

FINAL



November 19, 2020

The Westport Parks and Recreation Commission held a meeting on Wednesday, November 18, 2020 @7:32pm. Pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order No. 7B, there was no physical location for this meeting. It was held electronically and recorded via Zoom.

Members Present:

Charles Haberstroh, Chairman; Alec Stevens, Kate Kirby, Stephen Axthelm

Absent:

Edward Iannone

Also Present:

Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation; Rick Giunta, Deputy Director; Jane Pimentel, President – Longshore Sailing School, along with two members of the public.

1. Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Alec Stevens, seconded by Kate Kirby, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting of October 21, 2020 were approved 3-0-1. (1-absent)

2. Public Comment: None

3. Reports of:

Boating Advisory Committee – Report by Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation

- The boating season is wrapping up for the year.
- The water for both marinas has been winterized.
- Fingers for “F” dock at the Ned Dimes Marina are built and staging to start next week. Water and electric will be disconnected next week. Anticipate installation to begin after December 1 (weather dependent). Estimated completion is two to three weeks.

Golf Advisory Committee – Reported by Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation

- The Golf Advisory Committee met on November 2, 2020.
- BrightView's Fall Maintenance Plan is in process, which includes:
 - The edges of the bunkers have been fertilized and over-seeded.
 - Additional sand has been added to the bunkers.
 - Some spots in the fairways were aerated again and seeded last week.
 - Mowing of the fairways continues twice a week, with the greens being mowed five times a week.
 - Leaf cleanup is currently the main job.
 - Winterizing of the irrigation system will take place when less people are on the course. There are still quite a few players every day.

FINAL

- Jennifer Fava is in weekly contact with Vince Gilmartin, NE Area Director for BrightView, along with Todd Salamone, Longshore Golf Superintendent.
- The planting of 32 trees began today, some to replace those lost in the past storms, and others to be used for screening and safety measures.
- The Thanksgiving shotgun start, which was done last year, will not be scheduled this year due to COVID-19. There will be regular tee times for Thanksgiving Day.
- Plans are to keep the course open as long as possible, weather permitting and dependent on demand.
- Golf maintenance staff to be kept on after Thanksgiving as well.

Parks Advisory Committee – Reported by Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation

- Work is being done at Riverside Park and along the Riverwalk.
- The architect for the Riverside Park has not been selected yet.

Racquets Advisory Committee – Reported by Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation

- Planning on keeping the tennis courts at Longshore open as long as possible, weather permitting. Same for the hard courts.

Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee – Charles Haberstroh

- Held its inaugural meeting on November 9, 2020.
- Members present: Charles Haberstroh, Chairman; Alec Stevens, Stephen Axthelm. Also, present: Jennifer Fava, Director, Parks & Recreation; Eileen Flug, Assistant Town Attorney; Lynn Scully, Internal Auditor; Andy Fleischman, Friends of the Levitt Board Member; Carleigh Welsh, Levitt Pavilion - Director of Marketing & Development, along with members of the public.
- Carleigh Welsh gave an historical background review of the Levitt Pavilion.
- Eileen Flug gave a recap regarding the Licensing Agreement.
- Lynn Scully, Internal Auditor gave a recap of the Levitt Pavilion audit.
- The public expressed their concerns over the sound and interest in viewing more in-depth financials.
- Another meeting will be held soon, however the future date has yet to be determined.
- Charles Haberstroh stated that an agenda item will be added devoted to sound concerns.

4. To take such action as the meeting may determine to approve fees for the Longshore Sailing School for the 2021 season.

Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation stated that the fees for the Longshore Sailing School need to be approved by the Parks and Recreation Commission only, they do not need to go before the Board of Selectman. Jane Pimental reviewed the 2021 fee increases and stated the three biggest expenditures for the increases were; payroll, equipment and insurance. Minimum wage was increased on 9/1/20 and another increase will occur on 7/1/21, which represents a 20% increase from last August 2020. Next, is the increase in sourcing to replace the fleet each year. Plastics and freight are a big cost contributor. Finally, the increase in Workers' Compensation, which is directly impacted by the increase in payroll. Charles Haberstroh requested Jane Pimental to give a review of the past summer. Jane recapped the summer, along with how she dealt with COVID issues. Overall, Jane Pimental said the season was a success.

Commissioner Comment:

Kate Kirby said she thought the fees were equitable and fair.

Steve Axthelm said he would like to see all residents have the same opportunities to use the Sailing School, even those that are financially challenged. Jane Pimental said that the group "Not for Profit Friends of the Longshore Sailing School", has funds to financially help for that purpose. She said she personally provides

FINAL

assistance to some of the Westport community who simply cannot afford to pay and she does this on a one-on-one basis review. Charles Haberstroh said residents can also go through Human Services for assistance.

Upon a motion by Charles Haberstroh, seconded by Kate Kirby, and passed unanimously 4-0 (1 absent)

RESOLVED: that the Parks and Recreation Commission approves the 2021 fee schedule for the Longshore Sailing School as submitted.

5. To take such action as the meeting may determine relative to approve the proposed changes to the “Rules and Regulations Governing Use of Municipal Beaches, Yacht Basins, Longshore Club Park, Park Areas and Recreational Facilities”.

Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation stated that this document is our governing Rules and Regulations that are followed. Most changes are for clarification purposes. The Town Attorney has reviewed and made appropriate language changes. If approved, these proposed changes would need to go before the Board of Selectmen for final approval.

Charles Haberstroh said that the Lillian Wadsworth Arboretum needs to be added to the list of the properties. Jennifer Fava said she would make this change.

Jennifer Fava reviewed the proposed changes throughout the entire document. Most notably were the clarifications in:

- Animals
- Parking Emblems, Handpasses and Permits
- Parking and Traffic
- Beach Rules
- Yacht Basins and Marinas

Charles Haberstroh asked about compliance and enforcement. Jennifer Fava said there would be a learning curve. Signage would be used to assist the public, along with verbal directions from either the Police Department, the Parks and Recreation Department or Animal Control, should they see people disobeying the rules.

Overall, the Commissioners were agreeable with the majority of the changes, which reflect clarification in the Rules and Regulations. However, they felt that prohibiting dogs at Luciano Park would upset some people. They did agree it was a reasonable change since the park is small and contains a playground, as well as a ball field. But, would expect pushback from the public.

Charles Haberstroh stated that due to the quantity of proposed changes, he would recommend this document be reviewed again during the December Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. This would also allow the public another opportunity to speak.

Upon a motion by Charles Haberstroh, seconded by Stephen Axthelm and passed 4-0 (1 absent)

RECOMMENDED: To defer approval of the proposed changes to the “Rules and Regulations” until the December 16, 2020 Parks and Recreation Commission meeting.

FINAL

Public Comment:

Megan Michaud, 3 Hogan Trail stated that she would like to see dogs prohibited from Luciano Park. She has two children who enjoy using the playground but have been harassed by dogs and are reluctant to use the park due to the unleashed dogs.

Matthew Murray, 27 Old Mill Road stated he is in favor of all the changes but would expect push back from the dog owners.

8. Commissioners Report – No Report**9. Administrative Report: Jennifer Fava**

- Compo Beach restrooms are closed and being winterized. Port-a-johns are available. Restrooms at the marina are open.
- Some storm damage occurred with some downed fencing and a couple of kayak racks were lost.
- Lights are up at the Greens Farms field and the wiring is being worked on. Lights to be completed within the next couple of weeks. Backstop fabric and some fencing will also be replaced.
- Starting work on the budget for Fiscal Year 2022, which starts July 1, 2021. The direction from Finance Department is to base our budget as if COVID does not exist.
- Westport has moved into a COVID Red Zone.
- All field permits have been revoked with no new permits issued until further notice.
- The basketball courts at Compo Beach have been closed, and rims removed.
- Athletic fields are open for general use, but not for any organized groups. All goals at fields are being removed and locked up to discourage gatherings and group usage.
- Working with PAL and Thin Ice Management to open the ice-skating rink in a safe manner.
- Returned the rule for single use riders only for golf carts at the Longshore Golf Course.
- Cancelled all outdoor sports programs scheduled through early December.

Upon a motion by Stephen Axthelm, seconded by Kate Kirby, the meeting adjourned at 9:28pm.

Respectfully,
Debbie Detmer, Recording Secretary