

Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board Minutes - Thursday, February 28, 2008

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Tom Ragonese at 7:00 p.m. at the Town Hall in conference room #1. Members present were Tom Ragonese, Rich Lepore and Dan Silbo. Also present was Kathleen Bagley, Director, Parks and Recreation Department. Ms. Bagley reported that Council Liaison Jeff Kotkin called and explained that he would be unable to make tonight's meeting.

A. Public Comments.

No public comments.

B. Minutes - [January 24, 2008](#).

Dan Silbo moved to approve the minutes. Motion was seconded by Rich Lepore and voted unanimously.

C. Monthly Report - January, 2008.

Members reviewed the report.

D. Letters and Announcements.

1. Memorial Fund for Dick Dobmeier.

Miss Bagley reported that the family of Mr. Dobmeier asked that donations be made to the Parks and Recreation Department in his memory. These donations will be used to purchase a park bench in Mr. Dobmeier's name. This park bench will be installed in Mill Woods Park.

Chairperson Ragonese suggested placing the park bench in front of the Mill Woods Bathhouse. Everyone thought this was a good idea and Ms. Bagley will move forward to order the bench in Mr. Dobmeier's memory.

E. Old Business.

1. Mill Woods Park Building Committee.

Tom Ragonese reported that the Planning and Zoning Commission approved the construction plans for the Little League Field. This application to the town required a special permit because of lights for the Little League Field. He explained that some members of the public were at this meeting and had questions about the lights and the PA system. The architect and Ms. Bagley answered these questions. Mr. Ragonese also reported that the Inland Wetland Commission tabled the submittal and asked for additional information on the construction plans for the Soccer Field and Little League Field. Due to the Inland Wetland Commission tabling this application, the bid process will be delayed approximately one month. Mr. Ragonese reported that the architect is on schedule in preparing all the bid specifications due to go out to bid on this project.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee has recommended that \$100,000 be placed in the Capital Improvement budget request for next year for the construction of the Mill Woods Little League Field. She also reported that the town has submitted a grant application to the state for \$500,000 for improvements identified in the Mill Woods Master Plan. Ms. Bagley explained that town council members recommended that the town apply for this particular grant. Board members were appreciative of the town council thinking of ways to fund the Mill Woods Master Plan and look forward to additional grant money for this project. Committee members discussed other ways to raise funds for the Mill Woods Master Plan. Mr. Lepore asked if we knew the status of the sponsor signs being sold for the Little League fields. Ms. Bagley reported that the

Little League organization does have their sponsor sign on their web site and they are selling these signs to local sponsors.

The Little League organization is concentrating on Greenfield and Mill Woods Little League fields for the sponsor signs. Board members also suggested Men's Softball putting sponsor signs on their outfield fence. It was suggested that the Men's Softball League talk with the Little League organization and make sure that all the signs are standard.

Chairperson Ragonese reported that the architect has requested that borings be done on the location for the light poles and press box for the new Little League field. These borings will take place in March. He reported that in order to meet ADA standards the press box will have some type of lift installed in it. The architect is working on this design.

2. Community Center Renovation Status.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley to give an update on this project. She reported that the Town Council has authorized additional funds of \$75,000 to construct a new bathroom and shower in the fitness room. The contractor has received this additional work and is beginning to have the plumbing started for the bathrooms. All the asbestos has been removed from this area and the contractor is finished with all of the interior wall demolition and is actually constructing new walls and door frames at this time.

F. New Business.

1. Report on New Registration Process Using On-Line Software.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Park and Recreation Department went live with their on-line software on February 12th. She reported that approximately 60% of the registrations during that week were from residents using the on-line registration process. They are very pleased with the use by customers to date and are gearing up for the main summer registration on March 31st.

2. Budget Review.

Chairperson Ragonese asked board members if they had any questions about the review of the four Park and Recreation budgets. He asked Ms. Bagley to explain some of the differences in the equipment accounts where additional equipment was requested.

Ms. Bagley reported that they were asking for a new water fountain at Mill Woods picnic area in the park account. This water fountain would be an ADA accessible fountain. The path leading to the fountain would be rebuilt. Chairperson Ragonese reviewed each budget with board members. Also, new equipment requests included \$7,000 for a new floor machine, \$1,500 for replacement chairs for the Banquet Room and \$4,500 for a new replacement heating unit in the Community Center. Other requests included a \$1,500 copier for the Nature Center and a boat motor for the Harbor Master at \$8,000. They reviewed the Park and Recreation, Community Center, Nature Center and Maintenance budgets. Chairperson Ragonese reported that he reviewed these budgets and recognized that the increases were mainly personnel and fringe benefits with some increases for new equipment.

G. Park Board Comments.

1. Concession Operations.

Mr. Lepore asked if there would be concession operations at Mill Woods Park with the construction of the new Little League field. Ms. Bagley explained that there is a concession building in the park that has been offered to the youth sport groups in town. They have a difficult time getting volunteers to run this particular program. Mr. Silbo explained that he knew other Little League operations in the area that were able to generate revenue from their concession operations. This would be an area to

explore in the future. With the construction of the lighted Little League field, the board suggested looking at an area for concession operations and felt it could be a good revenue opportunity. Ms. Bagley will talk with Little League and discuss this future operation with them.

H. Motion to Adjourn.

Mr. Lepore moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Motion was seconded by Dan Silvo and voted unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director
Parks and Recreation Department