

## **Wethersfield Recreation and Parks Advisory Board Meeting Minutes - February 26, 2004**

The Wethersfield Recreation and Parks Advisory Board meeting was called to order by Chairperson Richard Dobmeier at 7:00 p.m. in the Town Manager's conference room in the Town Hall. Members present were Richard Dobmeier, Jackie Pentalow, Greg Even, Peter Kalousidan, Tom Ragonese (arrived at 8:15 p.m.) and Kathleen Bagley, Director, Recreation and Parks Department.

### A. Public Comments.

Members of the Connecticut Ultimate Frisbee Club were present at the Park Board meeting to discuss their request to use fields for their Ultimate Frisbee program. Spokesperson, Scott Blankenburg, addressed Board members on their request to use Cove Park to set up Frisbee fields for their league. He explained that the Connecticut Ultimate Frisbee Club is a non-profit group playing Ultimate Frisbee across the state. They have approximately 300 members and do a summer league and two winter leagues. They are looking to use Cove Park on Thursday nights for possibly up to eight fields for their members. As their letter stated, they do not need any special maintenance for the use of the fields. They would show up that night utilizing cones to designate their fields. He explained that they have approximately twelve Wethersfield residents in this club and would like to play in Wethersfield because of its central location in the state. Board members discussed this proposal with members of the club and explained that they would take this item up under New Business on their Agenda. Chairperson Dobmeier invited the members to stay until it came up under the Agenda item or to leave the meeting and come back when it came up on the Agenda. Mr. Blankenburg suggested that the majority of the members present would leave, but that he and a few others would return for the Agenda item. Members also discussed other facilities that might be available to accommodate their needs. Ms. Bagley explained that eight fields might be too large a capacity for Cove Park. She also reminded Board members that Thursday nights the Department of Motor Vehicle is open for business and the parking lots would not be available. Therefore, Thursday night would not be a good night to give permission for Ultimate Frisbee to be at Cove Park. Board members will discuss this further under New Business.

### B. [Minutes - December 18, 2003.](#)

Greg Even moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Peter Kalousdian and voted unanimously. There were no minutes for the January 22, 2004, meeting, as there was no quorum.

### C. Monthly Reports - December, 2003 and January, 2004.

Board members reviewed the monthly reports.

### D. Letters and Announcements.

1. Recreation and Parks Board member list presented to them for their information.
2. Letter from Evangelical Free Church Requesting Use of a Soccer Field.

Ms. Bagley reported that this request was approved last year and she was bringing it to the Board's attention since new Board members have been appointed when this original request was approved. She explained there were no problems with the request and felt it was appropriate to go forward with it. Board members concurred with her suggestion.

3. Letter from Historical Society for Craft Fair at Cove Park.

Ms. Bagley reported, once again, that this is an annual event at Cove Park and has been approved in the past by the Board. She brought it to the Board's attention for their information. At this time, she also notified the Board that the Chamber of Commerce is investigating the possibility of moving the Corn Fest from the Board Street Green to Cove Park. She will keep Board members updated as the Chamber

evaluates the proposal to change the location of the Corn Fest. She did mention to Board members that one or two people in the community had contacted her in opposition to this location change because they felt it was too close to the Historical Society's craft fair on October 4. Since the Corn Fest would be September 18, that would leave two weeks between these two large events. Ms. Bagley explained that once the Chamber of Commerce make the decision regarding the location, they will approach the Park Board for permission for the change in location.

4. Wethersfield High School Class Reunion.

Ms. Bagley gave this information to the Board and explained that the Class of 1984 wanted to hold a picnic in Mill Woods Park on September 19, 2004.

E. Old Business.

1. Moeller Home Update.

Ms. Bagley reported that the architect did the preliminary design for the renovation of the Moeller Home into the Nature Center. She reported that he developed plans that are very attractive for handicapped accessibility into the building. As soon as the Building Committee reviews the plans, they will give the architect the OK to go forward with the next phase of the process.

2. Report on Skate Park Project.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Committee has been fund raising with a variety of events. To date, they have collected \$7,000 towards their goal of \$ 125,000. She explained that the students are working very hard to increase their fund raising for the park and also have met with a designer to look at what features they want to include in the park.

3. Report on Mill Woods Master Plan Meeting.

Board member, Tom Ragonese, reported that the February 19 meeting went very well. He explained that the volunteers who came to this meeting have a strong interest in seeing the plan implemented and had good suggestions. He explained that the Committee has decided to focus on a small part of the plan in order to accomplish something in a reasonable amount of time. They have decided to focus on the building of soccer field #2 and Little League field #2. Both these fields are located at opposite ends of the park and would help bring the utilities to each end of the park. Tom reported that committee members volunteered to handle a variety of tasks and will report at the next meeting what they have accomplished. Ms. Bagley suggested that the Advisory Recreation and Parks Board appoint a chairman from the Board to oversee this committee. The unanimous selection was Tom Ragonese. The next meeting for this sub-committee is March 18. This sub-committee has set their upcoming meetings for the third Thursday of each month. Tom Ragonese reported that a great deal was accomplished in this initial meeting to begin the implementation of the Master Plan.

4. Status of Fence at Stillman Baseball Field.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Building Committee for the renovation of the Stillman Building has recommended not installing a fence between the new parking lot and the baseball field even though this was the recommendation of town staff. Upon hearing this, the Town Manager requested a site visit from the town's insurance agent to determine if safety would be a problem because of the lack of a fence. The town's insurance agent sent a letter to the Town Manager reporting that the fence is necessary to handle safety concerns between the baseball field and the parking lot. Ms. Bagley asked Board members to support her request to close the field if the fence is not installed. Board members supported her request and will send a letter to the Town Manager stating the fence should be included as part of the renovation plans for the Stillman Building; otherwise, the town will need to close the field because of safety concerns.

F. New Business.

1. Col. Chester Fife & Drum Corps Muster at Board Street Green - June 5, 2004.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Fife & Drum Corps is requesting permission to have a muster at the Green on June 5. She saw no problem with this request and recommended that the Board approve it. Board members had no problem with this request and felt it was an appropriate use for the Green.

2. Rental Fee Waiver for Not for Profit Groups using Community Center Meeting Rooms.

Board members reviewed the memo from Ms. Bagley identifying a change in the rental fee process at the Community Center. They concurred with her request and voted to make a recommendation to the Town Council to amend the fee policy and to allow not for profit groups one meeting a month free at the Community Center in one function room on a weekday from 8am to 10p.m. A motion was made by Jackie Pentalow, seconded by Greg Even and voted unanimously to send this recommendation to Town Council.

3. Review of Program Registration Fees.

Board members reviewed the recommended program fees distributed in their packet for the upcoming Fiscal Year. Ms. Bagley reported that these fees have gone up incrementally each year and the Town Manager has asked each department to look at raising additional funds for the upcoming budget year. Board members reviewed the new fee requests for next year and approved recommending them to the Town Council. A motion was made by Tom Ragonese and seconded by Jackie Pentalow to send the new fee recommendations to Town Council.

4. Donations/Fees for Private Groups using Fields.

At this time, the Board discussed the Ultimate Frisbee Club's request to use Cove Park for their central location. Board members felt if the town could work it out without impacting any other resident programs to go forward with it. They did not want to see Stillman Park used for this purpose and wanted to make sure any other parks suggested for this group would not impact resident's use. Board members were concerned about the balance between resident's use of town facilities and the ability to make our facilities available to outside groups. Ms. Bagley suggested looking at fees to charge groups for the use of their facilities and possibly this money could be put into a fund for the Mill Woods Master Plan. She will look into this possibility. She explained that other outside groups have requested the use of town facilities and this might be a good way to help raise funds for the Mill Woods Master Plan as long as resident use takes top priority and we do not abuse our fields. Chairman Dobmeier asked Ms. Bagley to meet with the Ultimate Frisbee group to see if anything could be worked out for the use of Cove Park on a night not being used by Little League or soccer. Ms. Bagley will look into this and will work with the Frisbee group on this item.

5. Youth Sport Groups.

Tom Ragonese asked if Board members would consider inviting representatives from each group in town to provide the Board with information on their operation and organization. He suggested it might be appropriate to find out how these groups operate and what their registration numbers are for each organization. Board members thought this was a good idea. Chairman Dobmeier asked Ms. Bagley to work with the groups to invite them to a Park Board meeting. Groups identified were Wethersfield George Ritchie Soccer, Men's Softball, Little League, youth football and youth basketball. Items suggested for each group to speak on are their procedures, by-laws, budget and operation.

6. Ms. Bagley reported that Little League may be requesting the use of Cedar Street as a ballfield. She will keep the Board posted on this item.

G. Adjournment.

Tom Ragonese moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:15 p.m. The motion was seconded by Jackie Pentalow and voted unanimously.

