

# Minutes

## Park and Recreation Commission

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, March 8, 2004 in the Aldermanic Chambers of City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

By roll call, members present: John Walsh, Al Felice, Matt Cripps, Karen Izzo and Edward Handi. David Beverly Moran were excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present. Athletic Director Kenneth Marcucio was a

### **additions or deletions to the agenda:**

Without objection, the agenda was accepted as written.

### **approval of minutes:**

A motion was made by Al Felice and second by Karen Izzo Move to accept the minutes of the meeting o with it noted that vandalism is not the reason for the lights not being installed at the gates of the new socc

carried with Karen Izzo and Edward Handi abstaining.

**Public portion:**

Tony DelPrete reserved time to speak on the High School Cheerleaders request.

Michele Mastrianni, representing Pop Warner and Little League explained that a pipe broke at the Little League field because the propane ran out and the heat shut off. Pop Warner and Little League pay for utilities and minor building but she was uncertain whether the City owns the building and if so, would the City cover the cost of repairs. She questioned whether the damage was covered by insurance.

No one else came forward and public portion was closed.

**Correspondences:**

Nothing was presented.

**NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

A.) Cultural Commission request:

Heidi Madura was present to request the use of the Ryan Field Complex for Derby Days. Rides will be placed on the Little League School softball field from June 23<sup>rd</sup> through June 27<sup>th</sup>. They request the use of the restrooms at the field from June 23<sup>rd</sup> through June 27<sup>th</sup>. Vendors will set up on the northern part of the football field. The Little League field will have fireworks on June 27<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. O'Connell noted that scheduling might be tough to call. Depending on the weather, games may be rerun the season into this timeframe. It was noted that there was damage to the football field last year because of the use of the football field for soccer, football, baseball and Pop Warner, the surface is very stressed. With the use of the football field for soccer, football, baseball and Pop Warner, the surface is very stressed and members were concerned with any further damage. Plans are to do significant work on the field to prepare for the fall season. Mr. O'Connell was concerned that this use may compromise the work scheduled to be done. Ms. Madura indicated that the softball field was being suggested so as not to impact the football field. Mr. O'Connell noted that the softball field has surface problems also and there are areas that are showing excessive settling because of the materials in the field. There was concern for the sprinkler system. Members raised concern with the damage from the vendors and felt that there has to be an ironclad agreement with the vendors that the area will be restored to pre-existing condition when the event is ended, at the vendor's expense. Further, the fireworks left debris that needs to be cleaned by the city. Fireworks were found on the Little League field in previous years. Members questioned why the event was green. Ms. Madura indicated that setting up the rides takes more than a day and closing the street for an event is not an option. Members asked if there was another location that the event could use. Ms. Madura indicated that the Little League School parking lots were suggested but the vendor for the rides preferred the fields. Members discussed the concerns and it was noted that recreational programs have only limited use of the fields due to the conditions. It was felt that an alternative location should be explored.

A motion was made by Karen Izzo and second by Al Felice. Move to deny use of the Ryan Field Complex (softball field and football field) for Derby Days with only the Little League field being allowed for the fireworks.

that the vendor will be responsible for any damage and will clean the area thoroughly. Motion carried with Matt Cripps opposed.

B.) High School Cheerleaders request:

The High School Cheerleaders were seeking to use the concession stand during Derby Days for a fundraiser. The High School Cheerleaders indicated that Pop Warner and the Booster Club are the primary users of the facility and they have purchased the equipment. They have the right to first refusal and the authorization of the use of the equipment. As this is an association with the Cultural Commission event, it appears that the Cultural Commission would have to deal with the associations for permission to use the equipment and the facility. Mr. DelPrete indicated that he was willing to grant the request of whatever group although the denial of use of the fields seems to make his request mute.

### **DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director's Report:** Mr. O'Connell reported that he discussed the matter of the field with the Mayor and the Mayor was hopeful that the Parks & Recreation Commission could provide an answer to the matter. Mr. O'Connell explained that there has been a standing agreement between Pop Warner and Little League to fund \$3,600 per year to pay for utilities and general upkeep of the building.

Michele Mastrianni explained the agreement between the two leagues and stated that they were on a budget with Suburban Propane that they pay regularly. She noted the expenditures over the year that has been paid for maintenance. She did contact Suburban Propane to advise them of the damage.

Ron Slowik, representing Little League, indicated that the damage occurred because Suburban Propane failed to provide propane to fuel the furnace. He questioned whether the City could pursue this liability. He estimated that repairs will cost

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Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present. Athletic Director Kenneth Marcucio was

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A motion was made by Al Felice and second by Karen Izzo Move to accept the minutes of the meeting 2004, with it noted that vandalism is not the reason for the lights not being installed at the gates of the 1

Motion carried with Karen Izzo and Edward Handi abstaining.

**Public portion:**

Tony DelPrete reserved time to speak on the High School Cheerleaders request.

Michele Mastrianni, representing Pop Warner and Little League explained that a pipe broke at the Little League house because the propane ran out and the heat shut off. Pop Warner and Little League pay for utilities repairs to the building but she was uncertain whether the City owns the building and if so, would the City pay for these major repairs. She questioned whether the damage was covered by insurance.

No one else came forward and public portion was closed.

**Correspondences:**

Nothing was presented.

**NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:**

A.) Cultural Commission request:

Heidi Madura was present to request the use of the Ryan Field Complex for Derby Days. Rides will be on the High School softball field from June 23<sup>rd</sup> through June 27<sup>th</sup>. They request the use of the restrooms at the Little League house from June 25<sup>th</sup> through June 27<sup>th</sup>. Vendors will set up on the northern part of the football field. The Little League house will be used for fireworks on June 27<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. O'Connell noted that scheduling might be tough to call. Depending on the weather, games may be delayed and will run the season into this timeframe. It was noted that there was damage to the football field last year from the rides. With the use of the football field for soccer, football, baseball and Pop Warner, the surface is very worn and members were concerned with any further damage. Plans are to do significant work on the field to prepare for the next season and Mr. O'Connell was concerned that this use may compromise the work scheduled to be done on the field. It was indicated that the softball field was being suggested so as not to impact the football field. Mr. O'Connell noted that the softball field has surface problems also and there are areas that are showing excessive settling because of the subbase and there was concern for the sprinkler system. Members raised concern with the damage to the field from vendors and rides and they felt that there has to be an ironclad agreement with the vendors that the area will be returned to pre-existing conditions when the event is ended, at the vendor's expense. Further, the fireworks left on the field to be cleaned by them. Unexploded fireworks were found on the Little League field in previous years. Mr. O'Connell questioned why the event was moved from the green. Ms. Madura indicated that setting up the rides on the street all day and closing the street for an extended time was not an option. Members asked if there was another location that the event could use. Ms. Madura indicated that the High School parking lots were suggested but the vendors preferred the fields. Members discussed the request. There were serious concerns for the condition of the fields. Mr. O'Connell noted that recreational programs have only limited use of the fields due to the conditions. It was felt that

location should be explored.

A motion was made by Karen Izzo and second by Al Felice. Move to deny use of the Ryan Field Complex (softball field and football field) for Derby Days with only the Little League field being allowed for the event. It is understood that the vendor will be responsible for any damage and will clean the area thoroughly. Motion carried. Motions by Jack Walsh and Matt Cripps opposed.

B.) High School Cheerleaders request:

The High School Cheerleaders were seeking to use the concession stand during Derby Days for a fund-raiser. Mr. O'Connell indicated that Pop Warner and the Booster Club are the primary users of the facility and they have the cooking equipment. They have the right to first refusal and the authorization of the use of the equipment would be in association with the Cultural Commission event, it appears that the Cultural Commission will approach the two associations for permission to use the equipment and the facility. Mr. DelPrete indicated he is willing to work with whatever group although the denial of use of the fields seems to make his request difficult.

#### **DIRECTOR REPORTS:**

**Parks & Recreation Director's Report:** Mr. O'Connell reported that he discussed the matter of the fire damage with the Mayor and the Mayor was hopeful that the Parks & Recreation Commission could provide an alternative solution to the matter. Mr. O'Connell explained that there has been a standing agreement between Pop Warner and Little League to each fund \$3,600 per year to pay for utilities and general upkeep of the building.

Michele Mastrianni explained the agreement between the two leagues and stated that they were on a budget with Suburban Propane that they pay regularly. She noted the expenditures over the year that has been paid for building maintenance. She did contact Suburban Propane to advise them of the damage.

Ron Slowik, representing Little League, indicated that the damage occurred because Suburban Propane ran out of propane to fuel the furnace. He questioned whether the City could pursue this liability. He estimated that the repairs will cost approximately \$2,000 and there are additional costs for sheetrock replacement. He stated that Little League is not asking that the Parks & Recreation Commission specifically take over the general maintenance of the building to help with this extraordinary expense and help in pursuing any possible claim against the vendor.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that maintenance of the building was not budgeted this year because of the state of the economy. The funding in the Parks & Recreation Commission maintenance budget would be strained to try to address this incident. A consideration could be made to explore funding in the 2004-2005 budget to take over the maintenance expenses of the building with Pop Warner and Little League only responsible for utilities. Mr. O'Connell stated that there would have to be proper supervision of the building in order to have the Parks & Recreation department take on this duty. The department does have a full-time person for maintenance who could include these duties.

The Commission decided to move forward with the added maintenance in next year's budget and to explore the matter with the Mayor, Corporation Counsel and the Board of Apportionment and Taxation for resolution to the damage.

from the broken pipe.

Mr. O'Connell reported that Little League registration is nearly complete. There are 160 registrants so far and the expected number may reach 175. There will be 4 major and 4 minor teams and T-ball. To alleviate the Little League field this year, T-ball will play at Bradley. Babe Ruth registration is beginning.

The All-Stars Basketball league is finishing up now. Youth Soccer has held their registration but no numbers are available yet.

The budget is doing well. Under maintenance issues, there is mildew that must be remedied in the field and the ladies restroom will be painted. The drain pipe by the kitchen needs to be fixed.

**Athletic Director's Report:** Mr. Marcucio was not present.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Finance Committee** – The Committee will be meeting to begin drafting the 2004-2005 budget.

**Programs Committee** – The Committee is looking at a universal application for all coaches. First Aid is scheduled in the spring. They will be exploring the Volunteer website to post coaching needs. The coaches requested clinics to teach the fundamentals. Ms. Izzo questioned if there will be funding for the clinics. The budget committee will include the expenditure in next year's budget. She will be exploring the Yale Center again.

**Facilities Committee** – Mr. O'Connell and Chairman Walsh met with the Shelton Parks & Recreation to discuss the skate park. The proposed cost is approximately \$76,000 with Derby contributing \$40,000. The plan will be finalized with the Neighborhood Committee and brought to the Board of Alderman. The fees and cost of operation are being discussed. The location is to the south end of Canal Street under the Route 8 Bridge. Construction is expected to begin in April and use may begin by the end of June. The State has agreed to a five-year term and require supervision. Sue Riley from the Valley YMCA has expressed interest in supervising the park. Through this joint venture will save the City money and provide for a good safe facility that is ideally located.

A motion was made by Al Felice and second by Edward Handi. Move to endorse the concept of the joint venture proposal with Shelton as outlined in the package and authorize the Parks & Recreation Director to pursue this project. Motion carried unanimously.

Members noted that the costs for supervision and maintenance will have to be included in the 2004-2005 budget.

Mr. Felice reported that the Board of Alderman authorized the Mayor to sign the contract for Witek Park. The contract was filed and they are awaiting the outcome prior to signing. The plans are in place for work to begin and a decision has been resolved.

All needed approvals for the Greenway should be in place by April 1<sup>st</sup>. Bids should go out in June with anticipated in late summer.

A motion was made by Edward Handi and second by Karen Izzo. Move to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 carried unanimously.

The next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting will be Monday, April 8, 2004 at 7:00 p.m. at City Aldermanic Chambers are unavailable then the Veteran's room will be requested.

Respectfully prepared,

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

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