

TOWN OF HAMDEN

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

MAY 13, 2014

5:30 PM

PARKS & RECREATION CONFERENCE ROOM

HAMDEN GOVERNMENT CENTER

2750 DIXWELL AVENUE

HAMDEN, CONNECTICUT

Commissioners in attendance: Rich Leonardo, Vice Chairman
Chris DeMatteo
Arnie Mann
Sarah Morrill
Chris Ruggiero

Others in attendance: Mimsie Coleman, Director of Arts, Recreation and Culture
Peggy Craft, Commission Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairman Leonardo called the meeting to order at 5:47 PM

MINUTES

Mr. Leonardo asked if there were any changes to the Minutes of the April 8, 2014 Meeting. Hearing none he called for a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. **Commissioner Mann motioned to accept the Minutes of the April 8, 2014 Meeting as presented. Commissioner Morrill seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

INTRODUCTION OF NEW COMMISSIONER – CHRIS RUGGIERO

Mr. Ruggiero was welcomed to the Commission. The Commissioners as well as Ms. Coleman and Ms. Craft introduced themselves and told a little about their background.

Mr. Ruggiero explained his background and interest in serving on this Commission.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Coleman gave Mr. Ruggiero a copy of the duties of this Commission, and explained that this is an Advisory Commission.

Next, Ms. Coleman discussed plans for renovations to the trails at Brooksvale Park.

Mr. Mann asked about the YMCA camps. It was noted that the camps will be held at Camp Mountain Laurel. There was a discussion regarding this topic.

Ms. Coleman discussed the work being performed by the Public Works/Parks Division. She said there are 27 fields that must be prepared for the spring. She added that it has been a very difficult year due to the weather. There was a lengthy discussion regarding this subject.

There was a discussion regarding the lining on the fields. Mr. Ruggiero noted that the field at West Woods was not lined this past weekend. Next, he discussed the goals at West Woods field. He noted that the goals were secure. He described how they are secured. He said there is a problem at the Dunbar Hill Field. He noted that there is an umpire that will not work at this field due to the field conditions. He said there are ruts and holes that create a safety hazard. He also said there is a chain on the field at West Woods that would prevent an ambulance from entering. Mr. Ruggiero said that Dunbar Hill is a major safety problem. He said this would be his top priority.

Ms. Coleman asked about the nets at the fields. Mr. Ruggiero said the nets at West Woods field are excellent. There was a discussion regarding a Referee who called a game at West Woods due to what she felt were dangerous goals. Mr. Ruggiero again explained how the goals are secured. The discussion regarding soccer fields continued.

Ms. Coleman discussed the problems that the Town and the department face due to budget and staff constraints. Ms. Coleman suggested that Mr. Ruggiero prepare a list of suggestions for the fields, etc. She added that it is important for the athletic associations to make their hopes known to the Town and the Parks Department.

Ms. Coleman said that the Lacrosse people are very unhappy. There was a discussion regarding the problems with the field at the former Hamden Middle School. There was a discussion regarding the fields that are currently being used for Lacrosse. Ms. Morrill asked if there is something that can be done regarding security on the fields. There was a discussion regarding this topic.

Mr. Mann discussed the field at WELI. Mr. Ruggiero said the last time the Soccer Association used that field was five years ago. Ms. Coleman said the Town had a contract with this field. The agreement was that the Town could use the field for athletics as long as the Town maintained it. Ms. Coleman added that this did not happen. Mr. Mann said he felt that the field could be reclaimed. Ms. Morrill and Mr. Ruggiero agreed. There was further discussion regarding this subject.

There was a lengthy discussion regarding Brooksvale Park.

Next, there was a discussion regarding the field at Wintergreen School. Ms. Coleman said that Lacrosse looked at the field and felt it would be useable, but an engineer looked at it and said it could not be used.

Next, there was a discussion regarding the field on Augur Street owned by Hamden Hall. Mr. Ruggiero said the Soccer Association used this field last year. He said the Association reached out to them again this year, but Hamden Hall declined to have them use this field. It was noted that parking is a problem at this field. Ms. Coleman noted that it is necessary to be considerate of the neighbors.

Mr. Mann asked if the field at The Foote School had been looked into. Ms. Coleman said it has not, but she will look into it.

There was a discussion regarding the scheduling of soccer fields. Mr. Ruggiero said the Soccer Association handles this. There was further discussion regarding the various sports in Town and their need for fields for their games.

Mr. Mann suggested that the Lacrosse Association be invited to a future meeting.

Mr. Ruggiero motioned that Hamden Lacrosse Association be invited to the next meeting to discuss scheduling and field issues. Ms. Morrill seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Ms. Coleman shared that camp brochure that will be distributed this year. She credited Recreation Supervisor Laura Luzzi for preparing this brochure. Ms. Colman added that Ms. Luzzi did an excellent job.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. DeMatteo noted that the basketball posts, rims and nets at Bassett Field need to be repaired or replaced. Mr. Ruggiero noted that the basketball facilities at West Woods also need repair.

It was noted that there is a tree hanging over the basketball court at DeNicola Park.

Mr. DeMatteo noted that he has brought the conditions at Bassett Field to the Mayor's attention. Mr. DeMatteo said he spoke to Ms. Lion in the Mayor's office regarding this problem. Ms. Lion also brought this to the attention of the Mayor. Mr. DeMatteo was told by the Mayor, that he had observed the problems and would look into having it corrected...

Mr. Ruggiero read the duties of the Commission as listed in the Town Charter. There was a discussion regarding these duties. Ms. Morrill suggested that the Commission hold a meeting at an outside parks facility to prepare a report regarding what repairs/improvements should be recommended by the Commission. Mr. Mann suggested that each Commissioner be assigned a field to do a walk through and report back to the Commission. Ms. Coleman will prepare a list, and assign each Commissioner five fields to examine and report back to the Commissioners at the next meeting. There was a discussion regarding what fields would be assigned to each Commissioner.

ELECTION OF COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

Vice Chairman Leonardo turned the meeting over to Commissioner (Grand Pulbah) Morrill.

Ms. Morrill asked if there were any nominations for Commission Chair.

Mr. Mann nominated Commissioner Rich Leonardo for Commission Chair. Commissioner Ruggiero seconded the motion.

Ms. Morrill asked a second and third time if there were any nominations for Commission Chair. Hearing none, she closed nominations. Ms. Morrill asked Mr. Leonardo if he would accept the nomination. Mr. Leonardo accepted the nomination. The vote was called, and Mr. Leonardo's nomination was approved with a unanimous vote.

Ms. Morrill asked if there were any nominations for Commission Vice Chair.

Mr. Mann nominated Commissioner Sarah Morrill for Commission Vice Chair. Commissioner Ruggiero seconded the motion.

Ms. Morrill asked a second and third time if there were any nominations for Commission Vice Chair. Hearing none, she closed nominations. Ms. Morrill accepted the nomination. The vote was called, and Mr. Leonardo's nomination was approved with a unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the Commission, and Chairman Leonardo called for a motion to adjourn. **Commissioner Morrill motioned to adjourn. Commissioner DeMatteo seconded the motion that passed unanimously.** Chairman Watson adjourned the meeting at 7:09 PM.

Submitted by: _____
Peggy Craft, Commission Clerk