



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

October 15, 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; and Steve Axthelm 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. Franciscovich, seconded by Mr. Rogan, the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting of September 24, 2012 were unanimously approved.

2. Update from Friends of Westport Parks and Recreation.

Mr. Moss - I received word from Jeff Mayer today saying that there was nothing in particular to report. They are still looking for the right balance between raising funds and waiting for projects.

3. Review of Parks and Recreation 2012 Spring/Summer programs.

Ms. Puskas - Overall the summer was good. Road Runners entered its' 50<sup>th</sup> year in 2012 and it showed its' best summer ever having over 1,600 registrations. The attendance average was about 140 – 150 per race and the last couple of races for the summer were about 200 for each.

Mr. McCarthy made note of a correction to be made to the Department Totals of \$97,383 to \$96,471. This was due to a bill that came in from the police department for the road runners program that changed the Surplus/Subsidy from \$6,285 to \$5,373. Bill was for \$912.

RECCing Crew program - This turned out to be the highest grossing programming this summer, generating over \$133,000.

Mr. Axthelm asked if we do anything with the fresh air fund. Mr. McCarthy - Fresh Air Fund is a private non for profit organization. If a family has fresh air children they can get beach passes, hand passes, basically what they want for that child while he or she is in town for a couple of weeks.

Mr. Moss asked if we did anything for the kids that go to Staples HS from Bridgeport. Ms. Puskas - The kids that are in the school system, they are treated like a Westport resident. Project Return - we give scholarships for them otherwise the kids that are in the school system are treated like a resident.

Mr. Franciscovich asked geographically where the non-resident camp participants are from. Ms. Puskas - They could be non-residents from surrounding towns or they could be grandchildren of grandparents who live in town and register their grandchildren.

Mr. Axthelm - Does a non-resident qualify for a scholarship? Ms. Puskas - scholarships go through Human Services, but if someone came to us directly we would discuss it, but generally we do not give scholarships to non-residents.

Mr. Axthelm - I just wonder if we want to be a little bit more proactive and share some of our opportunities with those who are less fortunate.

Mr. McCarthy - That would be a policy issue for this commission to discuss.

Mr. Moss asked if we did surveys for the programs. Ms. Puskas - We used to do formal ones on paper but we have gotten away from that. We now do online feedback or walk-in feedback.

Ms. Puskas - Adult Tennis - Some feedback I received this summer was relating to adult tennis which mostly involves ladies. They sign up for classes that are convenient for them and not by the level of play. So what happens is that when you get a true beginner in the class, they tend not to fit in. Over the winter we will be working with the tennis director to see what, and if we can do anything to control this. It might come down to more staff enforcement.

Mr. McCarthy - One of the things we did find out in our overall tennis survey is that the tennis instruction classes are priced very moderately compared to other communities. As we look at our overall tennis program, our subsidy for our overall operation of the tennis courts has gone up significantly. One of the things we will be recommending is to incorporate a court fee into the tennis instruction.

Mr. Axthelm (speaking about REcing Crew) - What is the staff to participant ratio? Ms. Puskas - I have a staff of 22 counselors, plus the 4 supervisors. We are running close to 8-1 or 9-1 ratios. We had 175+ on the waitlist so we were able to hire additional staff so that we could accommodate some of the waitlist.

Ms. Axthelm - Is it our goal to make a profit on summer programs? Mr. McCarthy –for most of these programs we are aiming at breakeven on these general operating expenses. Taking out the sports camps (those are intended to raise profits).

Mr. Moss - I am going to ask a question, and I don't expect an answer tonight. Because programs are so well run and you are making money given the overall department, would you think about opening them up to area residents?

Mr. McCarthy - You can do that. We do make the programs available to the non-residents we don't do any advertising. The facilities are an issue.

Mr. McCarthy - Currently the policy is to try and get the programs run on a breakeven basis and the town picks up the overhead.

#### 4. Old Business

Mr. McCarthy - Westport Vintage Antique Market - They had a torrential down pour at the end of their event that moved in quickly. Basically, they lost control of their vendors and had several vans that got stuck in the mud. We have hired a contractor and we have received the \$1,200 from the Antique Market to make the repairs. We cancelled the dates for the rest of the season. They did arrange something with the Police Department and the Selectman's office to use the parking lot down at the railroad station.

Wakeman Town Farms – They had a fall farm to table dinner to raise some funds. They also had a pancake breakfast this past weekend and they will meet their fundraising goals for the year. A good portion of the money will go towards capital improvements. (\$30,000 capital improvement budget) One of the things they want to do is build a chicken coop. Technically they are on the same property as the two schools so anything they do there is going to require them to go to the ZBA. We are working with them on that.

Compo Beach Bathhouses - Joe Fuller who is with the Maintenance Study Committee as I reported at the last meeting was going to help to develop a scope of services for an architectural firm, he has done that and I have not had a chance to review it yet.

Golf Course Update - We are seeing significant improvements on the golf course. We are still having some issues with the 2<sup>nd</sup> green. We will likely close the 2<sup>nd</sup> green earlier than the rest of the course.

Levitt Pavilion - They still do not have the funding in place they are still very optimistic. The lawyers on the donor side finally got around to sending their list of conditions and some of them were not acceptable to the Levitt Pavilion. I spoke today with the architect and the general contractor, the general contractor is most anxious to get the project under construction.

Mr. Moss - Field Use Policy - asked Mr. Franciscovich and Mr. Axthelm if they had a chance to look at the Field Use Policy in general, and for an opportunity for fees as we go into the budget season.

5. New Business  
None
6. Commissioner's Reports  
None
7. Administrative Update  
None

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully,  
Sheila Kavey  
Recording Secretary