

# Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes (meeting taped)

Regular meeting: Tuesday, February 13, 2001 at the Aldermanic Chambers of City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:08 p.m. By roll call, members present: John Walsh, Beverly Moran, Al Felice, Matt Cripps and arrived shortly after roll call.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell and Athletic Director Kenneth Marcucio were present. Alderman Michael K

## ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Without objection, the agenda was accepted, as presented.

### **Public portion:**

Derby High School football coach John Oko voiced concern for the practice facilities. He stated that the teams practice on the conditions are very poor. Grass has worn away and the ledge is showing on the surface. This makes it very difficult and unsafe team practices at the picnic grove and this area is in very poor condition due to the extensive use.

Mr. Oko stated that the field house has many needs for improvement. The visitor's locker room is an eyesore and most visitors. Traveling to other schools, his teams have always been offered a reasonable place and he felt it an embarrassment that Derby's storage of landscape supplies and equipment impacts the air quality significantly. He also noted that the drying room fans are remove the moisture. The interior needs painting and there was a roof leak in the drying room area.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that maintaining the building is very costly. Being that the primary use is by the High School sports, a solution may be to transfer the responsibility to the Board of Education. Mr. Marcucio noted that during the reevaluation of t

was reviewing the school did tour the field house facility and he is awaiting comments in their final report.

The Commission noted that the poor conditions were recognized but major improvements have been on hold with anticipation adopted. The pending school referendum is hampering any planning until a decision is made on the location of the new school shares use of the recreation fields, planning is further complicated. In most towns, schools have fields associated with their co- programs has been occurring for many years without the benefit of added fields further straining the facilities. Consideration v meeting with the Board of Education and the Parks and Recreation Commission to review these shared concerns. It was stress has been ongoing and the issues presented will be reviewed. Mr. O’Connell stated that he has identified some of the problems arrangements for their repair. He asked that Mr. Oko supply a list of identified problems.

Kim Timpko of 660 Hawthorne Avenue inquired about the arrangements with Seymour and the use of the Bungay School field the field has been reserved for Thursday night and Saturday from noon to dusk.

**Approval of minutes:**

A motion was made by Beverly Moran and second by David Mikos. Move to accept the minutes of the meeting held on Janua Al Felice and Karen Izzo abstaining.

**Correspondences:**

Nothing was presented.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Discussion of Commission’s priorities:

Chairman Walsh felt that the priorities for the Commission should be stated and committees should be set to address the many and a lengthy discussion ensued. The following committees were created with the duties defined.

Programs Committee	Facilities Committee	Budg
Members: Karen Izzo David Mikos	Members: Al Felice Jack Walsh	Members: Beve Matt Cripps
Liaison with the Program Directors	Liaison with the Neighborhood Committee of the Board of Alderman.	Liaison with th Apportionment
Program development at the Veteran’s Community Center	Maintenance of the Veteran’s Community Center	Funding for pro at the Veteran’s
Development of adult recreational programs	Field Maintenance – working with the Budget Committee	Development o
Seminars and training for coaches and parents	Field and Gymnasium space Acquisition	Staffing needs · Programs Com

Development of the use of Witek Park	Clarification and possible revision to the governance of the facilities - working with the Neighborhood Committee	Marketing and programs and f
<p>For the Commission:</p> <p>Communication with the Board of Alderman, Board of Apportionment and Taxation and Board of Education- joint meetings to be considered</p>		

**DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

Parks & Recreation Director's Report: Mr. O'Connell stated that a Little League baseball clinic, under the supervision of School baseball coaches, has been set to be held at the Veteran's Community Center during school vacation on 7/1-7/10, 2001. There will be three age groups and the program will run all day. All children interested are invited to register. League registration will be held at that time. Other registration times will also be set.

Biddy basketball is finishing. The finals of the Senior and Junior divisions will be held this week. All-star games will be held after the finals.

The newly developed sixth grade basketball league is shaping up. The program was started this year and has been well accepted. He was confident that the program will see growth next year and he intends to continue this effort from Bradley, Irving, Assumption in Ansonia and the Boy's Club.

The swim lessons at the Veteran's Community Center were cancelled as there were only ten sign-ups. With only ten sign-ups given to running the program with the small number of participants, the instructor chose not to do so. This was announced in March.

Chairman Walsh questioned whether the Senior Center had shown any further interest in the Center. Mr. O'Connell stated the director has not contacted him.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that he is preparing scheduling of the Veteran's Community Center for use by the Senior Center Program. The pool and gymnasium will be used. Staffing needs are being reviewed.

Mr. Mikos suggested that basketball camps be considered as another offering at the Center.

The Valley girl's softball league is studying uniting with Ansonia. Specifics are still being reviewed but they are looking for a better distribution of participants, grouping by age and skill.

Regarding the budget, the work in the field house bathroom is complete. As mentioned earlier, work is scheduled to start in the field house with funds in the Ryan Field Capital account. The revenue from the Veteran's Community Center is currently \$35,000 with an additional \$7,000 in fees yet to be collected. The original projected revenue budget was for \$35,000 lower than expected.

The Irving After Hours program has requested their funding. Mr. O'Connell asked that information on this be provided and he is awaiting a response. It was noted that the funding in the budget was set for a full year only running for half, then only half of the funding will be provided. Consideration is being given to using for additional programming at the Veteran's Community Center, or next year, budgeting these funds for that programming.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that he is working out the scheduling of the Little League program. With the new field is certainly over utilized. The T-ball program will probably be shifted to another area as their current area of the facility is both small and unsafe due to the traffic of players and balls flying. Mr. Marcucio questioned maintaining the field. Mr. O'Connell indicated that Public Works will be cutting the grass but it is anticipated again be doing the field preparation. The coaches rake and line the infield and the pitching and batting areas during the games. Members suggested that this practice of coaches preparing the fields should be reviewed during the season. Another option may be to solicit volunteers from the players' family or friends.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that he is also reviewing the surface run-off problem behind the softball field and will be working with Public Works Director Gary Parker to develop a solution.

#### **Athletic Director's Report:**

Mr. Marcucio presented the spring schedules. He indicated that the scheduling is still being worked out and that Bradley School is impacting the schedule. He feels that scheduling practices will be a problem.

#### **Committee Reports:**

Veteran's Community Center Committee – Nothing reported.

Youth Advisory Council – Nothing reported.

#### **NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

Alderman Kelleher advised the Commission that work is continuing on the School Building Committee. The issue considered is locating the school on the current Little League field. He encouraged all interested residents to participate. As many options are now under consideration, the issue of field space does play a part in the decision and concerned residents should be very vocal at this juncture of the discussion. He reported that the soil test on the landfill parcel. There have also been preliminary discussions of possibly leasing land from St. Jude's Church School area for an additional soccer field. Ms. Moran noted that St. Jude's Church has forwarded a letter requesting permission for this leasing.

A motion was made by Al Felice and second by Karen Izzo. Move to adjourn this meeting at 8:29 p.m. A motion was carried.

The next meeting will be Monday, March 12, 2001 at 7:00 p.m. at City Hall. If the Aldermanic Chamber is needed, the Veteran's room will be requested.

Respectfully prepared,

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

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