

Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes - Thursday, September 24, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Tom Ragonese. The meeting was held at Town Hall. Members present were Tom Ragonese, Rich Lepore, Kevin Rogers and Dan Silbo. Also present were Jeff Bridges, Town Manager and Kathleen Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation.

A. Public Comments.

No comments.

B. Minutes – August 27, 2009.

Dan Silbo moved to approve the minutes of August 27, 2009. The motion was seconded by Richard Lepore and voted unanimously.

C. Monthly Report – August, 2009.

The monthly report was reviewed by Board members. Chairperson Ragonese commented about the 375th Fireworks and Concert. Board members discussed the success of this event.

D. Letters and Announcements.

1. 375th Parade – September 27th – 1 p.m.

Chairperson Ragonese reminded Board members of the Town's parade coming up this weekend. Ms. Bagley provided members with an overview of the marching units.

2. Kevin Rogers reported that the new playscape at Highcrest School has been very popular. He sees children playing on it all the time.

E. Old Business.

1. New Little League Field – Press Box Status.

Chairperson Ragonese gave Board Members an update on the press box. He reported that the Building Committee had a meeting just prior to the Park Board meeting at 6 p.m. at Town Hall. Little League volunteers will be starting work on the press box shortly. They are currently buying the supplies needed for the press box and will start the work within the next couple of weeks. The Building Committee also discussed the additional small projects identified for the new field. These projects included extending the backstop an additional 6' high and extending the warning track down along the first and third base coach's boxes, and the entrances to the dugout. Chairperson Ragonese discussed the maintenance meeting he held with Dr. Dest, Bob Bauer, Roberto Giansiracusa and Kathy Bagley. Maintenance procedures for the field were reviewed. Dr. Dest will work with Bob Bauer to evaluate the water problem on the warning track in right field. Dan Silbo reminded members that it is now important to keep the field well-maintained.

2. Cove Docks - Approved by Historic District Commission.

Ms. Bagley reported to committee members that the plan for the Cove Docks was approved by the Historic District Commission and the next step is for submittal to the Inland Wetlands Commission. She will keep board members updated on the status of this project as it goes through the different town commissions for approval.

3. Greenfield Little League Field Renovation.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley for a status report on this renovation. Ms. Bagley reported that the town staff have skinned the infield and will be adding material to it. They also had a request from Little League to skin outside the foul line area and install drainage for the third-base dugout side. This work is being completed now.

4. Fall Field Maintenance.

Ms. Bagley gave Board members an update on field maintenance this season. After Greenfield Softball Field is completed, maintenance will begin work on the Webb Baseball Field and then the improvements to the new Mill Woods Little League Field. Time and weather permitting, maintenance staff will work on the High School Baseball Field. Currently many soccer fields are being maintained by the town and fall baseball is taking place at some town fields. Dan Silbo mentioned that the trails in Wintergreen Woods are in tough shape. There are still trees down from the tornado. In order to use the paths, you have to walk around or over the trees. Ms. Bagley is aware of this situation and is working with maintenance to get into the park to clear the trees. The tree crew is working on many different areas around town and Wintergreen Woods is not a priority at this time.

F. New Business.

1. Beaver Brook Park Study - Final Report.

Ms. Bagley distributed the consultant's final report on the Beaver Brook Park Study. She went over the consultant's recommendations for the park, and reviewed the large display maps developed by the consultant with the board members. One of the main recommendations of the consultant was to clean up Beaver Brook area and look to remove invasive plants along the brook. Board members were concerned with this plan for Beaver Brook Park, that Mill Woods Park would not be a priority. Ms. Bagley explained that these improvements to Beaver Brook Park would look at grant opportunities. Chairperson Ragonese was concerned that funding should go to the Board's next priority, which is the Soccer Field in Mill Woods Park. Board members had a discussion on publicizing the projects already completed in the Mill Woods Park Master Plan and look at ways in the future to fund the remaining items in the Master Plan.

2. Silas Robbins Bed and Breakfast.

Board member Dan Silbo asked for the Planning and Zoning policies for the Silas Robbins Bed and Breakfast as it relates to parking on the Broad Street Green. Board members wanted to know if the Planning and Zoning Commission can make rules about town parks. Board members did not see a problem with allowing the Bed and Breakfast customers to park on the Green. Ms. Bagley will research that information for the next meeting.

3. Dog Park Drainage.

Ms. Bagley reported that the drainage project in the Dog Park will be completed in October. The volunteer Dog Park committee is funding this project at a cost of approximately \$15,000. This work will eliminate a lot of the water that gets in the park after a rain storm.

G. Board Member Comments.

1. Cottone Field Lights.

Chairperson Ragonese reported that this project is moving forward. The Town has awarded a contract to install the light bases for this project. The volunteer committee is approximately \$150,000 short in purchasing the lights and light stands. They are working on getting additional donations from groups in town. The Town Manager is supportive of this project and is working with individuals and organizations to fund the lights for the stadium.

H. Motion to Adjourn.

A motion was made by Richard Lepore and seconded by Carmelo Amoddio to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director
Parks & Recreation Department