

Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Harbor Management Commission
Minutes - Thursday, November 15, 2012

The meeting was held at Wethersfield Town Hall and called to order by Chairperson Tom Ragonese at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Tom Ragonese, Richard Lepore, Tom Mull and Jeremy Donnelly. Also present were Kathy Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation and Marty Sitler, Recreation Supervisor.

Chairperson Ragonese welcomed Mr. Donnelly to the Advisory Parks and Recreation Board and the Harbor Management Commission.

A. Public Comments - None.

B. Minutes – October 25, 2012.

Richard Lepore moved to approve the minutes of the October 25, 2012 monthly meeting. The motion was seconded by Tom Mull and approved unanimously. Mr. Mull asked about the status of the work on Softball Fields #3 and #4. Ms. Bagley reported that the Physical Services staff has installed drainage on Fields #3 and #4, regraded the infields and installed turf on the infields. Additional drainage work will be done in the spring.

C. Monthly Report – October 2012.

The Monthly Report was reviewed by Board members. Chairperson Ragonese asked who is in charge of youth basketball in town. Mr. Sitler responded that Mr. Tom Pentalow is the director of the youth basketball program.

D. Letters and Announcements.

1. Santa's Pancake Breakfast – December 1, 2012 from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the Community Center. Ms. Bagley provided information on this special event that benefits Special Olympics. Santa visits with children in the Fireside Room and the pancakes are served in the Banquet Room. A horse and wagon ride are provided on the streets adjacent to the Community Center.
2. Holidays on Main & Tree Lighting/Carol Sing – December 6, 2012 from 5:00 – 9:00 p.m. on Main Street. Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley for a status report on the plans for this event. She explained that the Chamber of Commerce has a great schedule of events for this program, including ice carvers, fire juggler and horse and carriage rides.

E. Old Business.

1. Review Boat Launching Fees at Wethersfield Cove.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley to review the reports enclosed in their packet on the boat launching fees at Wethersfield Cove. These reports included a history of past fees, five year comparison of revenue at the facility and a survey of launching fees in the area. Ms. Bagley also provided a memo recommending no fee changes at this time. Board members and staff discussed these reports and the new improvements that will be done to this launching facility. Improvements include new docks, additional moorings and installation of navigational aids. Chairperson Ragonese reviewed Mr. Randall's email to the Board asking that the fees be reviewed and consideration be given to reducing fees for canoes and kayaks. Mr. Randall's email was included in the Board packet. Board members felt that they should consider new fees after the improvements are completed at the Cove and look at it as a big package, not do fees on an individual basis. They did not see a need to reduce or increase fees at this time. Chairperson Ragonese directed Ms. Bagley to contact Mr. Randall and let him know the Board's position at this time on the fees. They recognize his concerns and will consider it when all the improvements are completed. Timetable for improvements is late summer of 2013.

F. New Business.

1. Community Center Used as a Shelter During Hurricane Sandy – October 29, 30 & 31.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Community Center opened as a shelter with 18 people staying overnight on Monday, October 29. Shelter closed Wednesday, October 31. No residents stayed overnight on Tuesday, but shelter remained open for warming and charging electronics.

G. Board Member Comments.

Chairperson Ragonese asked what groups used the lights at Cottone Field this season. Ms. Bagley reported that all the high school fall sports used the lights, including the band. The Youth Football program had the use of the lights for one of their games too.

The next meeting for the Board is December 20, 2012. Board members decided to hold this meeting at Lucky Lou's restaurant in town. The meeting will start at 7:00 pm.

H. Harbor Management Commission

1. Harbormaster Report.

Chairperson Ragonese reviewed the Harbormaster report included in their packet. The timetable for the new dock installation is August/September of 2013 if the Boating Infrastructure grant paperwork is completed in a timely manner by the State. Chairperson Ragonese noted that the Army Corp is continuing their study of two locations for placement of the dredged material from the Cove channel. One location is property owned by Mr. Anderson in the meadows and the other location is in the Connecticut River near the Cove channel.

2. Chairperson Ragonese asked the status of sending the Harbor Management Plan to the Town Council. Ms. Bagley reported that they are targeting the second meeting in December for approval of the plan.

3. Chairperson Ragonese discussed the condition of the Harbormaster boat with Commission members. Ms. Bagley reported that the center console of the boat has separated from the bottom of the boat and needs to be evaluated for repair. The boat is 35 years old and will need to be looked at to determine if it can be repaired or needs to be replaced. The Town Harbormaster and Parks and Recreation staff are following up on this issue.

4. Chairperson Ragonese reported that he will be attending the annual Connecticut Harbor Management Banquet on November 29, 2012.

5. Pump out Station for Wethersfield Cove.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley for an update. Ms. Bagley reported that they have purchased the portable pump out cart for the Cove and it will be put into use at the next boating season. The pump out cart was purchased with a grant from the state for 75% of the purchase cost.

I. Motion to Adjourn.

A motion was made by Richard Lepore and seconded by Tom Mull to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director
Parks & Recreation Department