

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING  
APRIL 10, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: Jane Branigan, Chair; Susan Daly; Mary Flynn;  
Andrew Hunter; Robert Marchesi; Erika Morris; Marianne  
Gutierrez (7:40 p.m.)

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

OTHERS: Kevin Webb

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Branigan called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF MARCH 20, 2013**

The following corrections were made to the minutes of March 20, 2013:

Page 2: last paragraph should read as follows: Ms. Swiatek reported that the budget has been submitted and is in the hands of the Board of Finance. Many capital budget items were cut. She reviewed where there is remaining money to fund projects, and there was a discussion over the process and frustrations and hopes to have the final approved budget at the next meeting.

Page 5: correct spelling of Ms. Branigan's name.

Page 4: Correct spelling of Mr. Coghlan's name.

**\*\* MS. DALY MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED**  
**\*\* MS. FLYNN SECONDED**  
**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**REPORT ON STATUS OF STORM DAMAGE AND REPAIRS IN PARKS**

Ms. Swiatek reported that the contractor came on site and did another walk through. They also did a walk through with the building inspector.

Ms. Gutierrez joined the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Ms. Swiatek explained that anything that was below the tide mark in the building has to come out and the conduits have to be replaced. She said that she asked for new pricing. She said that the Town has insurance; however, flood insurance is a different type of insurance and the deductible is \$500,000 for each building. As a result, they will not see insurance coverage. Wind damage has a \$10,000 deductible. FEMA will help with rebuilding what was there. The Town is continually filing and she said that she is keeping up to date with all of the expenses.

The buildings at Weed Beach suffered badly and there will be a 1 -2 week delay in getting the buildings ready for the season. Repairs at Pear Tree will take time. The crew did a great job getting the beach safe and usable. The gazebo was re-roofed and they were able to do it within the operating budget.

Ms. Swiatek said that they are getting requests to extend the paddle season into the summer.

#### **REVIEW STATUS BUDGET SUBMISSION FY 2014**

Ms. Swiatek distributed and reviewed the operating and capital budgets that were approved by the Finance department. She noted that the tennis court repairs will be funded through bonding.

#### **DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON DARIEN PARKS AND RECREATION E-BLAST AND WEB SITE POLICY**

Ms. Daly asked if the department would have to provide information if it was requested under FOI. Ms. Swiatek said that they would have to provide information; however, if someone asked for class lists, she would go to the Town Counsel for advice. Ms. Daly said that she does not want her information made available. Ms. Swiatek said that anyone who uses Parks and Recreation services is entered into their data base. Ms. Flynn added that even if you opt out of E-blast, the information is still there.

Ms. Daly said that she is concerned about childrens' information being given out. Ms. Swiatek said that the request has to be in writing. She said that the purpose of this policy is to keep people from using their website to send out messages. She said that everything in her office is subject to FOI. By law she has to give out information if she receives a formal request and the Town Counsel agrees. A discussion ensued.

The following changes were made to the policy:

Change Freedom of Information regulations to Freedom of Information Act regulations.

Add a period at the end of the following: E-blasts are meant to be infrequent and targeted and will be issued solely for specific department events and information.

- \*\* MS. FLYNN MOVED TO APPROVE THE DARIEN PARKS AND RECREATION E-BLAST AND WEB SITE POLICY AS AMENDED**
- \*\* MS. MORRIS SECONDED**
- \*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

### REPORTS

#### A. DIRECTOR

Ms. Swiatek reviewed her written report dated April 10, 2013.

1. Maintenance: Work is underway to prepare all parks for play. Late snow has us a bit behind schedule. Crew continues to perform storm clean up tasks and equipment and tree work at various locations.
2. Administration: Spring programs began and summer registration is underway. New process to eliminate application for beach permits seems to be working.
3. Recreation: See Assistant Director's report.
4. Storm Damage: We continue to attempt to get repairs underway. At the time of this report, the contractor to repair buildings is ready to mobilize. A meeting with the Building Inspector was held on Wednesday, April 3. Code requires that all electrical that came in contact with salt water must be completely replaced – including conduit. This is not part of the initial quote for repairs. That including testing. Pear Tree is most significantly affected. All electrical runs underground and under concrete floors, some is overhead. Most all outlets and some switches were impacted. Sewer pump lines were also affected. Since there is no power to the building at this time, it is unknown how the pumps may have been affected. Costs for repairs will be higher as a result. We are awaiting new price quotes. Other work to ready facilities is underway.

Project Status:

- a. Weed Fire Alarm System. Purchase orders complete, numbers for backup system selected. Waiting for installation call.

- b. Renovate Gallagher Field. Completed. Grand opening celebration with Darien Little Leagues scheduled for April 21<sup>st</sup>. Commission members are invited to attend.
- c. Tennis Courts Weed 1-3 Additional quotes for repair work where obtained. Surfacing cannot be done until temperatures are adequate. We are attempting to find some competitive pricing for demo.
- d. Paddle Courts. Storm damage repair work still remains on the court skirting.
- e. Mather Center. Construction of the Mather Center is slated to begin in April. This will most likely restrict our programs making the gym unavailable while work is performed. Work will continue into the summer and fall.
- f. Furniture for Beaches. New picnic tables for the beaches have been assembled and are stored at the sewer plant for now. Bathhouse furniture, benches, chairs, and some refuse containers are on order. The furniture has been shipped. Additional interior furniture remains and additional refuse containers.

B. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Mr. Coglan reviewed his written report dated April 10, 2013

**Summer Staff Recruitment**

Interviews for lifeguards are ongoing. We have received twelve applications and have hired three lifeguards and will need to hire three more to have a full staff for Memorial Day Weekend. I am also in the process of interviewing candidates for the part time Waterfront Coordinator position. This person will help supervise the lifeguards and assist with scheduling and payroll.

**Beach Security**

Bids were open on Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> for beach security services. The bids are currently being reviewed and we hope to award the bid the week of April 8<sup>th</sup>. Once a company is selected, I will meet with their management and supervisory team to review our procedures and regulations. Beach security is scheduled to begin work at weed Beach on Wednesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> and Friday, May 24<sup>th</sup> at Pear Tree Point Beach.

**Beaches Cherry Lawn Park and Senior Center Cleaning Services**

Bids were also opened for cleaning services for the Senior Center as well as restroom cleaning services at both beaches (including the paddle tennis building

at Weed Beach) and the comfort station at Cherry Lawn Park. American Janitorial Services of East Norwalk has been selected as our cleaning service provider. Cleaning services began on Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> at the Senior Center, weed Beach (paddle bathrooms) and Cherry Lawn Park. They will commence on Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup> at Pear Tree Beach. The Cherry Lawn Park comfort station will be cleaned every day during the spring, summer and fall months and three days per week during the winter.

### **Paddle Courts**

The 2012-2013 paddle court season concluded on Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>. A financial analysis of the season will be distributed at the meeting on Wednesday, April 10<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Coghlan reported that the paddle season was successful. He said that the season ran from October 8, 2012 to March 22, 2013. Ms. Swiatek said that there were a few complaints about the fee increase. She said that this year they booked on the hour and a half, rather than on the hour.

Mr. Coghlan said that the plan for next year is to be able to accept credit card payments for paddle tennis. He said that there have been requests to extend the paddle tennis season through June. There is an issue with liability because they do not have anyone to monitor there. There is also an issue with the restroom and they did not budget for an extended season.

### **C. CHAIRMAN**

Ms. Branigan did not have a report this evening.

### **D. SUB-COMMITTEES**

Ms. Branigan reported that there is no money to do anything with the dog park.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no members of the public present this evening.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business discussed this evening.

**ADJOURN**

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

There was no other business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi  
Telesco Secretarial Services