

TOWN OF NORTH BRANFORD

TOWN HALL, 909 FOXON ROAD, NORTH BRANFORD, CONECTICUT 06471-1290

Parks and Recreation Commission
STW Community Center 1332 Middletown Avenue, Northford, Ct. 06472
Thursday, January 23, 2018 – 6 pm

Minutes

Present: Brian Lynch, Michelle Provencher, Victor Palma, Steve Torino and John Onofrio.

Also Present: Lauren Munro, Director; Rose Angelino, Council Liaison; Shawn Keogh, Program Supervisor; Michael Rice and Jim Kuabell, NBYFC; Donna Pursley, Hazwaste and Marie Ponzlo, Marge Healy, Bill Savastrano, Hunter and Mason Provencher.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brian Lynch at 6:05 pm and the Minutes of November 28 2017 were accepted on the Motion by Michelle Provencher, second by Steve Torino.

Parks and Fields: Discussion and Action:

a. Eagle Scout Projects: Lauren said Toby Tarantino the Eagle Scout Candidate will try for the next meeting. Time is of the essence.

b. Park Signs: Lauren has done a survey of the Town Parks and said that Mill Road has no sign and Northford Park sign needs to be upgraded; North Farms has no sign; Totoket Valley is in poor condition. The sign the Commission wanted at Northford Park prohibiting cars driving/parking on the fields is in place. Since it is intended that all signs be alike in Town, the Commission has discussed them several times in the past and Rose Angeloni recommended that the Commission make a list of the parks and fields that need signs and designate priority, such as Mill Road, which has none and Northford Park where the sign should be upgraded, then design a sign that would be acceptable. Lauren mentioned the Dog Park, and who might be responsible for that one.

Rose said that the Town Planner is working with the State because main roads Rt. 80, 22 and 17 are State Highway entries to the town from surrounding towns, so there is a question if the town signs should match the State signs or not, but with limited funds and lack of space it is moving slowly.

Brian questioned if the park signs needed to match the so called Welcome to town signs. Victor recommended that they put together a list of the parks and which signs were needed in priority order, make a design and look into the cost and submit it to the Town Manager, Town Planner and from there to the Town Council to request appropriation of funds. There are many parks that have not had signs in as many as 5 years and John said that signs are also needed identifying the various practice fields within the parks for people who are unaware of their location, so it's not just Park signs, but Field Signs as well. Brian suggested that Lauren reach out to the vender for prices as a first step.

c. Colter and Memorial Signs: These fields must be addressed for signs that include Reigeluth Tennis Court which had been requested to be replaced by the family back in October and was once so designated. There was also a request for a field to honor the Zyrtec family member Parks and Rec can't do so, only the Town Council can name fields.

d. Trash Removal: Lauren Michelle and John, with Town Manager, Michelle Knockwood met with John's Refuse, who still has the trash pickup contract, to express the concerns about lack of trash pickup last season and they are going to do a walk thru the end of March to discuss location of the bins prior to the season.

e. Portlets: Lauren has postponed the RFQ that will be resubmitted to Town Council on the 6th for this coming season. Jerome Harrison only had one and has been exchanged for a handicapped one because of the amount of games played there.

Town Sports Organizations: Discussion and Action

a. Football Fence: Michael Rice asked if their current field is considered their permanent field, inasmuch as they could qualify for funding under a special program if the field was designated to be their permanent home field. Questioned as to whether it had to be used exclusively by USFL, or if other field sports such as Lacrosse could use the field, he said as long as the field was outlined for football, other lines could be added, it wouldn't be restricted to football.

He submitted a list of requested modifications with permanent goal posts being of priority, especially if the request for a low 4' high permanent chain link fence is approved, whereby the portable ones currently used could not be moved around. He explained the need for a low fence being to prevent people from crossing the field during games. Bystanders have done it in the past and also with young players, it is a safety factor to prevent them from roaming. Concerning the field it should have a crown to it, with curtain drains around the sides for drainage. Other requests were for permanent bathrooms, extending the upper parking lot and extension of the current parking lot barrier; and additional sets of sideline benches and bleachers which have been in the budget for a few years. His request for moving the scoreboard to the hill at the end of the field by the Police Station was discussed and considered a tech problem that would have to be researched.

b. Little League Updates: Joe Mascari sent an email to Lauren explaining their plans and needs for the new season which includes 5 pitching mounds and a batting cage at Memorial/Coulter Fields, locations have not been decided yet and have already approved the funds for a new scoreboard at Coulter, location to be decided by Fran Merlo at Public Works, however it will have to go out to bid.

Bill Savastrano asked what date was opening day for Little League, but no one was sure.

Lauren passed out a proposal for rules for field use and there was a brief discussion, but she asked the members to take them to look over for anything they might see that should be corrected, added or omitted and be prepared to discuss them at the next meeting so they can be ready to send out prior to the start of seasonal use of the fields. There is emphasis on having a person designated and responsible to check the condition of the field prior to play and cancel if it is unsuitable to prevent damage that Town Public Works will have to repair.

Program Review: Discussion and Action

a. Tree Lighting: A huge success; very well attended and the additional attractions were excellent. Traffic and parking became a problem, so next year it will be given more consideration. Hopefully more will be added next year. There was also a recommendation to arrange for more/better lighting in the area. The possibility of ice skating was mentioned, but liability and dependence upon weather make it almost impossible. An acrylic surface was mentioned and discarded as too expensive, though something like that would be lovely.

b. Update: Yoga has been added as a new program on Monday during the day, Thursday evening and Saturday for children, which Shawn has set up and they're full and running. Basketball team numbers are up. Pickleball has so much interest that so many people are here we are going to have to make some adjustments, it's all up and full.

The new Spring Summer Brochure will be out at the end of the month.

Bill Savastrano talked about Earth Day and a recycling program collecting plastic, such as shopping bags. Several citizens and Donna Pursley, Hazwaste were present with him, to request permission to erect a tent during opening day of the Little League to promote the collection of plastic bags

for recycling which is being done though out town at many locations, including the libraries, Town Hall and Parks and Rec, with the prize being a bench for anyone collecting some 500 lbs. they would be rewarded with a park bench with a limit of two per year per organization. It was suggested to contact businesses to request them to participate. The Commission saw no problem using the park and recommended that they approach the Potato Corn Festival Committee also for space to explain the project and gain interest. Victor recommended that they attend an affair in North Haven April to get more ideas for promoting recycling.

STW Community Center: Discussion and Action

- a. Tennis Courts – Nothing to update. Issues are being addressed.
- b. RFQ Food: Bids need to be done. Spent over the threshold...
- c. RFQ Portlets: To Town Council on the 6th.
- d. Part Time Cook: Town Council did allow for 17.5 hrs. a week and the ad is going out to the papers this week. Brian asked who the Breakfast was targeted to and Lauren explained that it was the general public, working citizens and senior who were early arrivals and fitness room members.
- e. Updates: Lauren showed the new Logo that Parks and Rec will use for marketing, conferences, and will be used on the Spring Summer Brochure which was approved on the motion by Steve Torino, second by Victor Palma She also requested members to attend a special budget preparation meeting to prepare for the Town Budget meetings. Consensus was that Tuesday is the best day and Lauren will get back to them with the date. Steve requested it to not be the first week and Rose asked that it not be on Town Council nights.

She also congratulated Victor who has been reappointed to the Commission to December 2019 and John to December 2020.

Steve asked that Lauren request Town Council to allow members of the Commission to have input into interviews concerning new Parks and Rec personal when they are hiring. He also requested that the Potato and Corn Festival be added to the P & R Agenda each month so they could discuss it during meetings, but Brian said that they had their own agenda and anyone interested could attend those meetings for information, he didn't think it was up to the Commission to be micro managing their committee. Their meeting schedule isn't set yet but Tuesday nights were good for Jen and they will be working on it when she is back from vacation. He also asked for an update on the state of the dishwasher and Lauren said she had requested a written estimate from Ken Ashe, but hasn't gotten it yet and is waiting before approving the money. Steve had a question concerning snow days the need for snow removal when employees were here when they could just as easily be working from home and be more productive. Victor explained that that is an operational issue and should be asked of the Town Council.

Steve questioned using Social Media and if it could be a budget item, to which Brian explained t it is already there under additional advertising and can be addressed at the Special Budget meeting next month and if it is thought to be important enough for a request for additional money be allowed for it, address it to the Town Manager.

Senior Center: Discussion and Action

- a. Holiday Luncheon: Well attended with some 65 attendees many of whom stayed for the entertainment by the 4th Grade from TVS and the program was enjoyed by all.
- b. Tree of Giving: Tees were set up in both libraries and the Community Center. Trees were decorated with gift requests that were replaced with Angels, and over 100 seniors in town were beneficiaries of gifts. Very well received and especially appreciated were the gift cards for shopping at Big Y. Both Libraries and the Food Pantry contributed to make it a successful event.
- c. Wash Sink: Waiting for written estimates.
- d. P T Cook: (Discussed above)

e. P T Van Driver: We budgeted for this position. It was approved last week at the Town Council meeting to fill at 17.5 hours a week.

f. Updates - None

Public Comment:

Adjournment motion made by Victor, second by Steve and the meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Leigh Bianchi
Clerk