

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
APPROVED MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, JUNE 21, 2023
REGULAR MEETING
VIA INTERNET & CONFERENCE CALL
6:30 P.M.

JOIN ZOOM MEETING

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87486708741>

Meeting ID: 874 8670 8741

Passcode: 442684

A Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, June 21, 2023 via the Internet on Zoom.

In attendance were:

Commissioners: Paul Newman, Chair
Melanie Hollas, Vice Chair
Angela Adetola
Jessica Katz
Michael Tedder

Staff: Matthew Quiñones, Director of Operations
Kevin Murray, Director of Parks & Recreation
Lesley Capp, Assistant - Parks & Recreation Commission

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Newman called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m. and introduced the Commission Members and staff present.

Mr. Newman introduced the first item on the agenda.

- **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION:** Each individual requesting to speak shall send a Chat Message to the Chair stating their name and address for the record. Public participation comments shall be limited to 3 minutes.

There was no one present who wished to speak.

- Review of the May 17, 2023 Regular Meeting Draft Minutes.¹

Ms. Hollas mentioned items discussed at the May 17, 2023 meeting which she requested follow-up at this meeting:

1. Under the Public Participation, there was an email noted from Toni DeCarlo, President Soundview Manor Property Owners Association, which Mr. Newman stated he would send to all the Commissioners and make part of the public record. Mr. Newman stated he would make sure it was sent out.

¹ Video Time Stamp - 00:00:56

2. The Cummings Park tennis court conversion to pickleball: The approval of the conversation was made with the condition Mr. Murray report on the tennis court & pickleball court usage at Cummings Park this meeting.
3. Field Policy Manual: There was discussion at the May 17, 2023 meeting about how the Recreation Department deals with inclement weather with regard to natural grass and turf fields. Ms. Hollas stated her understanding from that conversation was there would be a revision to the Field Policy Manual noting there would be an exception to turf fields and they would remain open so there would not be any confusion.

Ms. Katz also mentioned that it would also apply to softball and baseball fields.

Mr. Murray agreed and stated he would make the revisions to the Field Policy Manual.

Mr. Newman confirmed with Ms. Hollas that there are to be no changes to the Draft Minutes; just items for follow-up. Ms. Hollas responded, yes.

Ms. Hollas made a motion to approve the May 17, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes with the follow-up items for discussion at this meeting.

Seconded by Mr. Newman

Unanimously Approved

(Mr. Tedder was ineligible to vote as he left the May 17, 2023 meeting early and Ms. Adetola was ineligible to vote as she was absent at the May 17, 2023 meeting.)

SPECIAL EVENTS:

- Bonnie Kim Campbell, Board of Representatives - District #5 - ***Take Back Carwin Park Summer Music Series - Kool Riddums (Reggae Vibes) - Tuesday, July 25, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Carwin Park*** - Set-up Begins at 4:30 p.m. and Clean-up Ends at 9:00 p.m. - 100 Total Participants.²

Ms. Campbell presented the applications for both events in Carwin Park and answered questions from the Commission.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Adetola made a motion to approve Take Back Carwin Park Summer Music Series - Kool Riddums (Reggae Vibes) to be held on Tuesday, July 25, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Carwin Park.

Seconded by Mr. Tedder

Unanimously Approved

- Bonnie Kim Campbell, Board of Representatives - District #5 - ***Take Back Carwin Park Summer Music Series - Rhythm & Blues Performance - Tuesday, August 8, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Carwin Park*** - Set-up Begins at 4:30 p.m. and Clean-up Ends at 9:00 p.m. - 100 Total Participants.

After a brief discussion, Ms. Adetola made a motion to approve Take Back Carwin Park Summer Music Series - Rhythm & Blues Performance to be held on Tuesday, August 8, 2023 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Carwin Park.

Seconded by Mr. Tedder

Unanimously Approved

- Mohamed Uddin - ***Bengali Community Celebration - Sunday, July 2, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Cove Island Park Pavilion*** - Set-up Begins at 9:00 a.m. and Clean-up Ends at 8:00 p.m. - 40 Total Participants.³

² Video Time Stamp - 00:05:35

³ Video Time Stamp - 00:10:25

Mr. Uddin presented the application and answered questions from the Commission.

After some discussion, Mr. Newman made a motion to **DENY** the Bengali Community Celebration to be held on Sunday, July 2, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. at Cove Island Park due to this event being scheduled during the busy 4th of July weekend.

Seconded by Ms. Adetola

Unanimously Approved

- Scott Conn - **5K Run/Walk for Austin - Saturday, November 18, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Cove Island Park** - Set-up begins at 8:00 a.m. and Clean-up Ends at 12:00 p.m. - 100 Total Participants.⁴

Mr. Conn presented the application and answered questions from the Commission.

Mr. Tedder made a motion to approve the 5K Run/Walk for Austin to be held on Saturday, November 18, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Cove Island Park.

Seconded by Ms. Adetola

Unanimously Approved

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Michael Orgera, President - Girls Softball League:** Proposal to install new restrooms at Troy Field in Cove Island Park.⁵

Mr. Orgera made a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

After considerable discussion, it was decided to **TABLE** this item for vote to the July 19, 2023 meeting in order to investigate the possibility of the Girls Softball League signing an agreement with regard to maintenance of the restrooms. Director Quiñones stated he would work with Mr. Orgera and the City of Stamford Legal Department on a potential operating agreement stating if the Girls Softball League does not want to or can no longer maintain the restrooms they would revert to property of the City and would be open for public use. Also, to inquire if Board of Representatives approval is required.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Parks Strategic Plan:** Matthew Quiñones, Director of Operations, City of Stamford and Tricia Martin, Associate Principal, Local Office Landscape and Urban Design, LLC.⁶

Director Quiñones made brief comments and introduced Tricia Martin, Local Office Landscape and Urban Design, LLC.

Ms. Martin, along with Chrysothemis Kouloumentas, Local Office Landscape and Urban Design, LLC and Sam Savin, Trust for Public Land, made a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

- **Policy, Rules, Guidelines & Vision for Stamford Parks (**TABLED from the May 17, 2023 Meeting**):** Review and approval of revisions to the Parks & Recreation Commission Policies & Procedures (6.3 Health Department) as presented and discussed at the April 19, 2023 meeting.⁷

After some discussion, the Commission agreed to not make any language changes to Section 6.3 - Health Department and to discuss edits Ms. Hollas suggested as per the attached list at the July 19, 2023 meeting.

⁴ Video Time Stamp - 00:20:25

⁵ Video Time Stamp - 00:26:10

⁶ Video Time Stamp - 00:59:32

⁷ Video Time Stamp - 02:23:30

TOURNAMENTS:

- No Tournaments.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- No Correspondence or as may properly be introduced before the Commission.

STAFF REPORTS:

- Kevin Murray, Director of Parks & Recreation: Parks & Recreation Update.

The following Staff Report was submitted and discussed by Mr. Murray:⁸

[Begin Report]

- Memorial Day has officially opened the City of Stamford park season.
- Parks Department has been fully staff with thirty-five (35) seasonals assigned to parks and routes for the 2023 season.
- Beach/Park Attendants Program is going well with Laz Parking enforcing quality-of-life and park rules and regulations.
- Cubeta Stadium bleachers have been upgraded.
- Bocci League agreement has been sent to the league for acceptance and signatures.
- New financial system Oracle end-of-year spending: Meeting with staff to end fiscal year for June 30, 2023 and open new fiscal year July 1, 2023.
- June 30, 2023 City fireworks are scheduled and meeting internally with Operations. We have a scheduled call on June 21, 2023 and a site meeting on June 28, 2023 to go over all plans. DJ/Sound Company and Grucci Fireworks contracts have been finalized.
- Dorothy Heroy baseball dugouts will get an upgrade with securing the dugouts and new paint job.
- Scalzi Hockey and pickleball court project has been delayed because of overgrowth that staff removed. Also having water issues in certain areas. Therefore, contractor will resume this week until completion.
- Awaiting price proposal for Cummings two (2) bay tennis courts to realign for six (6) dedicated pickleball courts for the standalone pickleball courts.
- Recreation Summer Camps sites open Monday, June 26, 2023: All 7-week programs are at full capacity and staffed.
- Dorothy Heroy Pool opens Saturday, June 24, 2023 for the season.
- Lifeguards for Beaches/Pool: Currently have thirty-five (35) certified lifeguards and working to get up to forty (40) for schedule coverage and rotations.
- Beach Volleyball started June 5, 2023: Ninety-six (96) teams at Cummings Beach.
- Summer baseball/softball schedules have started. All-star competition will begin this weekend and continue through early July.
- Cummings Park gate closure at 10:00 p.m. off Shippan Avenue started on May 28, 2023: All three (3) gates will be closed daily which includes the quiet zone at 8:00 p.m.; Soundview entrance at 9:00 p.m. and last the Gate off Shippan Avenue at 10:00 p.m. Park has been getting cleared daily. This is an effort to support the ongoing noise issues we have seen.
- FY 7/1/22-6/20/23 Recreation Department Revenue collected \$1,802,780.29 to-date; thus we are up in comparison in the amount of \$173,656.00 from FY 7/1/21-6/20/22 where \$1,629,124.34 was collected.
- Terry Conner Rink (TCR) summer skating camps opened Monday, June 20, 2023 with sixty (60) campers.
- TCR roof bids are in; awaiting bid award.

⁸ Video Time Stamp - 02:34:40

- TCR HVAC cooling tower to be bided out with remainder of available funding. Working with Engineering Department.

[End Report]

The Commissioners asked Mr. Murray questions regarding the following:

- Off-leash dogs at Kosciuszko Park.
- Hill cutting at Scofieldtown Park.
- Update on Barrett Park.

Doug Edwards - Pickleball Usage Update:⁹

Mr. Edwards made a presentation on his findings of tennis court and pickleball court usage and answered questions from the Commission.

DISCUSSION:

➤ Parks & Recreation Commission Strategic Goals for 2023/2024.¹⁰

Mr. Newman made some brief comments and was agreed by the Commissioners to **TABLE** this discussion to the July 19, 2023.

➤ Update of Parks & Recreation Commission Strategic Goals for 2022/2023 as follows:¹¹

- Mr. Newman and Ms. Hollas: Friends Groups.
- Ms. Hollas: Invasive Species initiative & RFP Update.
- Mr. Tedder and Ms. Katz: Foundation and the City website.
- Mr. Tedder: Scofieldtown Park Dog Park.

➤ Application and Waiver Agreement for volunteer groups to work in the City parks.

The Commission discussed the Strategic Goals for 2022/2023 specifically the Scofieldtown Park Dog Park and the Parks Foundation.

Mr. Newman called for any final comments.

Ms. Hollas asked that there be better communication from Mr. Newman to the Commissioners so they could be more informed about items for upcoming meetings and issues in the parks.

There was some conversation about how to disseminate information amongst the Commission.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Tedder made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Ms. Adetola and the vote was carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Newman adjourned the meeting at 9:54 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lesley Capp
Assistant to the Parks & Recreation Commission

⁹ Video Time Stamp - 02:47:40

¹⁰ Video Time Stamp - 03:00:34

¹¹ Video Time Stamp - 03:03:30

June 27, 2023

These proceedings were recorded on video and are available for review on the City of Stamford website at:
http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_is=9

Parks & Recreation Commission Policy, Rules, Guidelines & Vision for Stamford Parks

Descriptions of departments and positions need to be revised throughout. The following edits are required:

- **PAGE 8:** Last paragraph to the Internal Committee since it no longer exists. Note - Because the Internal Committee was dissolved due to the new permitting process, we should ADD that the Parks & Recreation Commission must be informed of the events that are approved every month.
- **PAGE 12:** Paragraph 1, Superintendent of Recreation and Parks & Facilities Manager positions need to be revised.
- **PAGE 14:** Under 3.4 Parks & Recreation Commission and Parks & Recreation Committee Paragraph 3 - Since the position of Director of Parks & Recreation does not exist in the City Charter...
- **PAGE 15:** Under 3.6 Paragraph 3, Mentions the Appendix has a listing of all Stamford Parks listed that is not listed. Link to Map on Land Use Bureau website?
- **PAGE 16:** Last paragraph See Appendix 10.12 for the priority list of Parks - this list needs to be created.
- **PAGE 21:** Under Parks Director Policies ‘...on behalf of recruiting an official Parks & Recreation Director’. This role has been implemented by the administration.
- **PAGE 24:** Second to last paragraph remove ‘Alive@Five’ since this event now takes place at Mill River.
- **PAGE 25:** First paragraph, role of DSSD at Veteran’s Park needs to be updated with reference to Stamford Veterans Park Partnership.
- **PAGE 30:** Second Paragraph, last sentence ‘Any commemorative plaque will be flush with the ground; no boulders or tombstones are permitted’. Revised with allowable height off the ground as well as flush to the ground i.e. commemorative plaques the Commission approved at Kosciuszko Park and Fort Stamford.
- **PAGE 31:** Under 5.1 Introduction, Paragraph 3 ‘These recreational activities are overseen by a Superintendent of Recreation’.
- **PAGE 32:** First sentence ‘Superintendent of Recreation oversees....’
- **PAGE 33:** Add ‘Playgrounds’ to Active Recreation List; Second paragraph ‘Organized sports covers service...’ Strike covers; Broken link for Appendix Item 10.10 linking to the Field Policy Manual; Update Stamford Little League name.
- **PAGE 35:** What is 5.3 Park Assets Brochure?
- **PAGE 37:** Broken Link for Appendix Item 10.15; Broken Link for Appendix Item 10.2, Parks Rules & Regulations.
- **PAGE 43:** ‘Click here’ link to brochure is not a hyperlink; Last Sentence ‘The Manager of Parks & Facilities’ should be changed to Director of Parks & Recreation.

- **PAGE 49:** 7.7 Park & Recreation Bureau Chief: update to Director of Parks & Recreation with responsibilities listed below.
- **PAGES 56 & 57:** Update Appendices.