

Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board  
Minutes - Thursday, February 26, 2009

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Tom Ragonese. The meeting was held in the Town Hall, Conference Room #1. Members present were Tom Ragonese, Daniel Silbo, Carmelo Amoddio and Kevin Rogers. Also present was Kathleen Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation.

A. Public Comments.

No comments.

B. Minutes – January 22, 2009.

Dan Silbo moved to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Kevin Rogers and voted unanimously.

C. Monthly Report – January 2009.

Monthly report was reviewed by members.

D. Letters and Announcements.

1. Chamber of Commerce Request to Hold the 25<sup>th</sup> Cornfest and Business Expo on the Broad Street Green - September 12, 2009.

Chairperson Ragonese referred to the letter submitted by Chamber President Maureen Kennedy requesting permission to hold the Cornfest on the Broad Street Green on September 12. Ms. Bagley explained that the Cornfest has been held on the Green for many years with the permission of the Park Board. Chamber members felt it was time to request the renewal of permission to use the Broad Street Green. Board members have no problem with this request. They like having the Cornfest at the Broad Street Green and no problems have happened due to this event. Dan Silbo moved to approve the Chamber of Commerce's request to use the Broad Street Green for the Cornfest on September 12, 2009. The motion was seconded by Kevin Rogers and voted unanimously.

2. Town's Proposed Acquisition of Wilkus Farm for Open Space.

Chairperson Ragonese discussed with Board members the Town's proposed acquisition of approximately 80 acres of open space on three separate properties owned by the Wilkus family. Ms. Bagley provided a map for Board members to review the location of these three parcels. Board members were supportive of the acquisition of this property.

3. Foote Family Association.

Ms. Bagley reported to the Board that she received an e-mail from John Foote requesting permission to hold their bi-annual reunion in Wethersfield the weekend of August 8th and 9th at the Broad Street Green. This year marks the 101st year since the Foote monument was originally dedicated by the Association. On August 8<sup>th</sup> they would like to gather on the green for a re-dedication ceremony of the monument. They anticipate 70 to 100 association members will be in the area to attend the ceremony. Nathaniel Foote was one of the original 10 adventurers who settled in Wethersfield traveling down from Massachusetts. His home was located in the general area of the monument. Their agenda would include a lunch on the Green, followed by the ceremony. They are anticipating having some speakers at this event. They will need to use the Green from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., however the majority of their members will be there from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Board members discussed this request. They recognize there are no events on the Green in August and thought this was an appropriate event for the Green. Kevin Rogers moved to approve the Foote Family Association of America's request to hold its bi-annual reunion in Wethersfield on August 8 at the Broad Street Green for a rededication ceremony at the Foote monument. The motion was seconded by Dan Silbo and voted unanimously.

4. A Street Sign in Memory of Dick Dobmeier.

Chairman Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley the status of naming the road in Mill Woods Park after Mr. Dobmeier. Ms. Bagley reported that the family has approved the wording for the sign. The next step is to get the permission of the Town Council. This request will be put on the Town Council agenda for March 16. Chairperson Ragonese asked Board members to attend the Council meeting on March 16 and express support for this memorial. Ms. Bagley showed Board members the street sign for the Mill Woods Park road named Dick Dobmeier Lane.

5. Silas Robbins Bed and Breakfast.

Ms. Bagley distributed a letter from the Planning and Zoning Commission, identifying the stipulations for the renewal of the application by the Silas Robbins Bed and Breakfast to hold outdoor special events. Board members reviewed this letter.

E. Old Business.

1. Mill Woods Park Building Committee - Project Status.

Chairperson Ragonese reported that no work has been done over the winter on the field. However, Ms. Bagley is working with Little League to build the press box as a volunteer project in town.

F. New Business.

1. Proposed Budget 2009 - 2010.

Chairperson Ragonese reviewed the Parks and Recreation's proposed 2009 - 2010 proposed budget with Board members. He asked Ms. Bagley to give a brief overview of these budgets. Ms. Bagley explained that there are four Parks and Recreation budgets. One is the Nature Center, one for the Community Center, one for Park Maintenance and one for the main Parks and Recreation budget. Each of these budgets was submitted to the town manager with a 0% increase for next year. In order to achieve a 0% increase Parks and Recreation staff worked on making more programs self-sustaining and taking them out of the operating budget. Board members reviewed the budget and recognized that there was very little increase in any budget amounts. Ms. Bagley also pointed out that she took the suggestion of Board Member, Dan Silbo, to identify the revenue each budget turns into the Town general fund. Board members discussed all the fees for the programs and suggested Ms. Bagley review the pool pass fee to see if it could be increased. Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley if she needed to increase fees at this time. Ms. Bagley is trying not to raise fees because of the economy. Board members said they were only talking about a five dollar fee increase for the pool pass. Ms. Bagley will review this suggestion with staff as they go through the budget process. Board members also discussed other fees and the daily admission fee for the pools. They suggested developing a proposal for a discount policy if you sign up for a certain number of programs. Ms. Bagley will review this idea with staff too. Board members were giving suggestions, because they know this will be a difficult budget process and everything will be on the table. Ms. Bagley explained that the Town could close one pool for the summer to save money. If that were the case, she would recommend closing Mill Woods Pool and leaving Willard Pool open. The reason for this selection is because sometimes Mill Woods Pool is closed because of thunderstorms that wash out the beach and close the pool. She does not want to have a time in the summer when there is no pool available to residents. Board members understood the selection but felt that Mill Woods Park is the town's flagship park with the new facilities and they did not want to close the pool. Ms. Bagley will keep that in mind as the budget process continues.

2. Season Pool Pass Policy.

Chairperson Ragonese discussed the revised pool pass policy with Board members. Ms. Bagley pointed out that the only major change is that a family pool pass will now allow only two adults and any number of children. In the past, the department would allow families to list more than two adults if they lived in the same household. This policy was abused by some people and they would put four or five adults on the pass. This revised policy will help to eliminate that abuse. Dan Silbo moved to approve the revised season pool pass policy. The motion was seconded by Carmelo Amoddio and voted unanimously.

3. Proposed Change in Fees for Use of Cove Park Boat Launch Area.

Chairperson Ragonese discussed the proposed fee changes to the Cove Boat Launch Area with Board members. Board members had no questions on increasing these fees. Ms. Bagley reported that these fees were increased due to research done by staff and the Harbor Masters. Kevin Rogers moved to approve the change in fees for the Cove Boat Launch Area. The motion was seconded by Dan Silbo and voted unanimously.

G. Motion to Adjourn.

Dan Silbo moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 p.m. Motion seconded by Kevin Rodgers and voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director  
Parks and Recreation Department