



**Town of Westport
Parks & Recreation**
WESTPORT PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Longshore Club Park, 260 South Compo Road
Westport, CT 06880

June 18, 2012

The Westport Parks and Recreation Commission held a meeting in Town Hall, room #201/201A at 7:30 p.m. Those in attendance were Andy Moss, Chairman; George Franciscovich; Stuart Rogan; Steve Axthelm and Jennifer Johnson; Commission Members; Stuart McCarthy, Director of Parks and Recreation; Karen Puskas, Program Manager and one(1) member of the general public.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

Upon motion by Mr. Axthelm, seconded by Mr. Franciscovich, the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting of May 21, 2012 were unanimously approved.

2. Update from Friends of Westport Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Fred Hunter – update on the Halfway House - It appears that the construction itself on the Halfway House will be finished within about two weeks. We have a meeting on Friday to go over some of the details like finishing the outside of the building. It will probably be ready for business around the 4th of July. Right now the Friends of Westport Parks and Recreation group are responsible for the building at some point we have to turn that over to the town. As far as the budget, we are virtually right on the budget it doesn't appear we have anything that is not accounted for at this time.

There will be a celebration ceremony and we will be discussing how big a ceremony we have because of the location.

Mr. McCarthy - There is a sequence of events that need to take place. The builder has to finish building, the concessionaire has to outfit the new building and move out of the old building and then we have to disconnect all of the utilities and then ask for a demolition permit.

Mr. Moss changed the order of items # 3 & 4 of the agenda.

3. Review of 2011-12 Fall and Winter recreation programs.

Ms. Puskas - The basketball program is the highlight of the winter it was up about 65 – 70 kids. We were dealing with one school being closed (Kings Highway Elementary) because of renovations. The high school program continues to thrive with 280 boys in that program. We are readjusting for the volume that we have and we are moving the program to Staples on Tuesday and Thursday nights using all three courts. It is a great program with a lot of

support. We are going through some changes because the original President and Vice President have finally resigned after thirteen years. We will be revamping over the summer and hopefully coming in with a strong fundraising effort in the fall.

The ice skating program was down considerably this year, we were down some 100 registrations.

Mr. Axthelm requested to keep an eye out for maybe having an opportunity to have an ice hockey program for girls in town.

Mr. Moss noticed that the football and baseball programs were down. Ms. Puskas - The football program had very low attendance and has prompted us to reconfigure the program, either to offer instruction for students and young adults who are interested or turn the program time over to PAL Football for them to consider offering a more competitive program.

Mr. Franciscovich asked where does the \$37,000 surplus end up. Mr. McCarthy - that goes into the general fund account. It will be reported as our overall budget.

4. To take such action as the meeting may determine related to change in hours for the Community Swim program at the Staples High School Pool.

Mr. Moss made motion to amend to the call item to include discussion of changing hours and fees.

Upon motion by Ms. Johnson, seconded by Mr. Franciscovich and passed unanimously.

Mr. McCarthy - The town has been running the Staples High School pool since early in 1980's. We run a community swim program, it has always been a subsidized program. In the last few years it has become more and more subsidized as fewer people are using the facility. We then got into changing hours of the pool because of increased demand by the school system, particularly with regards to the water polo program. Last year we made some slight alterations to our schedule.

As we began looking at the program and looking at the use of the program we came up with a different take on it which was it may make sense to reduce the number of days the pool is offered. The bottom line is that there are very few people using the pool. We sold fourteen season passes and the majority of those season pass holders were hardly using the facility. There were seven or eight people that were utilizing the pool more than two times per week.

Staff's recommendation was to cut down running the pool to four days a week. The reason that is cost effective is because we have slightly higher attendance on weekends and also we run a swim program during the winter months on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturday that share the pool with the public swim. There really is not a great demand for this the high school does not have the facilities that the YMCA have.

Staff suggests that we maintain the 39 week schedule for now but reduce the number of days per week.

The second part of the recommendation is to reduce the fee schedule not only in the fairness to the people right now who you are cutting the hours in half but also to try and reduce the fee to get more people attracted to the pool.

This is an opportunity here for us to change the way we are doing business, and be more cost effective.

Mr. Axthelm asked if there were other potential programming opportunities that could enhance the usage.

Mr. McCarthy - We did have some discussion about increasing our swim program. That is probably not something we can do right now. The Water Polo program is so successful one of the options may be to insert a Water Polo program. We will look at some other opportunities for that space before we turn back the space.

Mr. Moss - What I am hearing is general support and our recommendation is to use the extra time for program time.

Upon motion by Mr. Franciscovich, seconded by Mr. Rogan and passed unanimously, it was

RESOLVED: The Parks and Recreation Commission approve a change to four days per week (T, TH, Sa, Su) for the Staples Pool schedule.

The Parks and Recreation Commission recommend to the Board of Selectmen the following fee changes related to the Staples Community Pool program:

	<u>Current</u>	<u>New</u>
Family	\$450.00	Delete
Adult	\$250.00	\$125.00
Senior Citizen	\$125.00	\$100.00
Junior	\$125.00	No Charge
Discount Card	\$50.00	Delete
 <u>Daily Fee</u>		
Adult Handpass Holder	\$7.00	\$5.00
Adult Non-Handpass Holder	\$7.00	\$7.00
Junior	\$7.00	No Charge

- To take such action as the meeting may determine relative to leases with Joseph Romeo for food concessions at Compo Beach and Longshore Club Park.

Mr. Moss - These three leases are virtually the same with the exception of the rent and the obligations that are specific to each facility. Otherwise the general terms are the same.

Mr. McCarthy - As I begin this discussion to a certain level I recuse myself from this discussion particularly regarding the financial terms of this. After 25 years of working with Joe Romeo we are personal friends and I have made that clear to the First Selectman, Mr. Moss, the Finance Director and the Board of Finance as we begin this process. So I was asked to work on the operational issues surrounding these contracts and then others would involve themselves in the financial terms.

Joe Romeo has been operating the beach concession for 24 years, has been at Longshore between the halfway house and the pool concession for 15 years.

Financial Terms - Leases continue with the existing rate schedule through 2012, increase by 5% increase for the 2013 season and then it goes back to an annual CPI adjustment. These contracts have always run on an annual CPI adjustment beyond the initial term. It also calls for Mr. Romeo to spend \$20,000 at Compo in upgrades at the facility which he needs to have approved by us before he does them and he will handle the custodial services for the restrooms at the halfway house.

Mr. Franciscovich - On the last lease with Compo they had some obligations to do some renovations including putting a window in which is repeated again in this lease. Mr. McCarthy - He did not put the window in but he did put a new floor, a new hood system, new plumbing and electrical work.

Ms. Johnson - When we talked about the bathrooms at the different facilities, the Longshore and Halfway House contract includes that Joey does maintenance on the bathrooms, was there any discussion about him providing some supplemental help to the maintenance of the bathrooms?

Mr. McCarthy - yes, there is language in the contracts that would allow us to negotiate that in exchange for reduction in rent.

Ms. Johnson - As it relates to signage I thought it might be something for the Commission to discuss in terms of Joey's By the Shore. I have noticed this past year and seeing almost a pop-up shop inside of Joey's this year with the big Melissa and Doug sign and a whole wall of plastic beach toys. The question I have is whether or not the Commission is fine with this; in terms of whether or not we don't want to micro manage Joey's, or whether or not we want to have some say in signage and pop-up shop.

Mr. Franciscovich suggested adding to the contracts where appropriate the selling of additional non-food items.

Mr. McCarthy - As the landlord the lease doesn't give us much control of what goes on inside of the building other than they must run the food concession. It does allow them to sell other products that are related. I did verify there is no sub-lease, he is not receiving any payment from Doug and Melissa other than his percentage he gets on the sales of the product that he actually sells.

Mr. Moss - I am not inclined to micro manage what he does inside of the building.

Mr. Moss - My feeling is this is a concessionaire that has been with us for a long time, he has a good relationship with the town if we start getting complaints I'm pretty confident that he would react accordingly. We would like him to watch the over commercialization at the beach.

Upon motion by Mr. Rogan, seconded by Mr. Franciscovich and passed unanimously, it was

RESOLVED: The Parks and Recreation Commission recommends to the Board of Selectmen approval of commercial leases with Joe Romeo for operation of the Golf Halfway House, Longshore Pavilion and Compo Beach Concession, provided clarification that the leases include provisions permitting the lessee to sell additional non-food items related to the particular location.

6. Old Business

Mr. Franciscovich asked if a report could be published regarding daily parking similar to the rounds played report for golf.

Ms. Johnson asked if there was anything that the Commission could do to support moving forward the master plan for Compo? Mr. McCarthy - Andy and I have met with the First Selectman and he basically said go ahead and to come back to him with some suggestions. A Steering Committee will be appointed by the First Selectman which will be made up of five people.

7. New Business

None

8. Commissioner's Reports

None

9. Administrative Update

Mr. McCarthy - The bids are coming in next week for the Levitt Pavilion. They are proceeding to the Board of Finance on July 11th with their request for funding and they are moving ahead hopefully for a September beginning of construction.

Mr. Moss asked what was the status of the marina projects? Mr. McCarthy - There will be a meeting next week with the engineering department.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully,

Sheila Kavey
Recording Secretary