

Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Minutes - Thursday, January 28, 2010

The meeting was held at the Town Hall and called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Tom Ragonese. Members present were Tom Ragonese, Dan Silbo, Richard Lepore and Tom Pentalow. Also present were Michael Hurley, Council Liaison and Kathleen Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation.

A. Public Comments.

No comments.

B. Minutes – December 17, 2009.

Dan Silbo moved to approve the minutes of December 17, 2009. The motion was seconded by Richard Lepore and approved unanimously.

C. Monthly Report – December, 2009.

The Monthly Report was reviewed by Board members. Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley about the December vacation programs. Ms. Bagley told Board members that the department held a variety of programs over the December vacation week. The Nature Center held different programs during the week, the 9/11 Memorial Sports Center held a children's fun day and field trips to bowling and laser tag were offered to children. All programs were busy and the fun day at the sports center was filled to capacity. Many of these programs will be offered for the February vacation week.

Tom Pentalow, who organizes the youth basketball program in town, gave an update. New this season is a boy's high school program with 90 boys registered. Youth basketball has purchased drop down basketball hoops that are 9 ½' high for boys and 8 ½' for girls for the third and fourth grade programs located at Charles Wright and Highcrest Schools. These basketball hoops fold up and are easy to store at the schools. They help the children become more successful in shooting baskets and enjoying the sport. Richard Lepore mentioned that he has attended basketball games at Silas Deane Middle School and the gymnasium is a great facility for the town.

D. Letters and Announcements.

None.

E. Old Business.

1. New Little League Field – Press Box Status.

Chairperson Ragonese gave an update on the press box. The exterior of the building is almost complete. The roof has been completed and the building just needs to be painted. Painting will be done in the spring by the town painter. The sliding door for the press box window has been installed and the next step is to place the electricity in the building and finish work on the lift. This work is all scheduled to be completed before the 2010 season. Chairperson Ragonese noted that many of the fallen trees from the tornado had not been cleared yet. Ms. Bagley has been talking with the town tree crew to get this area cleared before the start of the Little League season. As weather permits they will be clearing the area. Ms. Bagley updated board members on the status of the playscape adjacent to the field. This playscape was damaged during the tornado and has been approved for replacement by the town's insurance carrier. Town staff are beginning the purchasing process for this equipment.

2. Wintergreen Woods.

Chairperson Ragonese asked if the downed trees had been cleared in Wintergreen Woods. Ms. Bagley reported that the main trail in the woods had been cleared and woodchips from Christmas trees were being spread by town staff. The tree crew will be working to clear the side trails in the near future.

3. Cove Park Docks.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley for the status on the Cove Dock review process. Ms. Bagley reported that the Town Inland Wetlands Commission is reviewing this project and has continued their public hearing until their next meeting in February. The Inland Wetlands Commission is studying the plans and allowing the public the opportunity to provide feedback on these plans.

F. New Business.

1. Budget 2010-11.

Chairperson Ragonese noted that it is budget time again. He asked Ms. Bagley to provide a status report on the department's budget. Ms. Bagley explained that the Town Manager is having department's prepare their budgets at this time. He has requested that departments try to reach a zero budget increase, if possible. Department Heads have met with the Town Manager and the Budget and Finance Committee of the Town Council to discuss this process and look at ways to reduce budget costs. She is putting her budget together now. Richard Lepore asked if fees needed to be increased for any programs. Ms. Bagley explained that staff is looking to maintain existing fees because of the economy. She will keep the board informed on any proposed fee increases. Staff members want to keep the programs affordable for families. The department provides scholarships for children to attend programs.

Ms. Bagley presented the Capital Improvement Projects budget request to the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee on January 20th. She gave them the Parks and Recreation Board's priority list for these projects. They reviewed each project and will determine what projects to fund for the upcoming budget year. Town Councilor Hurley explained that he had talked with Town Councilor Drake about our Capital Improvement Projects. Councilor Drake is the liaison to the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee.

2. Refund Policy.

Board members asked about the new refund policy for the department. Ms. Bagley reported that refunds will be issued before the program begins and a \$10 processing fee will be charged for each program refund.

3. Use of Greenfield Little League Field.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley if the use of the Greenfield Little League field had been requested by the High School softball team. Ms. Bagley was unaware of such a request, but would check with staff. Chairperson Ragonese wanted to make sure that Little League would have first priority on this field since it was just renovated for the girls Little League Program. Ms. Bagley will check into this issue and get back to Chairperson Ragonese.

G. Motion to Adjourn.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director
Parks & Recreation Department