

**TOWN OF DARIEN
MINUTES OF
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
JANUARY 15, 2014**

ATTENDANCE: Jane Branigan, Chair; Susan Daly, Mark Crouch (7:50 p.m.)
Mary Flynn, Erika Morris, Kevin Webb.

STAFF: Susan Swiatek, Director; James Coghlan, Assistant Director.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Branigan called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and stated that there was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

Meeting of December 18, 2013

**** MS. MORRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE
DECEMBER 18, 2013 MEETING AS SUBMITTED.**

**** MR. WEBB SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Presentation from Tree Conservancy

It was noted that Ms. Tuck was not present, and Ms. Morris provided the report. She presented a brochure of the conservancy and gave an overview of how they work with Parks & Recreation and the process of referral and roles. Ms. Daly asked about the responsibility and the cost of maintenance aspect that is involved with gifts.

Ms. Morris noted that a Land Trust event is scheduled on June 8, 2014 at Selleck's Woods called "Celebration of the Woods". She described it as a repeat of a prior event that featured artists, gardeners and environmental experts on nature, arts, and conservation.

Discuss and take action: Parks and Recreation Gift/Donation Policy.

The policy was presented, as discussed at the last meeting. It was agreed that the appendix pages were procedure and lists of approved items, and it was not necessary to include with the policy (attached as a supplemental page 5).

**** MS. MORRIS MOVED TO APPROVE PARKS AND RECREATION
GIFT/DONATION POLICY AS SUBMITTED.**

- ** MS. DALY SECONDED THE MOTION.
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

Director's Report:

Ms. Swiatek presented her project status report as follows:

Administration

1. Maintenance. All fields are closed; snow removal tasks are underway as needed in conjunction with DPW roads. One of our full time Park Maintainers transferred over to DPW as Town Hall Custodian so one position was vacant. Another employee from DPW transferred over to Park and Rec.

December	Clean out equipment	TH gym
	Clean out homeless	Woodland
	Install no skate signs	Tilley, CL
	Paint and mount all plows	Equip
	Leaf removal for sewer dept	
	Repair tractor blower	Equip
	Repair sander	Equip
	Move YC event supplies	Recreation
	Cont leaf removal	Holahan
	Repair paddle skirting	Weed
	Mount new snow blower	Equip
	Install turf blankets	CL
	Fire alarm repairs	Weed

Administration.

Winter registrations continue. 'Active Net' new on-line reservation software is up and running. See Assistant Director's report for information and the Recreation report.

Paddle Courts. Building suffered pipe freeze during cold snap. Damage is unknown at the time of this report. There was discussion that the damage was minimal. There was also discussion of turf blankets that are being use to top seed the turf on fields.

Project Status:

- a) Tennis Courts Weed 1-3. Work was completed. We continue to await receipt of the small grant for repairs from the USTA.
- b) Mather Center. Project is well underway. The order for new furniture was finalized after a few months of work and a purchase order drawn up. Work taking place in the gym adjacent and part of the project has taken longer than we were informed impacted some programs.

Paddle Court Renovation Program. The two additional heaters were added to courts #4 and #5 appear to work well to get courts playable. Some closures have occurred due to snow events.

DJST Building Project. P&Z approved the project. DJST fundraising efforts have begun. Budget Fiscal 2015. The operating and capital budget was submitted. First round review took place on January 3 with the Administrative Officer and First Selectman.

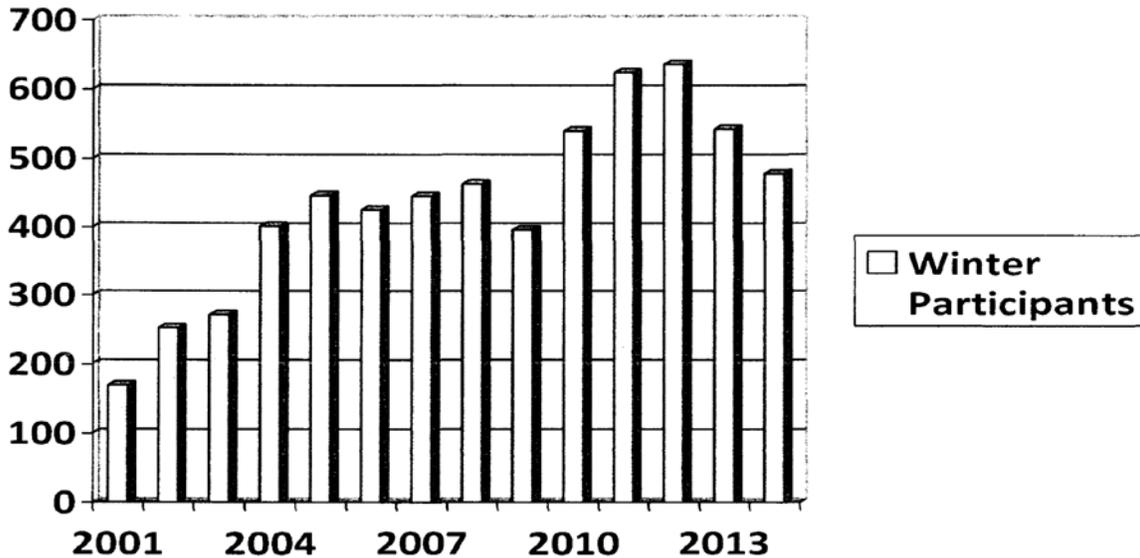
Parks Maintenance Management Plan. The revised plan was completed. In summary, the document demonstrates the shortage of available man hours to address parks according to the approved classification schedule.

Assistant Director's Report - Mr. Coghlan reviewed his report as follows:

Our winter programs began on December 21 with the first winter session of Tiny Tots Soccer & BWK Little Athletes. The following is a comparison of participants in our winter programs over the past fourteen years (through January 9 of each year):

The spring and summer brochure will be delivered to the printer the second week of February and will be mailed out towards the end of February to all Darien residents. Registration for all spring and summer programs begins on March 5th for residents and March 12th for non-residents. Programs will also be available to view online no later than Friday, January 31. Popular programs such as Tiny Tots Soccer and New Level Tennis will be back. We will be adding some camps and expanding some current programs. As of right now the Mather Community Center is not open so I am planning on holding spring classes at Town Hall and using the new center in the summer & fall.

Report on Paddle Tennis Operations: It was reported that play is up 25% and there are more parties and usage of the building.



Chairman Report

Chairman Branigan reported that the Board of Finance has approved the land acquisition for Short Lane, and it will be on the RTM agenda for the rescheduled meeting for next week. Mr. Webb asked about potential usage and it was discussed that it would be based on community outreach and further direction from the Town.

Sub-Committees/Study Groups - No reports other than given under item 1 on the agenda.

Budget Fiscal 2015

Ms. Swiatek stated that she met with the Administrative Officer to review the performance measures and priorities. There was an addition of utilities to the budget. It was noted that the budget presentation is on Saturday, January 25 at 9:30 p.m. It will then be forwarded on the Board of Selectmen for February 3, 2014.

Other Items

Ms. Swiatek stated that she would like to add a grant application to the agenda.

****MS. FLYNN MOVED TO ADD THE FOLLOWING ITEM TO THE AGENDA
DISCUSSION OF GRANT APPLICATION.**

**** MS. MORRIS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Swiatek stated that she would like to apply for a grant sponsored by Dr. Pepper, Snapple for recycling containers for parks. She provided photographs of the proposed containers and there was a discussion on limiting the size of the logo to avoid the look of advertisement. Ms. Swiatek stated the placement would be near the concession areas at the beaches. It was agreed by consensus that the Commission was in favor of supporting the grant application

**** MR. WEB MOVED TO APPLY FOR THE DR. PEPPER, SNAPPLE
GRANT FOR RECYCLING CONTAINERS AT PARKS.**

**** MS. MORRIS SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

NEXT MEETING:

February 5, 2014: Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Room 119 Darien Town Hall.

Adjournment

**** MR. WEB MOVED TO ADJOURN**

**** MS. MORRIS SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Knox,
Telesco Secretarial Services

Park and Recreation Donation/Gift Policy and Procedure attached.

Gifts Donation Policy

The Darien Parks and Recreation Commission (the "Commission") gratefully accepts donations from private individuals and entities that support the programs and services it provides to the public. The Commission receives many requests annually to install park benches, various plantings and other amenities at facilities under their jurisdiction. It is the intent of the Commission to encourage and facilitate public and private gifts, bequests, and such contributions that enhance, beautify, improve, supplement, support, or otherwise benefit the Town's park and recreation system. This gifts donation policy has been put in place to facilitate the process.

Acceptable Gift Locations

People may donate new or replacement gifts that contribute to the overall park visitor experience and preserve the visual character of the park setting. Placement of a donated item is at the sole discretion of the Commission. A donor may request a specific park/property but the Commission will ultimately decide the park and exact location within the park. This may be based on an existing design plan for the property, or if no plan exists, where placement is deemed a park or recreational necessity and consistent with overall design standards of the park.

Acceptable Gift Types

Living Gifts: Living gifts to the Commission include trees. Landscape specialists such as the Darien Tree Conservancy can offer a selection of native and durable trees for planting in selected parks sites from September through May. These include shade, evergreen and flowering trees.

Portable Gifts: Portable gifts to the Commission include benches, chairs, tables and bike racks. All gifts should meet Commission standards for their materials. Exceptions will be made on a case by case basis.

Permanent Gifts: Permanent gifts to the Commission include plaques, buildings, walkways, playgrounds and bridges. All permanent gifts must be reviewed on an individual basis and must be approved by the Park and Recreation Commission.

Procedure for Submission of a Gift

Groups/individuals who wish to submit a proposal for a gift to the Commission should complete the following steps:

- A. Present a detailed description of the proposed project, when applicable, including:
 - a. Dimensions
 - b. Proposed location
 - c. Population served (number, age, and type)
 - d. Building or planting materials
 - e. Samples from other comparable Towns
- B. Present detailed scope of the proposed project, including
 - a. How funds will be raised to pay for the project
 - b. Sources of ongoing funds for operation
 - c. Potential costs to Town of initial or future capital expenditures/operations
 - d. Insurance costs, if any, to be escrowed by applicant
 - e. Who will complete the work, and dates for completion
- C. Determine public support for a proposed controversial project
 - a. Newspaper article proposing the idea
 - b. Survey of adequate sample size (man-on-the-street survey or "Dial Darien")
 - c. Neighborhood support/opposition
 - d. Spell out pros and cons
- D. Understanding that project will require nominal town upkeep or future expense
- E. Please see Appendix A for specifications for donated plants and other items.

Please note: The donation of a gift to the Commission does not constitute ownership of the item, the land upon which it is situated or the surrounding lands. The Commission can accept only those commemorative gifts that are in alignment with the Commission's organizational mission and purpose. The Commission reserves the right to determine the suitability of all commemorative gifts and donations and expressly reserves the right to refuse any donation or commemorative gift. The Commission, in its sole discretion, will determine whether to repair or replace any of the commemorative gift items that are damaged, stolen or destroyed.