

**TOWN OF DARIEN
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 17, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Jane Branigan, Chair; Susan Daly, Susan Graham,
Marianne Gutierrez, Erika Morris, Robert Marchesi.

STAFF: 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 September 20, 2012

Corrections: Page 1, paragraph 2, Delete the park is not really being used primarily due to safety concerns and change the sentence to read: Ms. Feehan summarized that the narrow strip of land designated as the dog walking area is really not sufficient.

Page 2: Paragraph 3: In the first sentence, delete replacement and replace with construction for the unrestricted off leash dog area.

Paragraph 4: change the word there to it.

Correct the spelling of Swiatek throughout the minutes from Switzer.

Page3: in the first sentence add “September 1 to” before May 31. Add the word “Area” to the end of that sentence.

Correct the dates in last part of the first motion from October to September, to read:

**FROM JUNE 1 – AUGUST 31 FROM DAWN TO 8:30 AM MONDAY – SUNDAY,
AND TO ADD SATUDAYS AND SUNDAYS SEPTEMBER 1 - MAY 31.
CHANGES IN HOURS ARE TO BE EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2012.**

Page 5 under (f) change TH to the

**** MS. MORRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE
MEETING OF SEPTEMBER19, 2012 AS AMENDED WITH
CORRECTIONS NOTED.**

**** MS. DALY SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Discuss and take action on Eagle Scout Project, Stony Brook Park

Item was tabled pending further information.

Update on fire alarm monitoring, irrigation water expense- Weed Beach

Mr. Coghlan stated that they met with the electrician, Jim Adams and the good news is that the lines have already been pulled, which saves wiring expense. He explained that they only need the monthly monitoring from the station, and Ms. Swiatek is working on numbers and this will be covered in more detail in the next month's Director's report.

Discuss and take action on meeting schedule for 2013.

Chairman Branigan presented the proposed meeting calendar for 2013 as follows:

Facility/Equipment	Day	Start Date	Start Time	End Date	End Time
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	16 Jan 2013	07:30 PM	16 Jan 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	13 Feb 2013	07:30 PM	13 Feb 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	20 Feb 2013	07:30 PM	20 Feb 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	20 Mar 2013	07:30 PM	20 Mar 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	10 Apr 2013	07:30 PM	10 Apr 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	17 Apr 2013	07:30 PM	17 Apr 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	15 May 2013	07:30 PM	15 May 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	19 Jun 2013	07:30 PM	19 Jun 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	17 Jul 2013	07:30 PM	17 Jul 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	21 Aug 2013	07:30 PM	21 Aug 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	18 Sep 2013	07:30 PM	18 Sep 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	16 Oct 2013	07:30 PM	16 Oct 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	20 Nov 2013	07:30 PM	20 Nov 2013	11:00 PM
Darien Town Hall - Room 119	Wed	18 Dec 2013	07:30 PM	18 Dec 2013	11:00 PM

It was agreed to delete the dates of February 13 and April 17 and from the following schedule of meetings:

- ** **MR. MARCHESI MOVED TO APPROVE THE MEETING CALENDAR FOR 2013 AS PROPOSED WITH CHANGES NOTED.**
- ** **MS. GUTIERREZ SECONDED THE MOTION.**
- ** **MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Director's Report:

Ms. Branigan presented the Director's report and referred to the project status and encouraged Commissioners to see some of the great work that is being done. She referred to the following items and asked that they be noted in the record as follows

- a) Weed Beach Master Plan Project. Project is complete. We are awaiting final budget numbers from Finance.
- b) Renovate Gallagher Field. Work has been completed on the field. Fencing installation will begin shortly. An irrigation system has been installed.
- c) Tennis Courts — Work on all courts has either been performed or is near 1n completion. Work at Cherry Lawn is nearing completion. Cts 1-3 had all cracks addressed and the finish resurfaced. The single court reconstruction remains some additional materials are needed and final grading. Weed front courts were completed.

At the same time we asked the contractor to perform a simple repair to the worst 500 feet of cracks on the back courts in an attempt to keep the courts operational in the spring of 2013. The Commission should seek repair funds to demo and rebuild these 40 year old courts in the 2014 budget.

d) Paddle Courts. Year four of the five year renovation work has been completed.

e) Divider Door. The old divider door was removed during one week prior to programs beginning in Sept. The new divider will be installed in December.

The Administrative portion of the report is as follows:

Administration:

1. Maintenance. All fields have transitioned from summer play to fall. Field renovation and preparation work has been performed such as: some sod on Casey, McGuane and Holahan Fields, edging infields, fertilizing, aerating and overseeding. Town Hall Fields suffered from the summer weather conditions and we are attempting to address the turf condition which is difficult while the field is under play.

Wk end Sept 16	Remove lifeguard chairs	beaches
	Storm prep	All parks
	Repair plumbing	PT
	Event clean up	PT/recreation
	Move supplies youth commission	recreation
Wk end Sept 23	Move supplies youth commission	recreation
	Store Adirondack chairs	PT
	Clean storage location maint mater	Garage
	Supply stone to tennis ct drains	CL
	Repair Adirondack chairs	PT
	Storm prep	All parks
Wk end Sept 30	Install repl bricks in donor walk	WD
	Paint over graffiti – trees, rocks	Woodland
	Inspection of play equipment	CL,WD,McG, BK
	Install equip paddle building	WD
Wk end Oct 7	Clean storm drains	WD, BK, CL
	Clean storage room, dump	Senior Center
	Fire Extinguisher training	
	Repair gates	PT
	Set up rooms paddle tennis	WD
	Pull swim buoys	beaches

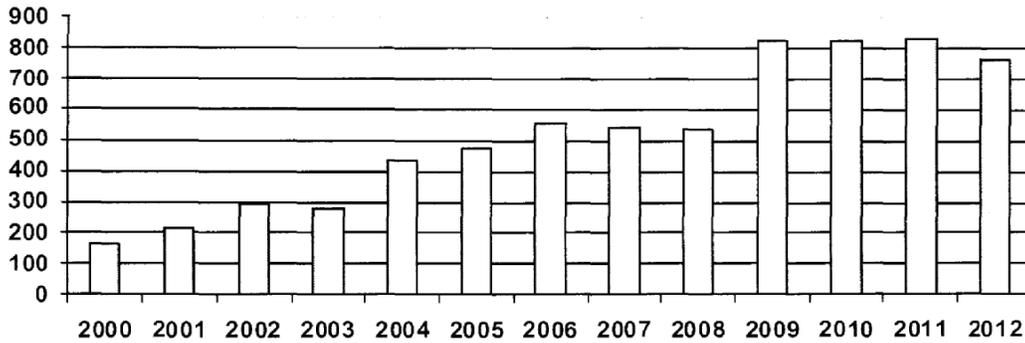
2. Administration. Fall & winter registration has been underway. Facility rental requests continue to come in. Large events hosted within the parks were: Darien Road Race (Pear Tree); ITP Triathlon (Weed), Big Rig Gig (Town Hall). Additional events were also hosted. The dept. is currently fielding requests for use of Tilley for new events.

3. Recreation. See Assistant Director’s Report.

Assistant Director's Report

Mr. Coghlan reviewed his report as follows:

Many of our fall programs, such as tennis lessons and soccer clinics, began in mid-September. The following is a comparison of the number of participants in our fall programs over the past thirteen years (registration through October 11th each year):



We began online registration for programs and beach sticker sales in the spring/summer of 2005. Each year more and more people are taking advantage of this system. Through the first 6 weeks of registration for fall programs in 2005, approximately 37% of all registrations were processed online. This year, approximately 73% of all registrations have occurred online. This is a 7% increase from last season. Online registration has allowed us to expand programs over the past several years.

The 2012-2013 paddle court season began on Monday, October 8th. Our paddle tennis staff went through orientation on Friday, October 5th to familiarize themselves with the new building and the new systems (electrical, heat, etc.) in the new facility. The igniter to the fire pit has to be replaced and the part has been ordered. Heaters under the courts were serviced on Tuesday, October 9th and are all set for the inclement weather that is just around the corner. Our propane delivery (heat for the building, courts, and fire pit) has been set on a bi-weekly delivery schedule. The supervisors and I will also closely monitor the rate of consumption over the next several months.

To prepare for the season, court #3 was resurfaced. All of the screens and snowboards were replaced on court #5 and various weathered screens were replaced on the other courts. This was the fourth year of a 5-year plan to provide major upgrades to each of the courts. We are looking forward to a successful 1st year in our paddle "hut".

Ms. Daly added that she has been in contact with a local designer who is working on a bid for furniture for the Paddle Hut and she will provide a proposal next month.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Branigan stated that there was no formal report, but requested approval of a change to next month's meeting date from November 21 to November 14, as it conflicted with the day before Thanksgiving. It was unanimously agreed to change the date.

It was also suggested that December meeting date be changed from December 19 to December 12, and Chairman Branigan recommended that this be voted on at next month's meeting.

Sub-Committee Report

Ms. Daly stated that she had received communications regarding DDOG and she read an e-mail from Anne Finn and asked for it to be included in the minutes as follows:

After watching the Channel 79 coverage of your last Parks and Rec. commission meeting, I have a few thoughts I want to express to the commission regarding the off leash area at Cherry Lawn Park. I am referring to the area between the Nature Center and Brookside Rd. which was designated as a 24 hour, 7 days a week, 365 days a year off leash area. I believe this area is about 3 acres in size. This is a HUGE area of our very limited open and precious parkland in our town. It is also a lovely area in Cherry Lawn Park, nice and open for the most part, and very flat. The impression I got from the speakers at your last meeting, was that this area is not an area, #1, that DDOG is very interested in for letting dogs run free. #2 In fact, the overwhelming consistent comments I heard from the group's member, was that it is not an appropriate area for off leash for a variety of reasons (not fenced, and proximity to Brookside). Then, your commission decided to grant MORE off leash hours in the OTHER parts of Cherry Lawn Park and areas that DDOG is much more interested in, for letting their dogs off leash. What I am getting at is this: We are already short on field space for sports and other recreational activities, and this piece of Cherry Lawn Park is now underutilized because it is a designated off leash area at every hour of the day. I feel this valuable piece of real estate at Cherry Lawn should not be solely dedicated to off leash dogs when it is not being utilized. DDOG should relinquish this area back to Parks and Recs. for other possible uses. I got the impression that the group was quite happy to gain more off leash hours which they have been asking for since last year when this all came to a head. I respectfully ask that your commission consider my comments and look at the big picture in our town, and the true desires of DDOG and other town residents.

Anne Finn

A discussion ensued on the size and dimensions of the area that prevent usage for other means. It was agreed that if money is raised for fencing, the area could be better utilized, and the item should be then re-examined and reviewed for alternative uses. Chairman Branigan stated that she is in agreement with letting the issue rest for now and bringing the item back for review if it becomes evident that the area can be utilized for other purposes.

Other Business – Ms. Daly presented copies of directional wooden signs for Seligs Woods. It was suggested that this could be an Eagle Scout project for possible use at Woodland Park and/or for the paths at Weed Beach as educational signs.

Ms. Morris stated that there is a Pumpkin Festival by Friends of Tilley Pond on October 21 from 4:30-6:00 and referred to the flyer on the event.

Ms. Branigan referred to the updated contact list of Commissioners and included in the record as follows.

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Jane Branigan, Chairman
26 Deepwood Road
Darien, CT 06820
655-8491 (home)
e-mail: jbr@townofdarrien.com
(R) apptd. 9/14/98; exp. 3/31/2014

Erika Morris
20 Circle Rd.
Darien, CT 06820
203-655-0045
Email:
(U) Appt. 4/1/09; exp. 3/31/12

Susan Graham
5 Chester Road
Darien, CT 06820
975-9039 (home)/ 273-8881 (cell)
e-mail: susan@townofdarrien.com
(R) appt. 8/29/07; exp. 3/31/2013

Andrew Hunter
253 Hollow Tree Ridge Rd.
Darien, CT 06820
656-0896 (home)
e-mail: andrew@townofdarrien.com
(D) apptd. 4/1/07; exp.3/31/2013

EX OFFICIO:
Jayme Stevenson, First Selectman
Robert Steeger, Director of Public Works
Town Hall, 2 Renshaw Road
Darien, CT 06820

Robert P. Marchesi
12 Homestead Road
Darien, CT 06820
961-9596 (home)
212-563-6700 ext. 320 (work)
email: rob@townofdarrien.com
(R) apptd. 3/4/02; exp. 3/31/2014

Marianne Gutierrez
135 Holmes Avenue
Darien, CT 06820
323-7771 (home)
Email: marianne@townofdarrien.com
(D) appt. 4/1/11; exp. 3/31/2014

Susan Daly
15 Queens Lane
Darien, CT 06820
656-2811 (home)
e-mail: susan@townofdarrien.com
(D) apptd. 4/1/07; exp. 3/31/2013

Mary Flynn
6 Crimmins Rd.
Darien, CT 06820
(home) 655-4849
e-mail:
(R) appt. 1/1/11; exp. 3/31/2013

Susan M. Swiatek, CPRP
Director of Parks and Recreation
e-mail: swiatek@townofdarrien.com
James H. Coghlan, CPRP
Assistant Director
e-mail: jcoghlan@townofdarrien.com
Phone: 656-7325

(updated 10.12)

**NEXT MEETING: November 14, 2012: Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. Room 119
Darien Town Hall.**

Adjournment

** MS. GUTIERREZ MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MS. DALY SECONDED.
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Marilyn Knox
Telesco Secretarial Services