

**TOWN OF DARIEN
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2012**

ATTENDANCE: Acting Chair Susan Daly; Charlie Goodyear;
Mary Flynn; Erika Morris; Bob Marchesi;
Susan Graham; Maryanne Gutierrez (7:37 p.m.)

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

OTHER:

Acting Chair Ms. Daly called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

APPROVE MINUTES OF JANUARY 18, 2012

The changes to the minutes of the regular meeting of January 18, 2012 are as follows:

On page 1, under PUBLIC HEARING: FEES AND CHARGES, 4th paragraph, 2nd sentence, change "Park Permit" to "Park Resident".

On page 3, under UPDATE ON WEED BEACH MASTER PLAN PROJECT, the 4th sentence should read: "There was discussion on the guardhouse, and while a new guardhouse is not part of the project, there was a cost of \$40,000 to have it constructed to look similar to the bathhouse."

On page 4, the entire paragraph should read: "Ms. Branigan said that Mr. Tom Golden had passed away and bequeathed his estate to Yale University. He owned several properties in Darien, but one in particular, a house near Baker Field, should be purchased by the Town, as it sits inside the park."

**** MS. MORRIS MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JANUARY 18, 2012 AS AMENDED.**

**** MS. FLYNN SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Gutierrez arrived at 7:37 p.m.

DISCUSS NEW PADDLE TENNIS BUILDING POLICIES

Ms. Swiatek distributed copies of the revised policy, with the revisions being made from last month's meeting. She mentioned that she would send the insurance restrictions, as listed on page 2, #5, and as written in the Rules and Regulations, to Town Counsel for review. She said it states that any group who uses Town facilities on a regular or routine basis has to give the Town a Certificate of Insurance, and this gives the Town discretion. She said they apply this policy to all the Town facilities. She said that the Commission wished to have the attendant activate the firepit with discretion, based on policies that she and Mr. Coghlan are in the process of finalizing. It will be posted upon finalization. Ms. Swiatek said she is looking toward a Fall implementation of this policy and building use dependent on obtaining the Certificate of Occupancy. There was one alteration made to the fee structure for the paddle court rental. Anyone renting a paddle tennis court during regularly scheduled hours and wishing to rent the building will be charged a fee of \$50.00, instead of \$100.00. The deposit fee required doesn't apply to paddle court users; it applies to the outside public renting the facility.

- ** MR. GOODYEAR MOVED TO APPROVE THE WEED BEACH WARMING HUT RENTAL POLICY DRAFT AS OF 2/15/12.**
- ** MS. GUTIERREZ SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION - ACCEPT GIFT FROM FRIENDS OF WOODLAND PARK IN HONOR OF BETTY JEWETT; ENHANCE TRAIL, SUPPLY AND INSTALL BENCH AND BIRDFEEDERS

Ms. Swiatek explained that the intent is to install the bench in a location where Ms. Jewett can see the pond and birdhouses. She said Ms. Jewett is a former Parks & Recreation Commissioner who also has been very involved with Friends of Woodland Park, Friends of Selleck's Woods, and has done a lot of work at Tilley Pond.

- ** MS. MORRIS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE GIFT FROM FRIENDS OF WOODLAND PARK IN HONOR OF BETTY JEWETT; ENHANCE TRAIL, SUPPLY AND INSTALL BENCH AND BIRDFEEDERS.**
- ** MS. FLYNN SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION – FEE SCHEDULE FY 2012

Mr. Goodyear said that he received a call from a resident who was upset with the maintenance of the beaches and having to pick up trash herself, mostly at Pear Tree Point, and didn't want to see the fees raised. Pictures of the gazebo at Pear Tree Point were distributed, and they showed some deterioration. It was mentioned that it will be addressed.

The Commissioners discussed the potential of raising Town fees, even though some of them were raised last year. They discussed what services would be or have been provided as rationale for increasing the fees. The beach sand replacement was not approved in the budget, and some of the Commissioners felt that an increase could not be warranted based on that. The Weed Beach Master Plan Project is almost complete, and some of the Commissioners mentioned that it would be appropriate to raise the fees this year while they have something tangible to show for the increases.

**** MR. GOODYEAR MOVED TO APPROVE RAISING THE FEE SCHEDULE BY \$5.00 FOR PARK PERMIT, PARK PERMIT SENIOR, REPLACEMENT PERMIT, TOWN EMPLOYEE, NON-RESIDENT TAXPAYER, AND SITTING/NANNY VEHICLE.**

**** MR. MARCHESI SECONDED.**

**** MOTION FAILED TO PASS WITH TWO (2) VOTES IN FAVOR (GOODYEAR, MARCHESI) AND FIVE (5) VOTES OPPOSED (DALY, FLYNN, GRAHAM, GUTIERREZ, MORRIS).**

Mr. Coghlan requested that when they review the fees for the paddle tennis courts, that they be rounded up from \$37.50 to \$38.00 for the ½ hour court use.

UPDATE ON WEED BEACH MASTER PLAN PROJECT

Ms. Swiatek reported that the project is at a 53-54% completion rate, and they are looking at an April/May completion date. She said the sheetrock is being installed, the decking is being installed, and it was mentioned that the stonework on the bathhouse looks great. There was concern about the parking lot asphalt work, and the overflow parking area. She said that the area will have a natural and rustic look, with boulders in place.

DISCUSS BUDGET PROPOSAL FISCAL 2013

Ms. Swiatek distributed copies of the 2013 the Operating and Capital budgets. She has not yet received word from the Board of Finance. She will email the Commissioners when she receives an update.

REPORTS

a) Director

Ms. Swiatek said that due to the mild winter, many outside projects were able to be worked on. She provided pictures of the progress being made on the Weed Beach

project. She said staff has been working on repairing/maintaining equipment, rebuilding lifeguard chairs, and renovating Gallagher Field. She said the Little League has submitted plans for safety, irrigation, etc. The concept was approved in 2010. A permanent application is being prepared. This will be on the March agenda.

b) Assistant Director

Mr. Coghlan said the Spring/Summer catalogs are at the printer and the programs are on-line. The revenue from the paddle tennis courts is up. He discussed that the majority of the courts (four out of five) are reserved on a regular basis; the Commissioners discussed and agreed to leave one court open to have available for people who want to rent sporadically.

c) Chairman

The Commissioners discussed the dog leash issue for Cherry Lawn Park and Tilley Pond. Ms. Morris and Ms. Flynn are on the committee, with assistance from Mr. Goodyear, and this will be on the agenda for the March meeting. It was suggested that feedback be obtained from the DDOG group and the general public.

Ms. Morris mentioned that the three turf blankets installed over the soccer fields at Cherry Lawn Park is a great way to keep the field in good condition during the winter.

d) Sub-Committee

There was no sub-committee report.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (TWO THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED)

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN MEETING

**** MS. GUTIERREZ MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MR. GOODYEAR SECONDED.**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting ended at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr
Telesco Secretarial Services

**NEXT MEETING: Regular Meeting March 21, 2012 7:30 p.m.
Darien Town Hall, Room 119**