

## FINAL



February 27, 2020

The Westport Parks and Recreation Commission held a meeting on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 @7:30pm in room #309 at Town Hall.

**Members Present:**

Charles Haberstroh, Chairman; Edward Iannone, Alec Stevens

**Members Absent:**

Karen Hess, Steve Axthelm

**Also Present:**

Jennifer Fava, Director, Parks & Recreation; Rick Giunta, Deputy Director, along with members of the public.

**1. Approval of Minutes**

Upon a motion by Edward Iannone, seconded by Alec Stevens, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting of January 15, 2020 were approved 3-0-2 (two absent).

**2. Public Comment:**

Tom Lowrie, 4 Grist Mill Lane handed out a document, dated 10/22/19, composed by him regarding skate park information at Westport, Greenwich and Fairfield. He also requested that a discussion regarding the future of the Compo Beach Skate Park be added to the agenda for the next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

**3. Reports of:****Boating Advisory Committee – No report**

- The Boating Advisory Committee has not met this year and is in need of members.
- If any boaters are interested in becoming the Chair of the Boating Advisory Committee or joining the committee, please reach out to Charles Haberstroh.

**Golf Advisory Committee – Jennifer Fava reported.**

- The Golf Advisory Committee will be meeting on March 2, 2020.
- There is some concern on the Golf Advisory Committee over non-residents in the Women's Associations paying the same greens fees as residents on tournament days. They will be reviewing surrounding area associations, as well as looking for feedback from the LWGA and 9-hole associations. A significant number of members from the Ladies Association are non-residents. Once a decision has been made, the GAC will approach the Parks and Recreation Commission for review and/or approval of the proposed fee changes, if so determined. Implementation is planned for 2021.
- The switching of holes #9 and #14 is complete and new signage has been ordered.

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## **Parks Advisory Committee – No Report.**

- The Parks Advisory Committee will be meeting on March 23, 2020.

## **Racquets Advisory Committee – Ward Doonan**

- No significant changes from the last meeting.
- Paddle court fixes are almost complete.
- LED lights for the tennis courts is still a request. Discussions are taking place on how to reduce the purchasing cost, as well as the installation.
- There has been discussion regarding the creation of a Pickleball handpass fee, which will be discussed as a separate agenda item.
- A few people have volunteered to speak with Planning & Zoning to locate additional playing areas for Pickleball courts. Charles Haberstroh suggested that some tennis courts at Town Farm be converted to Pickleball courts. This topic was requested to be an agenda item at the next Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

### *Public Comment:*

John Polayes, 15 Over Rock Lane inquired why the open land located on both sides of North Compo and South Compo by the Baron's property can't be used for Pickleball? Jennifer Fava responded that that property is zoned for DOSRD3 – which means it can be used only for passive recreation. It is a Planning & Zoning ruling. Charles Haberstroh said other areas are being looked at.

Gary Krosilovsky, 10 Lookout Lane had a question regarding the skate park. He would like to see some of that space used for a Pickleball court. Charles Haberstroh responded that the Commission is well aware of the desire to create two additional pickleball courts, if the skate park becomes a smaller footprint. A new all-concrete skate park, five years ago was estimated to cost \$250,000. There needs to be a lot of preparatory work on this before any formal discussions begin.

Charles Haberstroh stated that the Skate Park is not an agenda item, and will not be discussed tonight.

## **Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee – No Report**

- The Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee has not met yet. It is tentatively scheduled for March 12, subject to receiving documentation from the Levitt.

## **4. To take such action as the meeting may determine regarding Pickleball Handpass fees as recommended by the Racquets Advisory Committee.**

Jennifer Fava handed off the discussion to Ward Doonan. The Racquets Advisory Committee discussed this, and they have proposed various fees. Staff does recommend moving forward with this, as it puts it in line with the Platform Tennis fees.

Ward Doonan stated these fees were discussed and many people from the Pickleball community were in attendance. There are three primary reasons for this request:

1. This would allow 5-days in advance court reservation at Compo Beach for Pickleball handpass holders.
2. Monies collected would directly benefit and help offset some Pickleball expenses.
3. It's a great way to formalize communication with the Pickleball community and show support for the sport.

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The proposed Pickleball Handpass fees would be:

\$40 Adult Handpass

\$30 Senior Handpass

No youth pricing is required to date

No guest fees at this time

Pickleball players will not be required to buy the pass. Purchasing the pass will allow you to reserve a court 5 days in advance.

*Public Comment:*

Tom Lowrie, 4 Grist Mill Lane stated he was confused about the terminology of the pass. He doesn't believe it's a Pickleball pass, it's more of a Pickleball reservation system. Ward Doonan explained to Tom Lowrie that people don't need to purchase the pass to make a reservation. With the handpass, you can make a reservation 5 days in advance, and demonstrate your support of Pickleball in the Town.

Gary Krasilovksy, 10 Lookout Lane stated that he was at the last Racquets Advisory Committee meeting when the Pickleball pass was discussed and confirmed buying the pass does not include your entrance into Compo Beach. He is in support of this Pickleball fee.

**Upon a motion by Charles Haberstroh, seconded by Edward Iannone, and passed 3-0-2 (absent)**

**RESOLVED:** that the Parks and Recreation Commission recommends to the Board of Selectmen approval of Pickleball Handpass fees as proposed by the Racquets Advisory Committee.

**5. Discussion relative to the banning of smoking at Westport Town Beaches.** (Discussion only).

Charles Haberstroh stated that this is a continued discussion from past meetings. Jennifer Fava said that based on previous discussions, it was determined that the Commissioners were leaning towards no smoking at playgrounds, sport fields, and beach areas, similar to how Bridgeport is structured. Jennifer Fava reviewed two statistics that were documented in the National Recreation and Parks Association. She also supplied additional information from NRPA regarding "Tobacco Consumption in Parks". Feedback responses from surrounding communities who have banned smoking at their beaches, have received little to no pushback, as residents have openly embraced the change. If approved, this ban would need to be a department policy, not an ordinance.

Jennifer Fava reviewed the proposed verbiage of the no smoking policy ban in our facilities. The discussion continued as the Commissioners reviewed maps of the four beaches to determine where the "no smoking" delineations would be. Talk included the possibility of expanding the no smoking areas to basketball courts, tennis courts, etc., as well as where smoking would be permitted, i.e., parking lots. The general thought was to make it easy for the public to understand where they can or cannot smoke. Jennifer Fava suggested that once the Commissioners determined the areas to ban smoking, the next step would be to have the policy reviewed by the Town Attorney's office, and then at a future meeting the possibility to vote.

*Public Comment:*

John Polayes, 15 Over Rock Lane stated he thinks smoking should be banned everywhere at Compo Beach during beach season, and only allowed off season.

Leslie Gallant – 2 Crooked Mile (Friends of Compo Beach) said that they have heard very little about smoking complaints. She agrees with John Polayes to ban smoking during beach season, and allow during off season.

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Gary Krasilovksy, 10 Lookout Lane said that the smoking ban should begin at the gate entrance at Compo Beach, and continue throughout the beach during the beach season.

*Commissioners Comments:*

Edward Iannone – stated that he is fine banning smoking at Compo Beach during the beach season, however, he would like smokers to have somewhere to smoke within the complex.

Alec Stevens said people could walk along Soundview Avenue to smoke.

Charles Haberstroh would like to see smoking banned within Compo Beach, as well as the parks. He asked about the Ned Dimes Marina Club House. Jennifer Fava said that smoking is prohibited within the clubhouse, being a public building. However, you are allowed to smoke on your boat, out on the water. Jennifer Fava said if smoking was banned on the Compo property as a whole, it would also work for the other beach three properties as well.

*Public Comment:*

Gary Krasilovksy, 10 Lookout Lane stated that he thinks most people would be in favor of banning smoking. He wanted to know if the Staples Track should be included in the ban.

Geralyn Breig, 1 Crooked Mile said she would encourage to make the working of the signs as simple as can be. Ban all smoking, instead of naming specific areas.

*Commissioners Comment:*

Edward Iannone is in favor of keeping it simple, so it's easy to enforce.

Alec Stevens does not have an objection to the policy.

Jennifer Fava said that she will make the revised wording for the policy and bring it back to the Commissioners for review.

Charles Haberstroh would like for this to be a formal review, addressing the wording at the next Commission meeting, and the following month's meeting will hold a vote. Jennifer Fava offered to send out an email blast to residents before March's meeting alerting them to this discussion.

**6. To take such action as the meeting may determine regarding the revised "Usage of Westport golf facilities for fund raising tournaments".**

Jennifer Fava stated that during the review of the charity golf events at last month's Parks and Recreation meeting, it was asked that the timelines be reviewed and if those timelines were feasible. The current "Usage of Westport golf facilities for fund raising tournaments" document was reviewed, along with the draft version. Charity golf tournaments go through the end of October every year. It was determined that time was needed after the final event to submit the actual financials, which would be no later than December 15 of the year. Current requests are asked to be presented before the Parks and Recreation Commission no later than November's Commission meeting, it is proposed to change that date to the January Commission meeting. It is believed that this new proposed timing would give people the amount of time needed to accomplish these requests.

*Commissioners Comments:*

Edward Iannone liked the clarity of the dates.

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*Public Comments:*

None

**Upon a motion by Charles Haberstroh, seconded by Edward Iannone, and passed 3-0-2 (absent)**

**RESOLVED:** that the Parks and Recreation Commission approves the recommended changes as proposed in the “Usage of Westport golf facilities for fund raising tournaments”.

**7. Commissioners Report – No Report**

**8. Administrative Report: Jennifer Fava**

- Received five proposals for the Concession RFP, and interviews are being held this Friday.
- Received 14 responses to the RFQ for On-Call Landscape Architect Services. We are in the review process.
- Carmen Roda was selected out of five viable applicants to be the Operations Manager, effective March 1, 2020, replacing Dan DeVito who has retired. He will be responsible for facility scheduling and operations of beaches, marinas, pools and tennis courts.
- Ice skating ends this week and the rink is closing for the season this weekend.
- Program registration begins on March 18 and beach emblems go on sale March 23.
- A “thank you” goes to all the Parks and Recreation Commissioners, all of whom attended the Board of Finance workshop meeting this past week.
- Design and cost estimates to replace the beach lockers has been received. It is estimated to cost approximately \$550,000. Part of the cost is the large concrete area which needs to be ripped up and replaced. At the moment, this project is deferred due to the prioritization of projects.

*Public Comment:*

John Polayes, 15 Over Rock Lane asked for clarity of the project. He thinks the replacement cost for the lockers is too high and asked if it was possible for the town to offer a “matching funds” from residents for the project? Jennifer Fava said everyone needs to look at the bigger picture and review the total expense and does this project require priority for a small number of people. Charles Haberstroh said that this project requires more research before decisions are made.

Geralyn Breig, 1 Crooked Mile asked if this project could be done cheaper? Jennifer Fava said there are certain standards of how these need to be built and we have to use materials that will hold up under the elements.

- The boys Lacrosse lines are currently being replaced at the Staples Stadium Field.

**Upon a motion by Alec Stevens, seconded by Edward Iannone, the meeting adjourned at 9:07pm.**

Respectfully,

Debbie Detmer, Recording Secretary