

**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
APPROVED MINUTES - WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2023  
REGULAR MEETING  
VIA INTERNET & CONFERENCE CALL  
6:30 P.M.**

**JOIN ZOOM MEETING**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87123349044>

*Meeting ID: 871 2334 9044  
Passcode: 537648*

**Web & Phone Meeting Instructions:**

- *If your computer/smartphone has mic and speaker then:  
Type in, paste or click the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87123349044>  
If not, then **Call-in** using the **phone number, Meeting ID & Passcode** provided above.*
- *Sign-up for Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting updates by emailing [lcapp@stamfordct.gov](mailto:lcapp@stamfordct.gov).*

**Web Meeting Ground Rules:**

- *The meeting shall be recorded and the video shall be posted on the City of Stamford website [http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_id=9](http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_id=9)*
- *The Parks & Recreation Commission shall moderate the audio for attendees.*
- *Attendees shall be on mute and will be unmuted when called to speak by the Commission members.*
- *Attendees will have 20 minutes to make their presentation or address the Commission.*
- *Any Attendee wishing to submit materials or a written statement can send it prior to the meeting to [lcapp@stamfordct.gov](mailto:lcapp@stamfordct.gov) or submit through a Chat message to the Commission Chair during the meeting.*

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A Regular Meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission was held on Wednesday, January 18, 2023 via the Internet on Zoom.

In attendance were:

Commissioners: Paul Newman, Chair  
Melanie Hollas, Vice Chair  
Angela Adetola (Arrived at 6:38 p.m.)  
Jessica Katz  
Michael Tedder (Arrived at 6:36 p.m.)

Staff: Kevin Murray, Director of Parks & Recreation  
Lesley Capp, Assistant - Parks & Recreation Commission

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Newman called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. and introduced the Commission Members and staff present.

Mr. Newman introduced the first item on the agenda.

- **Public Participation Session:** Each individual requesting to speak shall send a Chat Message to the Chair stating their name and address for the record. Public participation comments shall be limited to 3 minutes.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Newman asked Ms. Capp to announce the first speaker. Ms. Capp introduced the following residents to speak:

- Maureen Boylan - Spoke in opposition of the Pilot Program for amplified music in the parks.
- Sue Halpern - Spoke in opposition of the Pilot Program for amplified music in the parks.
- John Barrot - Brief introduction of Stamford Rugby youth program.
- Peter Quigley - Former Stamford Resident-South End - Spoke about noise issues in the South End.

Written comments were also received from Sharon Larsen and Kathleen Mathews in opposition to the Pilot Program for amplified music in the parks.

➤ **Review of the November 16, 2022 Regular Meeting Draft Minutes.**<sup>2</sup>

Ms. Hollas mentioned the League Sanctioning Policy Review which has been discussed. Mr. Murray was to incorporate changes suggested by the Commission and brought back for review at the December meeting. Since the December meeting was cancelled, Ms. Hollas requested this item be placed on the agenda for the February 15, 2023 meeting.

Ms. Hollas also asked for a correction to the language under “Update of Parks & Recreation Commission Strategic Goals for the 2022-2023 Fiscal Year” to reflect that the listed items each Commissioner is to provide a monthly report on do not fall under the Parks Strategic Plan and should remain on the agenda.

Mr. Tedder made a motion to approve the November 16, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Seconded by Ms. Hollas

Unanimously Approved

**SPECIAL EVENTS:**

- Greta Wagner, Executive Director- Chelsea Piers - ***Chelsea Piers Scholarship Fund 5K Run & Dog Walk - Sunday, May 7, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Cove Island Park*** - No Set-up or Clean-up in the park; will take place at Chelsea Piers facilities - 200 Total Attendees.<sup>3</sup>

Ms. Wagner made a presentation and answered questions from the Commission.

Mr. Tedder made a motion to approve the Chelsea Piers Scholarship Fund 5K Run & Dog Walk on Sunday, May 7, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Cove Island Park with the following conditions: (a) resubmit a revised route map eliminating the Wildlife Sanctuary and (b) submit an updated Tax Exempt form.

Seconded by Ms. Katz

Unanimously Approved

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<sup>1</sup> Video Time Stamp - 00:01:20

<sup>2</sup> Video Time Stamp - 00:11:47

<sup>3</sup> Video Time Stamp - 00:17:40

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Terry Conner Rink - Kevin Murray, Director of Parks & Recreation:** Review of fee increases for FY2023-2024.<sup>4</sup>

Mr. Murray, along with Ken Smith, Rink Manager, provided a review of the rate increases and answered questions from the Commission.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Resolution - Authorization of a Pilot Program - Sound Reproduction Devices during Special Events within City of Stamford Parks:** The intent is for the Commission to consider adopting a pilot program for 2023 to consider music in the parks as part of Special Events. Conditions of the pilot program would limit music to no more than two (2) hours for any event. Follow-up discussion from the November 16, 2022 meeting.<sup>5</sup>

After considerable discussion, Ms. Hollas made a motion to **DENY** the Resolution for Authorization of a Pilot Program for Sound Reproduction Devices during Special Events as written.

Seconded by Ms. Katz

Unanimously Denied

- **Sustainable Playing Fields & Playgrounds:** Follow up from October 6, 2022 Special Meeting. Status with Legal and Health Departments.<sup>6</sup>

Mr. Newman mentioned an email from Director Quiñones forwarding a memorandum from Douglas Delana, Corporation Counsel, providing a ruling from the Legal Department, which Mr. Newman read in part for the record as follows:

*Based on paragraph (1) of this Charter section, the Commission may establish policies for "providing public park facilities." A reasonable interpretation of this language, keeping in mind the existence of other Charter language entrusting actual construction of facilities to the Office of Operations, is that the Commission's authority extends to big-picture policies which address what types of park facilities should be provided around town, where in town they should be located, the size of the facilities, and the like, but not to policies on details such as field surface type.*

*Based on paragraph (2) of this Charter section, the Commission may develop plans "for the preservation and expansion of natural resources" in the City. Natural resources are generally thought to be materials from the Earth that are needed to support life, including water bodies and watercourses, forests, fossil fuels, and metals within rock. In my view, this provision authorizes the Commission to locate facilities within a park to minimize disturbance to a stream, as an example. The decision as to what type of surface should be used on an athletic field would not, in my view, either preserve or expand a "natural resource."*

*Paragraph (3) of the Charter section does not grant the Commission any authority to regulate the type of surface of athletic fields.*

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<sup>4</sup> Video Time Stamp - 00:35:10

<sup>5</sup> Video Time Stamp - 00:42:52

<sup>6</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:00:37

*Therefore, the Parks and Recreation Commission does not have authority to dictate the type of surface (natural grass or artificial turf) to be used by the City on its athletic fields.*

Mr. Newman stated there was no ruling from the Health Department as of this meeting and opened up the discussion.

After considerable discussion, Mr. Newman stated he would follow up with Director Quiñones about receiving a ruling from the Health Department by the February 15, 2023 meeting and try to arrange for a representative from the Legal Department to possibly come to the February meeting to discuss Mr. Dalena's memorandum and answer questions.

Mr. Newman mentioned that going forward, when there are items on the agenda that require a vote, it should be stated at the beginning of the agenda that items contained therein require action and may be voted on as per the Freedom Information Act meeting he attended.

The Commission decided to **TABLE** this item to the February 15, 2023 meeting.

**TOURNAMENTS:**

- No Tournaments.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

- No Correspondence or as may properly be introduced before the Commission.

**STAFF REPORTS:**

- Kevin Murray, Director of Parks & Recreation: Parks & Recreation Update.

The following Staff Report was submitted and discussed by Mr. Murray:<sup>7</sup>

*[Begin Report]*

- Parks & Recreation restructure has taken place and all FY2023-2024 Operating Budgets have been submitted as of January 11, 2023.
- Citywide ERP/Oracle testing/training has been ongoing throughout this month with Operations staff. System will be in place by March 6, 2023.
- Newly Created Park & Recreation newsletter created by our Marketing Coordinator, Ashley Cooke. It covers all highlights and programs offered at Terry Conner Rink and E.G. Brennan Golf Course and is designed to provide alerts to all recreational activities and what's going on within the parks which will be illustrated by upcoming or current projects.
- Link for the newsletter <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/su/3gUIZsM/StamfordRecEmailList>
- Recreation winter leagues and programs are in progress. We are hosting volleyball, basketball, swim lessons, soccer, pickleball and Friday night ski trips to Thunder Ridge.
- Star Center winter programs are in session and are full.
- Terry Conner Rink's busy winter season continues with youth and high school teams and day-to-day synchronized skating and lesson programs.
- Coordinating summer Recreation programs and camps within Board of Representatives schools through Board of Education facilities and Engineering regarding school summer projects. Six (6) sites needed.

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<sup>7</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:17:20

- Program expansion for park attendants to monitor quality-of-life issues at additional parks as we do at the parks and beaches in season. Schedule will be made to reflect parks that have high activity and duality life documentations for a presence.
- Program expansion highlighting Board of Representatives tree resolution to include manpower and equipment needed. (*Resolution Attached*)
- Citywide tennis court plan to alert Administration that we did not obtain the House Bond we recently applied for in the amount of \$750,000. Would like to resubmit and/or capture other funding to support the Scalzi Park tennis courts project which is estimated at \$1.3 million.
- Attended the January 10, 2023 Planning Board Capital Budget Public Hearing which allowed residents to speak on the Scalzi Park tennis courts project and other game court locations for consideration.
- Scalzi Park playground repair is complete and the unit is open. Next repair is for Lione Park.
- Cove Marina dredging, which began November 28, 2022, is ongoing and is scheduled to be completed by January 31, 2023 which is the end of the dredging season.
- Park Maintenance is currently in winter mode with cleaning of all parks.
- Attached are Terry Conner Rink fee increases to be approved, which will have to go to the Boards with a Public Hearing to be scheduled.
- Parks & Recreation starts planning for the July 4, 2023 fireworks. Grucci will be on year-two of their contract. Working with M Communications for DJ and sound for the event.
- Invited to Board of Representatives Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting on Thursday, January 19, 2023 to discuss the following items:
  1. PR31.012 REVIEW; Dredging at Cove Marina. 12/12/22 - Submitted by Rep. Sherwood.
  2. PR31.013 REVIEW; Future Plans for Cummings Park and Cummings Marina. 12/12/22 - Submitted by Reps. Sherwood, Watkins, and Bewkes
  3. PR31.014 REVIEW; Overview of Department of Parks & Recreation Services Department. 01/04/23 - Submitted by Rep. Cottrell
- Citywide Parks and Strategic Plan: Operations working with local office and TPL. (*January Minutes submitted*)
- Received information on new State Bill in CT banning state and town governments from purchasing artificial turf. Administration discussions will be needed for the current state of our two (2) fields within the parks.
- Barrett Park Project Update: Draft plans and review cost estimate internally to be scheduled and last Public Meeting scheduled for January 31, 2023.

[End Report]

## **DISCUSSION:**

The Commission discussed each item listed below.

### ➤ **Capital Budget:**<sup>8</sup>

- Update on the Field Assessment Capital request. Will the Administration add it into the budget since the Planning Board put it in Tier 3.
- Scalzi Tennis Courts. How can the Commission assist.

### ➤ **Kosciuszko Park:** BLT held a turkey trot and stapled their signs to the trees.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:45:12

<sup>9</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:49:52

- **Various Parks:** Update on the replacement of trees planted in the parks last fall that died and were supposed to be replaced.<sup>10</sup>
- Update on how the NIPS fund money will be used.<sup>11</sup>
- **Paul Newman - Project Updates:** Courtland Park playground; Cove Marina dredging & Barrett Park.<sup>12</sup>
- **Paul Newman - City Website Updates.**<sup>13</sup>
- **Paul Newman - Parks Strategic Plan.**<sup>14</sup>
- **Update of Parks & Recreation Commission Strategic Goals for 2023 as follows:**<sup>15</sup>
  - Mr. Newman and Ms. Hollas: Friends Groups.
  - Ms. Hollas: Invasive Species initiative.
  - Mr. Newman: Baseball and field usage.
  - Mr. Tedder and Ms. Katz: Foundation and the City website.
  - Mr. Tedder: Dog Park at Scofieldtown Park.
  - Ms. Adetola and Mr. Murray: Setup of pickleball courts and working with pickleball and tennis players.
- **Application and Waiver Agreement for volunteer groups to work in the City parks.**

Mr. Newman asked if there were any other items for discussion.

Ms. Katz asked about possibly having occasional in-person meetings.

The Commission had a brief discussion about meeting in-person every couple of months. This will be discussed further at the February 15, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Newman mentioned that all Commissioners should use their City email for Commission business as per the Freedom of Information Act.

Ms. Adetola made a motion to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Mr. Tedder and the vote was carried unanimously.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Mr. Newman adjourned the meeting at 8:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
 Lesley Capp  
 January 24, 2023

*These proceedings were recorded on video and are available for review on the City of Stamford website at:*  
[http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view\\_is=9](http://cityofstamford.granicus.com/ViewPublisher.php?view_is=9)

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<sup>10</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:51:00  
<sup>11</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:52:35  
<sup>12</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:54:07  
<sup>13</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:57:25  
<sup>14</sup> Video Time Stamp - 01:57:49  
<sup>15</sup> Video Time Stamp - 02:04:39