

Wethersfield Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
Harbor Management Commission
Minutes - Thursday, January 26, 2012

The meeting was held at Wethersfield 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 Richard Lepore. Also present were Mike Hurley, Council Liaison and Kathleen Bagley, Director of Parks and Recreation.

A. Public Comments.

None.

B. Minutes – December 15, 2011.

Dan Silbo moved to approve the minutes of December 15, 2011. The motion was seconded by Richard Lepore and approved unanimously.

C. Monthly Report – December 2011.

The Monthly Report was reviewed by Board members. Chairman Tom Ragonese discussed the upcoming Fishing Derby scheduled for April 14 with Board members. He commented that it is a fun event for children in Town.

D. Letters and Announcements.

None.

E. Old Business.

None.

F. New Business.

1. State Grant for Mill Woods Park - \$500,000.

Chairperson Ragonese reported that the Town received a state grant for Mill Woods Park in the amount of \$500,000. These funds will be used for Beach Drainage - \$176,000; new Parking Lot – \$180,000 and Park Road Repairs - \$144,000. Board members were excited about this news. A question came up if the repair of the brick pillars on the park entrance road would be part of this funding. Ms. Bagley said that the pillars can be looked at as part of this process.

2. Keane Foundation Donation – Air Conditioning Gym at 9/11 Memorial Sports Center.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley to report on this donation. She explained that the Keane Foundation will be donating funds to air condition the gym at the Sports Center. The Town Council has accepted the donation and staff will be working with the architect to prepare bid specifications for this project. The goal is to install the unit before the 2012 summer season. The estimated project cost is \$56,000. Everyone was appreciative of the Keane Foundation donation.

3. Registration Software Update for Customers.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Parks and Recreation Department has upgraded their registration software for customer use. The upgrade provided a friendlier customer user system. A lot of staff time was involved in the upgrade and feedback from customers has been very positive.

4. Plan of Conservation and Development.

Chairperson Ragonese told members about the workshop session coming up on revising the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. This workshop will be held on January 31, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center. Its purpose is to solicit input from residents about how the Town should look in the future. He encouraged members to attend. Ms. Bagley explained that the Board will be asked to provide information on the Park and Recreation facilities at a later date.

G. Board Member Comments.

Board members asked about the status of their list of Capital Improvement Projects for Fiscal Year 2012-13. Ms. Bagley reported that the Capital Improvement Advisory Committee has recommended the following Parks and Recreation projects to the Town Manager. These projects include Cove Park Docks \$25,000; Willard Pool Controller Replacements and Chlorine Delivery System - \$49,400; Community Center Ladies Bathroom Renovation - \$36,000 and Mill Woods Park Renovation of Softball Fields #3 & 4 – \$30,000. The next step is for the Town Manager to submit his budget to the Town Council and then the approval of the Town Council budget. At the end of the budget process we will find out which projects get funded.

H. Harbor Management Commission.

1. Harbor Management Plan Draft #4 – Review of State Recommendations.

Chairperson Ragonese reviewed draft #4 with members. They had no problems with the recommendations from the State being included in the plan. Richard Lepore moved to approve Harbor Management Plan Draft #4. The motion was seconded by Carmelo Amoddio and approved unanimously. The next step is to send it to the State for their formal review. Once that is accomplished, members decided to hold another public information session for all interested residents.

2. Harbormaster Appointment by State.

Chairperson Ragonese announced that Charlie Forsdick was appointed Wethersfield's Harbormaster by the Governor. Chairperson Ragonese was pleased to see Mr. Forsdick get the appointment since he has worked very hard as the Deputy Harbormaster. Members of the Harbor Management Commission agreed with Chairperson Ragonese's comments and look forward to working with him on harbor issues.

3. Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Announcement.

Chairperson Ragonese announced that the Town of Wethersfield received a Boating Infrastructure Grant from the Federal Government for improvements to Wethersfield Cove. The Town will receive \$494,650 to replace the docks, add moorings to the Cove, install navigational aids and provide partial funding towards dredging the entrance channel to the Connecticut River. Board members were thrilled about receiving this grant for improvements to the Cove.

4. Army Corp of Engineers – Entrance Channel Dredging Project.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley the status of the dredging project, particularly if the Town had gotten back to the Army Corp with information on the testing of possible sites for the dredged material.

Ms. Bagley reported that the Town had not been able to contact the owners of the possible sites.

Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley to follow up on this issue. Councilor Hurley will also follow up with the Town Manager.

I. Quorum for February Meeting.

Chairperson Ragonese discussed the scheduled February 23rd meeting. Many members will not be able to attend because of school vacation, so a quorum will not be possible. A suggestion was made to hold the meeting on February 16th. All members thought it was a good idea. Chairperson Ragonese asked Ms. Bagley to make the necessary notifications to change the meeting date to February 16th.

J. Motion to Adjourn.

A motion was made by Richard Lepore and seconded by Dan Silbo to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen A. Bagley, Director
Parks & Recreation Department