

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, April 9, 2007 in the New City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m.

By roll call, members present: John Walsh, Al Felice, James Benanto and Andrew Cota. Beverly Moran arrived at 7:14 p.m. David Mikos and Nick Serednitsky were excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell and Athletic Director Joseph Orazetti were present.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Without objection, the agenda was accepted with the discussion with the Youth Soccer Directors moved up to before approval of minutes.

NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:

A.) Discussion with Youth Soccer Program Directors: Without objection, the meeting went out of order.

Rich Stankye, travel director for Youth Soccer was present. He stated that the travel team U19 has 20 boys with 14 from Derby, 4 from Shelton and 2 from Seymour. There is no girl's team as there were not enough participants even after approaching the adjoining towns. The U10 travel team has 11 boys with 9 from Derby, 1 from Shelton and 1 from Ansonia. The U14 travel team has not materialized possibly due to the push for the Middle School soccer program. The registration is \$40 with no additional fee for out-of-towners and of this \$15 goes to the district for insurance and registration fees. The Youth Recreation Soccer program has approximately 160 participants totally 16 teams.

Members commented on the decline in participation. It was noted that in the schools there is less time allocated for physical education. They discussed how this reflects on the epidemic of childhood obesity in the country. They also noted that interest in the recreational programs by the younger children presents itself in the success of high school programs as a good youth program creates interest in the sport. There is a trend for the youth to specialize in one sport rather than playing different sports in different seasons. The Youth Soccer program has considered sending questionnaires to the parents to ascertain their interests and to provide comment on how to augment the offerings of the program to meet their needs.

The recreational league will start on April 10th. The program will take care of the damaged goal from their funds. They will submit their schedule to Mr. O'Connell. Mr. O'Connell noted that the use of the fields at Witek Park have been flipped so that the stronger use would be on the field that saw less activity last year. He estimated that there would be 12 games played in the spring including the adult teams with U19 also practicing on the main field. Mr. O'Connell noted that he will be determining the makeup of the adult teams to be assured that there is a strong Derby presence. The adult teams will only play on Sunday mornings.

Members questioned who determined whether the fields were useable due to weather conditions. Mr. O'Connell indicated that he communicates with the teams about conditions. Mr. Stankye noted that he also inspects the fields prior to playing. Witek Park has not been handed over to the Parks & Recreation Commission and it is still under the Board of Alderman's supervision. Mr. O'Connell and Board of Alderman President Kenneth Hughes have been overseeing the conditions and the use. The plan currently is that the gates will be closed unless the fields are in use. Last year the Police Department was

opening and closing the park, driving in to make sure the area is clear. The plan for this year has not been determined but there is discussion that a neighbor of the park may open and close as needed.

Mr. Stankye indicated that the Youth Soccer League holds meeting monthly. Elections are held in September and a banquet is held in February. Mario Tessitore is president, Bill Harris is Vice-president, Rich Stankye is Travel director, Roger Bowman is treasurer and Chantal Gerckens is secretary. The program has a website and is developing the site. Schedules should be posted.

There is a storage container at the park and Mr. Stankye asked if he could obtain a key to store some equipment. Members discussed the expense of leasing the container verses purchase. It was noted that the equipment was leased as it is temporary.

Mr. Stankye questioned whether any coaching clinics are scheduled. Athletic Director Orazetti indicated that the High School coaches are available for instruction to the programs. It was noted that it is beneficial for the youth programs and High School coaches to interact as the youth programs are feeder programs to the High School and this interaction in the development process can mutually benefit the programs.

Mr. O'Connell indicated that he is exploring having signage installed at Witek Park stating no unauthorized use of the fields is permitted. Mr. Felice noted that he has observed parking occurring beyond the parking lots. He encouraged Mr. O'Connell to advise the coaches that parking should only occur in the gravel parking lot areas.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

A motion was made by James Benanto and second by Andrew Cota. Move to accept the minutes of March 12, 2007, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC PORTION:

No one came forward.

CORRESPONDENCES:

Nothing was presented.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Parks & Recreation Director's Report: Mr. O'Connell noted Babe Ruth registered 13 players for the thirteen year old team. There will be no fourteen and fifteen year old team. Girl's softball registration is finishing. The senior team will register later as their season is after the regular season. It was noted that the High School JV and Varsity teams have only 19 players. There seems to be a nationwide decline in the participation. Little League will open on April 14th. Registration numbers were not available.

Looking at facilities, a number of projects are underway at the Little League/Pop Warner field house. Work is being done on the roof, the chimney and gutters.

Mr. O'Connell continues to explore work on the lights and to the replacement of a fence. These are capital projects and he is speaking with Capital Planning in terms of the funding. Public Works did take down the lights at the softball field and remove the fallen one.

The City Engineer is still meeting with the contractor for the bleachers to resolve any pending issues.

The skate park will open on April 14th. The YMCA will be overseeing the program. Fees will remain the same and hours of operation are still being negotiated.

The winter season is wrapping up at the Community Center. Consideration is being given to redoing the gym floor during the off season.

Mr. O'Connell has located a yoga instructor and he is working with her and the Derby Public Library to schedule the program.

High School Athletic Director's Report: Mr. Orazetti indicated that softball has been playing up at Amendola field because of the light issue at the Ryan softball field. It has been quite hectic in adjusting the schedule. He asked if the lights were to be replaced. It was stated that there is no funding currently in place for the replacement of the softball lights. The layout of the lights would have to be refigured if they were to be installed. It was noted that there is no recreational need for the lights at this time; the lights are used by the athletic programs.

Mr. Orazetti noted that the lights at the football field seemed very dim. It was noted that there is capital funding but that funding has been frozen. Consideration is being given to testing the lumens output of the lights but concern was voiced that if the testing failed, then the night time football schedule would be in jeopardy.

Mr. Orazetti indicated that based on the low numbers of athletic participation he has approached Emmett O'Brien to explore a cooperative program. It is in the discussion stage with the superintendents of both schools looking at costs and structuring.

NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:

B.) Update on Review Committee: Mr. Walsh indicated that the Board of Alderman Sub-Committee's response to the report was very favorable.

In other business, Mr. Walsh stated that the Greenway Committee will be meeting to decide on the selection of the designer for Phase III of the project. He noted that all the benches have been sold. The goal is to have the benches, plaza, fountain, trash receptacles and bike racks installed by Memorial Day.

C.) Discussion of 2007 – 2008 Parks & Recreation Budget: The preliminary budget reviewed this evening totaled \$262,419, an increase of \$23,923 over this year's amount. The increase is due to adding 100 hours to supervisors' line item and 80 hours to attendants' line item, 3% salary increases across the board, Witek Park maintenance, additional technology(computer and software and internet connection) and increases in utilities. A new capital project being presented for consideration is the softball lighting.

The Commission is also asking that all miscellaneous capital funding unexpended this year, be rolled over to next year. The line item for Ryan Lighting Upgrade, they felt, would be better defined as a re-lamping of the fixtures. Members noted that the lights are predominantly used by the athletic programs and they questioned whether there would be grant funding available or reimbursement from the state should this be considered an educational expense.

Members discussed the income figure. Part of the income comes from the fee charged to the programs for the use of the gymnasium. Mr. Felice questioned whether listing the income and the expense was a clear representation of the finances being that the program spends a portion of their allocation that goes into the income that is given back to the City. Mr. O'Connell noted that the usage fee is charged equally to all using the facility and the Community Center is based on a facility usage program. Prior to having the Community Center under Parks & Recreation control, the programs paid far more for facility usage and now that payment covers much more time in the facility. He noted that the programs have to anticipate this expense and figure it into their budget. The allocation to the programs anticipates this expense. Mr. O'Connell noted that the total income received comes from a variety of sources such as membership fees, outside rental of the facility, birthday parties and other events. The percentage coming from the programs is minimal.

	2006-2007 Budget	2007-2008 Budget	Changes	Percent '06 vs '07

Dept 5100 - Parks & Recreation					
110-0110-0000	Parks Director Wages	13,905	14,500	595	4.28%
110-0111-0000	Supervisors	57,460	60,900	3,440	5.99%
110-0112-0000	Attendants	14,040	15,203	1,163	8.28%
110-0114-0000	Lifeguards	11,960	12,319	359	3.00%
140-0141-0000	Playground Wages	6,900	7,107	207	3.00%
100-0115-0000	Bldg Maintenance wages	14,456	14,890	434	3.00%
	Subtotal	118,721	124,919	6,198	5.22%
230-0231-0000	Yankeeegas	5,000	5,500	500	10.00%
230-0232-0000	Water Co.	8,000	8,000	-	0.00%
230-0233-0000	Light Pole Ryan Field	1,275	1,500	225	17.65%
330-0330-0000	Equip. Maintenance	30,000	30,000	-	0.00%
330-0331-0000	Bldg & Field Supplies	22,000	22,000	-	0.00%
330-0332-0000	Office Supplies	4,000	4,000	-	0.00%
330-0333-0000	Recreation Equip.	6,000	6,000	-	0.00%
new item	Witek Park Maintenance		15,000	15,000	100.00%
new item	Technology (computer)		2,000	2,000	100.00%
	Subtotal	76,275	94,000	17,725	23.24%
390-0001-0000	Derby Colt Baseball	3,300	3,300	-	0.00%
390-0007-0000	Girls Softball	2,500	2,500	-	0.00%
390-0009-0000	Soccer	5,000	5,000	-	0.00%
390-0010-0000	Little League	8,000	8,000	-	0.00%
390-0011-0000	Pop Warner	10,000	10,000	-	0.00%
390-0012-0000	Wrestling	1,000	1,000	-	0.00%
390-0013-0000	Playground Supplies	1,200	1,200	-	0.00%
390-0016-0000	Girls Softball 14-18	1,000	1,000	-	0.00%
480-0484-0000	Youth Basketball	9,000	9,000	-	0.00%
480-0488-0000	Skate Park	2,500	2,500	-	0.00%
	Subtotal	43,500	43,500	-	0.00%
	Dept. Total	238,496	262,419	23,923	

Motion was made by James Benanto and second by Beverly Moran. Move to accept the 2007-2008 proposed budget, as presented with the documentation detailing that the capital plan for Ryan Field Lighting upgrade is clarified to be a re-lamping project and that the paragraph raising the request for

consideration for lighting for the softball lighting be a separate paragraph from the other capital projects.
Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Beverly Moran and second by Al Felice. Move to adjourn the meeting at 8:55 p.m.
Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,
Karen Kemmesies, secretary

These minutes are subject to the Commission's approval at their next scheduled meeting.