) Advocate for responsible shared trail and land use;
- 6) Promote sustainable use of the environment; and,
- 7) Educate about shared access and use.

Areas and trails of focus for the group are:

- Upper Paugussett State Forest
- Lower Paugussett State Forest
- Newtown Trailway (aka Al's Trail)
- Rocky Glen State Park

Use of these areas promotes appreciation of the natural environment within the community. And, **Creating a trail system that attracts people to Sandy Hook will add to our prosperity.** But, the bottom line is, as human use of the forest land expands so does the negative aspect of our use. Trails become worn, and then water channels on trails and erodes the forest-scape, redirecting water away from vernal pools that are left short of ample water to support the annual rebirth of creatures and vegetation. It is our hope that maintaining trails will also lead to the preservation of the woodland forest scape and the natural interdependency web of forest life.

Short Term Goal:

- Build Membership - Find us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/TheTrailCrew/>
- Get Press coverage – Newtown Bee
- Have meeting with local interest groups
 - WestCOG (Western Connecticut Council of Government)
 - ✓ FC-NEMBA (Fairfield County chapter of New England Mountain Bike Association)
 - ✓ NBLA (Newtown Bridle Land Association)
 - ✓ S.H.O.P. (Sandy Hook Organization for Prosperity)
 - Newtown Chamber of Commerce
 - Newtown Forest Association
 - CT-DEEP managers
 - ✓ CFPA (Connecticut Forest and Parks Association)
 - Others (Scouts, etc)
- Have meeting with Newtown Government (rejuvenate the town Trails committee)
 - ✓ Parks and Recreation (Amy Mangold)
 - Planning and Land Use (Rob Sibley)

Introduction:

- Thank you for giving space on the agenda
- I promise I will take only a few minutes
- My name is Peter Cloudas and I am trying to assemble a Trail Crew

Intersectional

- All organization have a mission: to move from A to B
- Often individual mission cross
- **in-ter-sec-tion-al-i-ty** -the interconnected nature of agendas creating an overlapping and interdependent systems of shared interests. This view allows for broader solutions that address multiple agendas simultaneously.
- In more simpler words... we recognize we have common interests and we help each other advance toward the common interests
- The Trail Crew mission shares a common interest of prosperity for our community

What is the Trail Crew (what am I trying to do):

I am working with a Mark Lurie and others to gather people interested in helping to care for and maintain trails in the woodland areas of Newtown

How does this relate to ParknRec

- Create a trail system attracts people to use parks and open space
- Trails good way to get community engagement.
- A Good trail system will attracts people to Newtown
- Provide benefit to businesses in town

How might the Trail Crew help ParknRec

- Provide manpower to improved trail system in town parks and open space
- Pump Track for one of the parks
- Bridle Trail connect to FFD Hills to Hawleyville and eventually to Danbury
- Bridle Trail north through the vineyard toward Upper Paugusset
- Rail trail connection to Pequonnock River Trail in Trumbull

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CARL SAMUELSON
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PARKS

*Attachment
#2*

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: February 14, 2017

RE: Monthly park update and field report

The crew has been making progress on projects although recent rounds of ice and snow have kept everyone busy plowing and moving snow.

Dickinson Park: The parking lot work has been suspended here until the spring. Only the finish course of asphalt remains on the back parking lot.
The ice rink has been opened when weather allows.

Orchard Hill: No new news here.

Lake Lillinonah: No new news here.

Glander Fields: No new news here.

Liberty Fields: Fields here are quiet for the winter. The meadows will be cut as soon some of the snow is gone, assuming the ground is still frozen.

Oakview: We were able to apply a second wintergreen application. We will be overseeding here as early as possible. We were also able to get the burlap protection in place for the boxwood hedge.

Tilson Field: No new news here.

Treadwell Soccer/Softball: These fields are quiet for the winter.

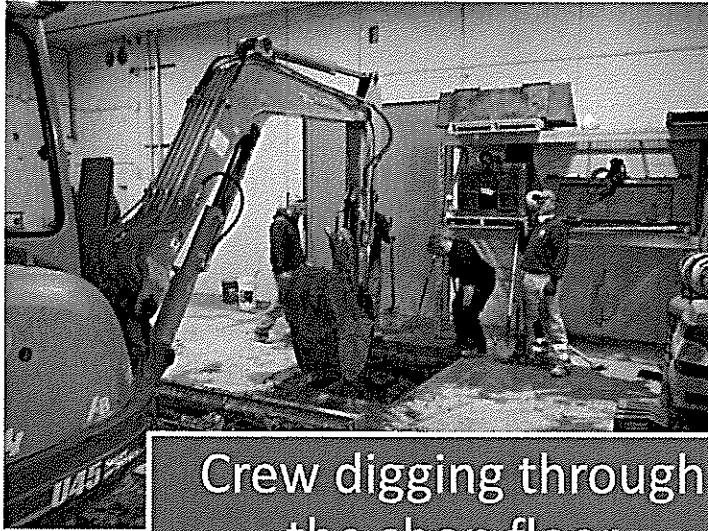
Walnut Tree: Things are quiet for the winter here.

Treadwell Park: We are currently working on the retaining wall at the basketball court. The wall will greatly allow for a wider parking area as well as eliminate the erosion issues associated with the basketball court.

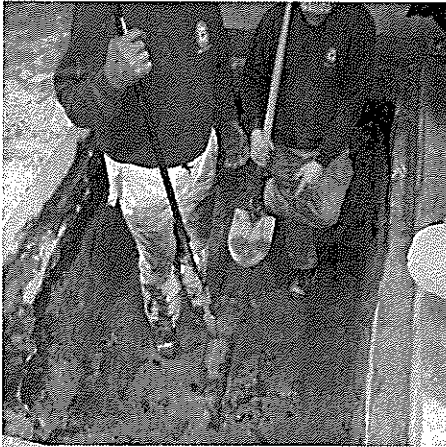
We are waiting on parts to complete the pool pump rebuilds.



Fairfield Hills: The ice skating rink is open here and will be as long as weather allows. Bathroom and locker room renovations continue at the shop. A failed cast iron drain line beneath our maintenance building was located and repaired.

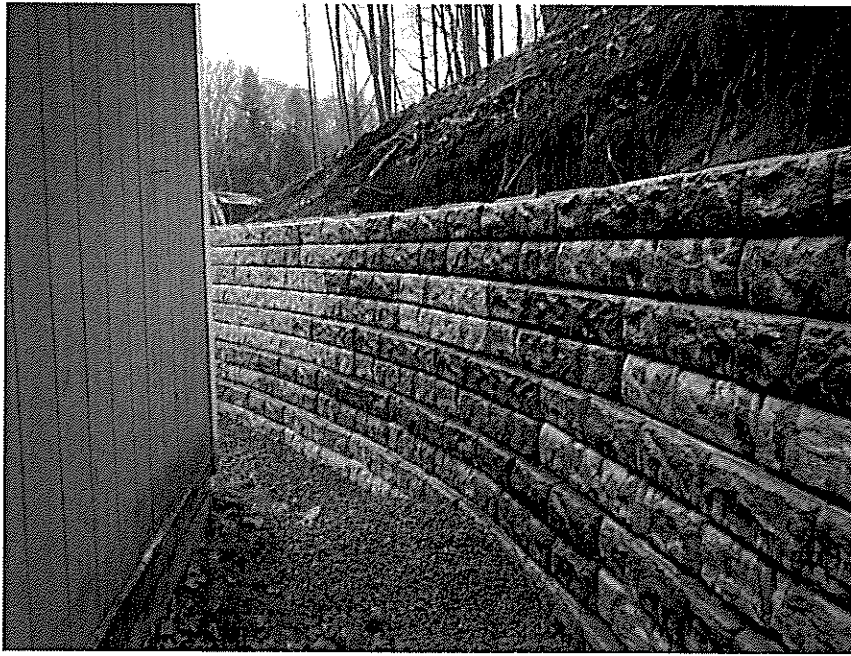


Crew digging through
the shop floor



Damaged area of pipe found

Eichlers Cove Marina: Extensive grading and retaining wall work has been taking place, although the recent heavy snow will stop progress for a while.



NHS Fields: Wintergreen has been applied here. A second application will go out if we have open turf later this winter, but all is quiet for now.

Dog Park: Things are quiet for the winter.

Staff:

- 168 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury/discipline hours were used out of 1920 potential work hours in the past month. This represents a 8.75% loss in workforce.