

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MARCH 18, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Mary Flynn, Chair; Mark Couch, Susan Daly, Amy Doering,  
Mark Ioli.

STAFF: James Coghlan, Interim Director.

OTHER: Adele Conniff, RTM, Chair of Parks & Recreation.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Flynn called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and stated that the members listed above were in attendance and a quorum was present.

Meeting of January 21, 2015

Ms. Flynn stated that many sections of the minutes were incorrect and did not reflect the items discussed. The commissioners made changes as follows:

Page 1: Erica to Erika. Page 2, last paragraph, in the last sentence delete 'bad news is that the number'.

Page 3, 1st paragraph, third sentence should read: Ms. Flynn said that the Pear Tree Beach renovations will be completed when the Master Plan is in place. Delete the next sentence.

Paragraph 3 (and throughout) replace BOS with Board of Selectmen. Delete the next sentence. Paragraph 4: sentence 2, replace 'is finished' with 'when completed.'

Paragraph 5, Sentence 2: add 'which' before is; delete and. The last sentence should read: Ms. Flynn said she received a call from Ms. Russell who was opposed to raising the fee.

Page 4: paragraph 1, add 'full-time' before town; change non residents to residents with cars not registered in Darien; last sentence, insert town before camps.

Paragraph 2: delete the second and fourth sentences.

Paragraph 3: first sentence change Ms. to Mr., delete on what they're saying now, add from \$200 – before \$500. Second sentence: add Noroton before Presbyterian.

In the next sentence change Guy's to Guides. Sentence four: change 'he' to 'the caller.'

Sentence five, change 'the experience' to 'rental history.' Sentence six, add 'asked' before 'how' and before 'do' insert 'are held.'

Paragraph 5: Under New Business, change people to committee and get going to met.

Delete the next sentence. Page 5: First sentence replace they with 'the Dog Committee'.

General comments noted: Avoid acronym abbreviations unless defined, minimize dialogue and 'he said/she said comments, (two minute late arrival should not be highlighted) summarize comments without interpretations. Minutes are to follow action-oriented format

- \*\* MS. DALY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 21, 2015 MEETING AS REVISED WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED.**
- \*\* MR. IOLI SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Meeting of February 11, 2015

Ms. Flynn suggested corrections, and the commissioners discussed each page and made changes as follows:

Page 1: Add Mark Crouch to Attendance. Delete the sentence under Discuss and Take Action. Change Cherry Lane to Cherry Lawn (throughout).

Paragraph 2, last sentence should read: Mrs. Miller is providing technical assistance. Correct spelling of de Parcevau to deParcevaux.

Page 2: paragraph 1 change Daly to Harris. Add 'DCA's' before Bird Sanctuary. Change the motion to delete words TO MAP.

Paragraph 4, under Budget 2015-16, sentence 1 delete 'which went well; Sentence 2: change 'plea' to 'request.' Delete 'understood why this is needed' and...the third and fifth sentences. Change Committee to Commission. After 'possible plan', replace 'to do some level of a study using this money potentially work with P&Z on the town plan' with 'on that funding level.' Insert 'It is requested for this to be a 10-15 year operation plan.' Correct the spelling of Coughlan to Coghlan (throughout) Delete the last sentence.

Add: Based on the Board of Selectmen approval this is moving forward to the Board of Finance. Page 3, paragraph 1: sentence 3: add 'the' before projects and prior. Sentence 4: after noted add 'a term; Paragraph 2 delete STUDY GROUPS.

End the first sentence after budget. Sentence 2 delete 'they framed things out subsequent to finding out.' Sentence 4, change 'they' to 'the Committee' Add 'A' before public. Delete the last sentence.

Last paragraph: 4: change 'progressed significantly with their fundraising' to 'not reached their fundraising goal' In the third sentence change safe place to 'their headquarters'. Change 'charge of \$1' to 'that a contract and insurance requirement' ... Change 'as new boat building is two summers out' to 'before the building is built'. In the last sentence, change 'oversee' to 'address.'

- \*\* MS. DALY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 11, 2015 MEETING AS REVISED WITH CORRECTIONS NOTED.**
- \*\* MR. IOLI SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

During the correction of the minutes for February 11, 2015 there was a discussion over whether a formal agreement is needed with the Darien Junior Sailing group. It was noted that prior minutes are to be reviewed to determine what prior agreements were made with the Darien Junior Sailing group, and if there needs to be further clarification.

Discussion of Parks & Recreation Section of Town Plan.

Ms. Flynn reported that she and Mr. Coghlan met with Jeremy Ginsburg to review the process of renewal of the Town of Darien Plan for Conservation and Development. It was noted that the plan draft is on the website and the process is outlined with a time line and next steps.

Ms. Flynn asked members to read through the Parks and Recreation sections of the Town Plan and provide their comments and feedback.

Ms. Flynn outlined that the task is to come up with a recommendation list of about 6-10 items identified as the top goals and objectives of the Commission. She gave examples as follows:

- The Pear Tree Master Plan
- Cherry Lawn Master Plan
- Review of Diller as an option for designation of (or relocating) the Dog Park.
- Open Space Designations.

There was discussion and it was noted that there would be additional recommendations after the master plans are completed.

There was further discussion on how to approach the recommendation list. It was agreed to have members send their recommended priorities to Ms. Flynn who will compile the list of recommendations with suggested priorities, next steps and timeline goals.

Discuss and Take action on Beach Concession Lease

Mr. Coghlan provided a draft of the lease for review. He noted that it was gone through Karl Kilduff and was a standard three year lease. Mr. Crouch suggested there should be a termination clause and an out for non-performance.

Ms. Doering pointed out that on page 1 at the bottom, there is a termination sentence that should be modified. It was suggested that a definition of conditions with language reflecting termination reasons for non-performance be included.

**\*\* MS. DOERING MOVED TO APPROVE THE BEACH CONCESSION LEASE AMENDED WITH TERMINATION CONDITIONS.**

**\*\* MR. IOLO SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Interim Director's Report:

Mr. Coghlan presented the Interim Director's report as follows:

Budget

The Board of Selectmen created earmarks in contingency for part of the Park & Recreation Master Plan. They earmarked \$25,000 to move ahead with the public engagement part of the project. A second earmark was set aside for beach sand. However, any release of money is tied to a presentation of metrics for why and when sand should be replaced. Jim Flynn and I are working on such a metric.

Mr. Coghlan explained that he is recommending that a solution would be to have at least \$10,000 for sand replenishment be included as part of the operating budget rather than the capital budget. He noted that tentatively this is scheduled to go to the Board of Finance on March 24.

The funding for the Short Lane study, the repairs to the tennis courts at Cherry Lawn, and the equipment reserve were all passed by the Board of Selectmen. The basketball court at Cherry Lawn was cut.

The operating budget remained intact (following the Town Administrator's cuts). I will be meeting with two members of the Board of Finance in the near future. We are scheduled to present our budget on Tuesday, March 24, 2015 at 7:30 p.m. in room 206 of Town Hall.

Project Status

- a) DJST Building Project. DJST fundraising efforts continue. We hope to include DJST in the Short Lane project discussions.
- b) Bids. Bathroom cleaning and refuse bid specifications are complete. Bids will be opened on March 30th. Aron Security will be returning to provide beach security guards at the same rate as 2014. We placed a stipulation in last year's bid that the Town could bring the winning bidder back and not bid this service out every year.
- c) 4 Short Lane. Subcommittee of Park & Recreation Commission held a public hearing on March 10th; feasibility funding request has been submitted for 2015-2016 budget and was approved by the Board of Selectmen. It will go before the Board of Finance on March 24th
- d) Replacement Fountains — Tilley. Work on specifications will begin soon.
- e) Replacement of Backstop - Town Hall. Estimates have been obtained: spring/summer installation is planned.

Ms. Daly mentioned there were e-mails of concern over sand around playground equipment. There was a discussion of reporting injuries. Mr. Coghlan noted that he would discuss this with Liz in the Town's finance office.

## Interim Director's Report – continued

f) Replacement Equipment. Purchasing is in process at this time. The Barber walk-Behind surf rake has been delivered and was used at Pear Tree and Weed Beaches in October & November. A new sander for this winter season was delivered and used. The last item purchased was a commercial grade mower which will be used starting in April.

g) Replacement of Sidewalks — Tilley. Sidewalks along Lakeside & Sedgwick Avenues were replaced in late November and survived the winter.

### Personnel

The Town has advertised for a new Director of Parks & Recreation with an application deadline of Friday, April 3. The timeline is to hold interviews in April - May and to have a new Director on board in June or possibly July.

### Winter/Summer Programming

We had a successful week of February Vacation Camp the week of February 17-21 with 137 registrants.

Our spring & summer brochures were delivered to mailboxes on Saturday, February 21 St and registration as well as beach permit sales began on Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup> (Mr. Coghlan referred to charts provided in his report for a comparison of program registration and beach permit sales over the past several years.)

Program registration and beach permits sales are down this year. I believe the decrease in sales is due mostly to the weather. I will continue to send out email reminders about upcoming spring programs and beach permits. Thus far we have seen a slight increase in play and revenue over last year, approximately 4%. We have also seen an increase in paddle tennis parties. We averaged about 2 parties per month this season. We only lost 1.5 days of play due to snow in the month of February and our crew has done a tremendous job clearing the courts as soon as possible with all of their other snow responsibilities.

Letters were sent out in mid-February to twenty of our lifeguards asking them their interest in returning for the summer of 2015. I have thus far received thirteen responses, with eight of the guards desiring to return. We have received three applications from certified lifeguards looking to work for the Department this summer and thus far two have been hired. I will continue to conduct interviews in March and April and hope to have a full staff by early May. We typically have nineteen or twenty lifeguards on staff each summer. It looks like we will have a large changeover in guards again this summer.

Interim Director's report – continued

Jackie Morgen & Meghan Varley will be returning as Waterfront Coordinators. Their responsibilities include supervision of lifeguards, payroll, and preparing the weekly lifeguard schedule.

I am advertising for a Red Cross Water Safety Instructor for swim lessons as our previous instructor will not be returning this summer. Lessons run Monday-Thursday from 10 AM 2:30 PM at Weed Beach for 6 weeks starting June 22.

### Maintenance

The maintenance crew was again very busy with snowstorms in February and early March. They continue to be called out to assist Public Works with roads and then will work on our parking lots, sidewalks and finally the paddle tennis courts. Overall they did a tremendous job with the inclement weather we had this winter. They have also used the cold spells to repair and clean all their equipment in preparation of the spring and summer months. They were also able to paint the Parks & Recreation offices, something that has not been done in almost twenty years.

The crew is now starting to prep for the spring sports season. We anticipate the fields to be snow free approximately March 20th and they will start to prepare fields and tennis courts at that time.

The high school tennis teams will be using Weed Beach & Cherry Lawn the week of March 23', our programs begin the week of March 30th and the youth leagues will begin approximately April 7.

Mr. Coghlan distributed the national Recreation and Park Association report and explained this report shows how Darien's services compare to the community Parks and Recreation standards. He outlined that the data in this report compares specific measures of efficiency and effectiveness against thousands of other parks and recreation agencies across the country. He reviewed charts that compare operating expenditures per acre and per capita and there was a discussion on the positive revenue tracking. It was noted that this can be used to justify budget requests to provide a metric measure for benchmarking expenses versus revenue.

### Chairman's Report

Ms. Flynn reported that the Town Consolidated Plan of Development is the primary topic of her report, which was discussed earlier in the agenda.

### Sub-Committee/Study Groups

Mr. Ioli reported there were proposed suggestions over open space including picnic areas and possibly looking into a Town pool. There was discussion over e-mails regarding those in favor of a pool. It was suggested to do some research into Sue Swiatek's survey and past reports on Town pools—the pros and cons and her recommendation.

The next meeting is March 31 and it was agreed to have an e-mail blast sent to increase attendance and encourage public participation. It was agreed to add the Commissioners to the e-mail list.

There was a discussion on the fees and noted that the 5 year comparison chart is attached.

### Public Comment

Adele Conniff, Chair of Parks and Recreation RTM was in attendance. There were no public comments for the meeting.

### Next Meeting:

April 8, 2015: Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Room 119 Darien Town Hall.

### Adjournment

**\*\* MS. DALY MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* MS. DOERING SECONDED.  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marilyn Knox,  
Telesco Secretarial Services

### Attachment

5 year comparison chart of Darien Parks & Recreation fee schedule

**DARIEN PARKS RECREATION FEE SCHEDULE**

	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
<b>Park Permit</b>	\$40 ea incl. new resident	\$45 ea incl. new resident			
<b>Park Permit - Senior</b>	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea	FREE 1st. Veh/\$45 ea.
<b>Replacement Permit</b>	\$40 each replacement	\$40 each replacement	\$40 each replacement	\$40 each replacement	\$45 each replacement
<b>Town Employee</b>	\$40 ea w/paystub&reg	\$40 ea w/paystub&reg.	\$40 ea w/paystub&reg.	\$40 ea w/paystub&reg.	\$45 ea w/paystub&reg.
<b>Non-Resident Taxpayer</b>	\$70 in res/w/out/townreg	\$70 in res/w/out/townreg.	\$70 in res/w/out/townreg.	\$70 in res/w/out/townreg.	\$75 inc res/w/out/townreg.
<b>Summer Residents</b>	\$100 each vehicle				
<b>Sitter/Nanny Vehicle</b>	\$70 each vehicle	\$70 each vehicle	\$70 each vehicle	\$70 each vehicle	\$75 each vehicle
<b>Daily Entrance Fee</b>	\$40 each vehicle				
<b>Youth Service Organiz.</b>	\$40 per organization	\$40 per organization	\$40 per organization	\$40 per organization	\$45 per organization
<b>Boat Launching Permit</b>	\$45 per boat sticker				
<b>Boat Launch -Daily fee</b>	\$65 per boat launch				
<b>Volunteer Fireman</b>	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$45 ea.
<b>Tennis Courts/weekday</b>	\$5 per hour				
<b>Tennis Courts/weekend</b>	\$6 per hour				
<b>Tennis Cts. evening</b>	not applicable				
<b>Tennis Cts. Youth Fee</b>	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
<b>Paddle Tennis - Daily</b>	\$15 day/ \$20. evening	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING
<b>Paddle Tennis - Block</b>	\$15 day/ \$20. evening	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING
<b>Paddle Tennis Youth</b>	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
<b>Rent - Ross/ Weed</b>	TABLED	TABLED	TABLED	TABLED	TABLED
<b>Adult League Fees</b>	\$100 per team				
<b>Park Facility Fees</b>	varies per size/\$25 to \$250	1-15 \$50; 16-30 \$75. 31-50 \$100; 51-150 \$200 151 + \$500.			
<b>Paddle Bldg. Rental</b>				\$50/hr. season,\$100 off	\$50/hr. season,\$100 off seas