

**TOWN OF DARIEN
MINUTES OF
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
DECEMBER 18, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: Jane Branigan, Chair; Susan Daly, Marianne Gutierrez (8:30 p.m.)
Bob Marchesi, Erika Morris, Kevin Webb.

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

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Branigan called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and stated that there was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes

Meeting of November 20, 2013

Page 2: paragraph 1, sentence 2: change ‘the December’ to ‘a future.’

Page 3: Under Requests Gifts/Donations, delete the second sentence.

- ** MS. MORRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE
NOVEMBER 20, 2013 MEETING AS AMENDED WITH CHANGES AS
NOTED.**
- ** MS. DALY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

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

Ms. Morris referred to the draft policy presented at last month’s meeting and there was discussion over the absence of the representatives from the Darien Tree Conservancy. Ms. Swiatek gave examples of gifts that should be included in the policy and it was agreed based on consensus of the Commission to not provide a specific list in the policy and to keep the language general in nature.

The following changes were agreed upon:

- Acceptable Gift Types: remove the brackets and add ‘such as’ before the Darien Tree conservancy and add ‘qualified professionals’.
- Under portable Gifts, end the third sentence after ‘case basis’.
- In the last sentence on page 1, change Department to Commission.
- Page 2, Section D: change Agreement to Understanding.
- Section E: replace attached with ‘Appendix A’.

- ** **MS. MORRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION GIFT/DONATION POLICY AS AMENDED WITH CHANGES NOTED.**
- ** **MS. DALY SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Director's Report:

Ms. Swiatek presented her report and noted that the budget preparation has been the current major task and performance measures will be discussed under the budget presentation later on in the agenda.

Administration

Maintenance: Buildings and irrigation systems are fully winterized.
 Leaf removal is near completion. Fields are closed.
 Much work was performed on the berms and islands at Weed to cut back sea grasses--first time for this task since the renovation.
 Work on the skirting surrounding the paddle courts is underway again.

November	Truck in chips for scouts	Baker
	Shut down all water @ buildings	Beaches
	Install sod and fence off areas	Hol, TH, Baker
	Move equip at garage	DPW
	Winterize all irrigation	TH,Hol, BK,Mc, CL
	Traffic control/parking	Senior center – recreation
	Remove all goals, benches	Recreation
	Winterize buildings	Beaches
	Meet w/alarm company	WD
	Clean out small gym storage	Recreation
	Clean out homeless shelter area	Wood
Dec	Leaf removal	Senior center
	Repair/paint plows	Equipment
	Repair tractor blower	Equipment
	Work on sander	Equipment
	Move event equipment – Youth Commission	recreation

Administration:

Winter registrations continue. Active Net new on-line reservation software is up and running. See Assistant Directors report for information.

Recreation: See Assistant Director's Report.

Storm damage: No change since October report.

Project Status:

a) Tennis Courts Weed 1-3. Work was completed. We await receipt of the small grant for repairs from the USTA.

Director's Report – continued

b) Mather Center: Project is well underway. Work with the Project Manager on soft cost equipment continues. Work taking place in the gym adjacent and part of the project has taken longer than we were informed impacted some programs.

c) Paddle Court Renovation Program. Two additional heaters were added to courts #4 and #5. The first snowfall to test the system took place December 10, 2013. It appears the additional heater helps significantly

d) On-Line Paddle Reservation System: completed

e) Paddle Court Propane Tank. Completed

f) DJST Building Project: P&Z approved the project. DJST fundraising efforts have begun.

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

Paddle Court Season

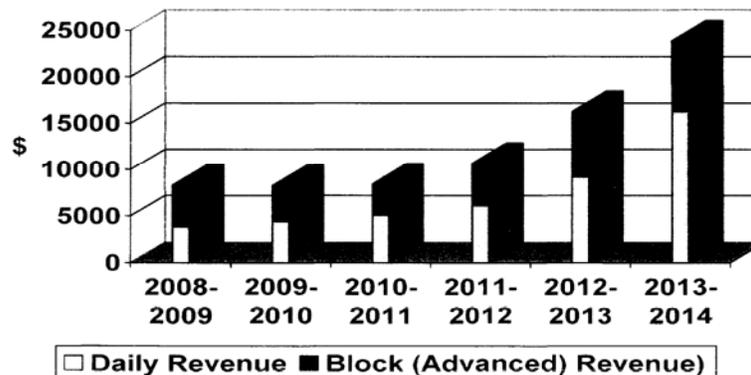
Usage and revenue are up from previous seasons. Below is a comparison of the past six years through two months of operation, Block revenue (advanced court reservation for the season) is up 10% over the 2012-2013 season. We were able to accommodate all requests except for one this year.

Daily revenue is up over 100% over last season. When the time lost to Hurricane Sandy is factored in, revenue is up over 77%. At this time I envision an approximate overall increase in revenue of 5 15,000 or 22% over the 2012-2013 season. Cash collections are down considerably over last year thanks to the online reservation system as well as the ability for residents to pay by credit card at the courts.

There is little interest in paddle parties with only two groups thus far reserving the paddle building. The hope is that providing the room at no charge if all five courts are reserved along with extended hours on Saturday night (until 10pm) next season will help generate more interest in reserving the building for parties.

I have conducted CPR/AED training for all of our paddle court supervisors. They will be able to assist should an emergency situation arise. The certification is good for two years. I am planning on running a course every year to refresh staff skills.

Paddle Tennis Revenue (through 8 weeks)



Report on Paddle Tennis Operations: As included in the Assistant Director's report.

Chairman Report

Chairman Brannigan reported that the Board of Selectman has approved the land acquisition for Short Lane and it will be on the Board of Finance agenda for the rescheduled meeting on December 19.

Sub-Committees/Study Groups - No reports

Discuss and take action: Darien Parks Classification System.

Ms. Swiatek presented the following for review and discussion:

**DARIEN PARKS & RECREATION
PARK CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM
PARK MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

LEVEL I

State of the art maintenance applied to a high quality diverse landscape. Usually associated with high traffic urban areas such as public squares, malls, governmental grounds or high visitation parks.

**WEED BEACH
PEAR TREE BEACH (I & II)
CHERRY LAWN PARK (I & II)
MCGUANE PARK (I & II)**

LEVEL II

High-level maintenance - associated with well-developed park areas with reasonably high visitation.

**PEAR TREE BEACH (I & II)
CHERRY LAWN PARK (I & II)
MCGUANE PARK (I & II)
TOWN HALL FIELDS
HOLOHAN FIELD
BAKER FIELD
TILLEY PARK**

LEVEL III

Moderate level maintenance - associated with locations with moderate to low levels of development, moderate to low levels of visitation or agencies that because of budget restrictions can't afford a higher intensity of maintenance.

**FRATE PARK
STONY BROOK PARK**

LEVEL IV

Moderately low level - usually associated with low level of development, low visitation, undeveloped areas or remote parks.

LEVEL V

High visitation natural areas - usually associated with large urban or regional parks. Size and user frequency may dictate resident maintenance staff. Road, pathway or trail systems relatively well developed. Other facilities at strategic locations such as entries, trail heads, building complexes and parking lots.

**SELLECKS WOODS
WOODLAND PARK
SENIOR CENTER**

LEVEL VI

Minimum maintenance level - low visitation natural area or large urban parks that are undeveloped.

**DILLER PROPERTY
DILLER WOODS**

Revised December 2013

Discussion: Darien Parks Maintenance Management System –

As discussed under classification system, this was used in the budget performance measure assignment.

Discuss and take action: Budget fiscal 2015

Ms. Swiatek presented the 2014-15 Operating Budget and Capital Budget for review and there was discussion of each line item. A priority level was assigned to each item and project based on the guidelines provided by the Town Administrative Officer.

Ms. Swiatek highlighted that she is asking for a full-time Facilities Manager to coordinate the management required to service new property acquisitions. She emphasized that with current limited resources the Department cannot adequately service the properties.

Ms. Swiatek noted that the budget is due by the end of the month and will be part of the budget presentation in mid January to the Board of Finance.

**** MS. MORRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION BUDGET FOR FISCAL 2014-5 AS AMENDED WITH CHANGES NOTED.**

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

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Requests gifts/donations

Ms. Swiatek reported that the Darien Board of Realtors has made a donation for signs along the trails. It was agreed to accept the gift based on the approved policy.

Public Comment - none

Discuss Department Fee Schedule

The following schedule was reviewed for discussion. It was agreed by consensus of the Commission to make no changes at this time.

**** MS. GUTIERREZ MOVED TO APPROVE THE PARKS AND RECREATION FEE SCHEDULE FOR FISCAL 2014-5 AS SUBMITTED WITH NO CHANGES AT THIS TIME.**

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

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DARIEN PARKS RECREATION FEE SCHEDULE

	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013	2013/2014
Park Permit	\$35 ea.incl.new resident	\$35 ea.incl.new resident	\$40 ea.incl. new resident	\$40 ea.incl. new resident	\$40 ea.incl. new resident
Park Permit - Senior	FREE for first veh/\$35 ea	FREE for first veh/\$35 ea	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.
Replacement Permit	\$30 each replacement	\$30 each replacement	\$40 each replacement	\$40 each replacement	\$40 each replacement
Town Employee	\$35ea.veh.w/paystub®.	\$35ea.veh.w/paystub®.	\$40 ea w/paystub®.	\$40 ea w/paystub®.	\$40 ea w/paystub®.
Non-Resident Taxpayer	\$65 inc.res/w/out/town reg	\$65 inc.res/w/out/town reg	\$70 in res/w/out/townreg.	\$70 in res/w/out/townreg.	\$70 in res/w/out/townreg.
Summer Residents	\$100 each vehicle	\$100 each vehicle	\$100 each vehicle	\$100 each vehicle	\$100 each vehicle
Sitter/Nanny Vehicle	\$65 each vehicle	\$65 each vehicle	\$70 each vehicle	\$70 each vehicle	\$70 each vehicle
Daily Entrance Fee	\$40 per vehicle	\$40 per vehicle	\$40 each vehicle	\$40 each vehicle	\$40 each vehicle
Youth Service Organiz.	\$40 per organization	\$40 per organization	\$40 per organization	\$40 per organization	\$40 per organization
Boat Launching Permit	\$45 per boat sticker	\$45 per boat sticker	\$45 per boat sticker	\$45 per boat sticker	\$45 per boat sticker
Boat Launch -Daily fee	\$65 per boat launch	\$65 per boat launch	\$65 per boat launch	\$65 per boat launch	\$65 per boat launch
Volunteer Fireman	FREE for first veh/\$35 ea	FREE for first veh/\$35 ea	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.	FREE 1st. Veh/\$40 ea.
Tennis Courts/weekday	\$5 per hour	\$5 per hour	\$5 per hour	\$5 per hour	\$5 per hour
Tennis Courts/weekend	\$6 per hour	\$6 per hour	\$6 per hour	\$6 per hour	\$6 per hour
Tennis Cts. evening	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable	not applicable
Tennis Cts. Youth Fee	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Paddle Tennis - Daily	\$12 day/\$16 evening	\$12 day/\$16 evening	\$15 day/ \$20. evening	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING
Paddle Tennis - Block	\$13 day/\$17 evening	\$13 day/\$17 evening	\$15 day/ \$20. evening	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING	\$20 DAY/ \$25 EVENING
Paddle Tennis Youth	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE	FREE
Rent - Ross/ Weed	TABLED	TABLED	TABLED	TABLED	TABLED
Adult League Fees	\$100 per team	\$100 per team	\$100 per team	\$100 per team	\$100 per team
Park Facility Fees	varies per size/\$25to\$250	varies per size/\$25to\$250	varies per size/\$25 to \$250	varies per size/\$25 to \$250	varies per size/\$25 to \$250
Small Craft Storage	\$55 per dinghy	\$55 per dinghy	\$55 per dinghy	\$55 per dinghy	\$55 per dinghy

NEXT MEETING:

January 15, 2014: Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Room 119 Darien Town Hall.

Adjournment

- ** MS. GUITIERREZ MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- ** MS. MORRIS SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Knox, Telesco Secretarial Services