

Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes - Thursday, June 23, 2011

The meeting was held at Town Hall and called to order by Chairperson Tom Ragonese at 7:00 p.m. Members present were Chairperson Tom Ragonese, Dan Silbo, John Rascius, Carmelo Amoddio and Peter Mozzicato. Also present were Michael Hurley, Town Council Liaison and Kathleen Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation.

A. Public Comments – None.

B. Minutes – May 26, 2011.

Dan Silbo moved to approve the minutes of May 26, 2011. The motion was seconded by Carmelo Amoddio and approved unanimously.

C. Monthly Report – April, 2011.

The Monthly Report was reviewed by Board members. Chairperson Ragonese noted that the Memorial Day Parade was very successful with a lot of marching units and spectators watching the parade.

D. Letters and Announcements.

1. Summer pools will open June 25th.
2. Summer programs will begin on June 27.

Ms. Bagley reported that her department has offered more financial aid this season and has worked with families to set up payment plans for their children's summer camp registrations.

E. Old Business.

1. Cottone Field Lights Project.

Chairperson Ragonese reported that the project is on schedule. The light towers are scheduled to be delivered on June 27.

2. Willard Pool Filters.

Ms. Bagley explained that the new filters are installed and operating properly. Some punch list items remain to be completed. The pool is ready to open on June 25.

3. Mill Woods Parking Lot Expansion.

Chairperson Ragonese explained that the project is moving along. Physical Services staff are constructing this expansion parking lot adjacent to the picnic area in the park. Mr. Mozzicato noted that four donated telephone poles have been delivered and more are on the way. A total of 10 poles have been requested. Chairperson Ragonese thanked Mr. Mozzicato for his efforts in getting the telephone poles donated for this project. Physical Services should complete this project in July.

4. Harbor Management Commission/Cove Boat Launch Area.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Town Manager has given approval for the Park Board to be appointed as the Harbor Management Commission. He will send the information to the Town Attorney for review and then to the Town Council for action. Park and Recreation staff have applied for a small grant from the State Department of Environmental Protection to purchase a portable pump out station for boats at the Cove. This grant will also cover staff costs to operate the pump out station.

The permit process is ongoing with the State Department of Environmental Protection for the new dock system and boat launch ramp at the Cove. The State will probably request some soil samples at the location where excavation will take place for the Boat Launch ramp. Ms. Bagley will keep the Park Board updated on the status of the permit process.

F. New Business.

1. Tour of Parks.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Board members for their input on setting the date for the summer park tour. Board members suggested the tour for August so that they could see the new lights at Cottone Football Field, Mill Woods parking lot and Wilkus Farm open space property. The tour will start at 5:30 p.m. and members will meet at the Keeney Cultural Center parking lot. Dinner will follow at Lucky Lou's restaurant in Old Wethersfield.

2. Park Bench at Broad Street Green.

Ms. Bagley announced that a new park bench will be installed at the Broad Street Green. This bench will be wood and carved out of one of the trees the Town lost on the Green during the tornado of 2009. Chris Hall, a town resident, has been working on the bench and a location has been picked out. It will be installed this summer.

3. STEAP Grant.

Council liaison, Mike Hurley, reported that the Town Council submitted a grant application to the State asking for funds for improvements to Mill Woods Park. This STEAP Grant application requested \$500,000 to fix the beach drainage at Mill Woods Swim Center, pave the new parking lot at the picnic area and fix the pavement on the park roads. Chairperson Ragonese thanked Mr. Hurley and the Town Council for submitting this application for improvements Mill Woods Park.

4. Vacant Lot at the Intersection of Nott and Westlook Streets.

Ms. Bagley distributed a memo from Town Manager, Jeff Bridges, on behalf of the Town Council. The Town Council would like the Park Board to review the potential of developing the lot at the corner of Nott and Westlook Streets into a park with park-like amenities. Specifically, they would like some feedback on the appropriateness of this particular parcel being developed as a public park and what amenities, if any, could or should be included in that park. Council liaison, Mike Hurley, gave Board members some background information on this request. He explained that the Town Council had reviewed four parcels in town to determine if the Town should keep them. These four parcels were Savage Park (on Silas Deane Highway next to Corpus Christi Church), Middletown Avenue parcel, Crest Street Park and this fourth parcel at the intersection of Nott and Westlook. The Town Council is looking for input from the Park Board. Board members discussed the vacant lot at the intersection of Nott and Westlook. They felt the location was not safe because of the traffic on Nott Street and that this parcel was not conducive for a park. Also, Board members wanted to focus on their existing properties because of limited funds. John Rascius moved to not endorse this parcel as parkland. The motion was seconded by Carmelo Amoddio and voted unanimously.

G. Board Member Comments.

1. Picnic Pavilion in Mill Woods Park.

Mr. Rascius asked about the status of this project. Ms. Bagley reported that the volunteer committee is beginning their fundraising process. Target date is next summer for installation.

2. Granite Bench at High School.

John Rascius reported that the granite bench vandalized at the high school near the track has been replaced. He asked Ms. Bagley to look into the location of low wires at the high school near the fence by the track and by the football concession area. She will look into these locations.

H. Motion to Adjourn.

A motion was made by Dan Silbo and seconded by Carmelo to adjourn the meeting at 8:07 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director
Parks & Recreation Department