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

June 17, 2021

The Westport Parks and Recreation Commission held a meeting on Wednesday, June 16, 2021 @7:42pm. 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, Kate Kirby, Stephen Axthelm

Absent:

Alec Stevens, Edward Iannone

Also Present:

Rick Giunta, Deputy Director; James Adrian, Chairman of the Gridiron Club; along with members of the public.

1. Approval of Minutes

Approval of the April 21, 2021 minutes were deferred until the July meeting due to lack of present members needed to approve.

Charles Haberstroh took a few minutes to speak about the inaugural "ALS-Lou Gehrig Day" which took place at Yankee Stadium on June 2, 2021. His eldest son is Co-chair of the committee that worked tirelessly for two years with the Major Baseball League Baseball to achieve this commitment from MLB to annually raise awareness and funding to beat ALS. All 30 leagues participated. It was a momentous occasion for all ALS patients.

2. Public Comment:

Mike Durkin, 1 Norfolk Drive stated that Westport is building a great paddle program. As such, there is a heavy demand for courts and he is requesting that the Town support the paddle community by constructing two more paddle tennis courts and a warming hut.

Charles Haberstroh replied that he would be reviewing the status of the Longshore Site Plan during the Administrative Review. However, he did confirm that two firms made it through the selection process. Final follow up questions will be given to those two firms next week. Both firms have pledged to have the process done within six months, with the start of the project beginning later in the year 2021.

Jay Walshon, 67 Roseville Road said he is supporting Tom Lowrie's request in asking that the Skate Park be placed on the Parks & Recreation Commission's agenda for July.

Tom Lowrie, 4 Gristmill Lane is also requesting that the Skate Park be placed on the Parks and Recreation Commission's agenda for July. He feels that the Skate Park should be recreated in concrete, and he would like to see the creation of two additional Pickleball courts.

Charles Haberstroh said he will consider putting it on the agenda next month or September, as there may not be a meeting in August.

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Reports of:

Boating Advisory Committee – Rick Giunta Reported

- Due to the COVID effect, boats are slowly coming into the marina. They may be waiting to get commissioned, parts or waiting for new boats.
- Boaters have been sending in positive comments.

Golf Advisory Committee – Rick Giunta Reported

- The GAC held a meeting on June 8, 2021.
- May rounds were 5,423.
- The last time rounds were over 5,000 in the month of May, was in 2015.
- New netting has been ordered for the perimeter of the driving range. When the material comes in, it will be installed by the vendor, which could be several weeks out.

Parks Advisory Committee – Reported by David Floyd

- The Parks Advisory Committee met on May 17. During that meeting SLR Consulting presented their first draft proposal along with estimated costs for various improvements at Riverside Park. Based on the estimates, the discussion focused on the higher priorities. SLR is working with Jennifer Fava and Steve Edwards on a recommended plan going forward and will present it to the PAC in the next month or two.
- Work is continuing on how to showcase the various parks on the Town's website.

Racquets Advisory Committee – Reported by David Ascelrod @8:39pm

- The RAC has met in both May and June.
- Heavy use was reported for all of the racquet facilities.
- There is a shortage of platform and pickleball courts, based on play.
- Tennis Courts:
 - The Longshore tennis courts were in rough shape the past couple of weeks, however Parks and Recreation applied calcium chloride and water to the courts to rejuvenate them, which has worked.
 - Tennis pros seem to be monopolizing courts on the weekends. Suggest putting a person on-site to monitor the courts. Also suggest expanding the Chelsie reservation system.
- Platform Courts:
 - Courts are playing fine.
 - Would suggest putting another pickleball court between the tennis courts.
 - The court surfaces need to be resurfaced.
- Pickleball Courts:
 - The sport continues to grow.
 - Requesting additional courts.
 - Suggest setting a schedule for the limited courts.
 - There are cracks in the courts at Compo Beach.

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Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee – Reported by Charles Haberstroh

- The committee met on April 29, 2021 and the Levitt presented their sound protocols.
- The first concert was held on Monday night and there were no sound complaints. Steve Axthelm attended it as well and stated that the music was comfortable to listen to.
- There was a preliminary meeting last Saturday with the sound consultants that Charles Haberstroh attended. The discussion focused on how to better monitor the sound. The consultants will be returning to the Levitt during a full concert to test various sound levels around different locations, as well as throughout the Levitt.
- Due to CoVid reopening guidance during the spring, the Levitt is rapidly putting the balance of their schedule together.

4. To take such action as the meeting may determine regarding a request to name the Staples Wrecker Field “Paul Lane Field”.

Charles Haberstroh spoke about his personal relationship with Coach Lane and what an inspiration he was to his family, as well as the community. Sadly, Paul Lane passed away on June 15.

Kate Kirby stated that her family is friends with the Lane family and has a fondness for them.

Charles Haberstroh introduced Jim Adrian, Chairman of the Gridiron Group.

Jim Adrian spoke in-depth about Coach Paul Lane’s football coaching career and how instrumental he was in the growth of football within the Town of Westport. He also spoke about how Coach Lane nurtured and mentored athletes from their PAL years, all the way through High School. Coach Lane sent seven (7) Staples Wrecker quarterbacks to play for Division 1 Teams, two of which were his sons. Coach Lane put Staples on the “Football Map” over fifty years ago with his biggest win in 1967 by beating Stamford Catholic H.S. 8 to 0, breaking Stamford’s 30 game winning streak. Coach Lane has served the Town for three (3) decades. His moral and ethical qualities comport with the Town’s high standards and policies. All of Coach Lane’s accomplishments cannot be encompassed in this brief paragraph.

Commissioner Comment:

Charles Haberstroh, Steve Axthelm and Kate Kirby are all in favor and support of naming the field “Coach Paul Lane Field”.

Public Comment:

Jay Walshon, 67 Roseville Road said he feels this request should be approved and passed quickly.

Charles Haberstroh read the Resolution but wanted to amend it include the word “Coach”. There were no objectives from the Commissioners.

Upon a motion by Charles Haberstroh, seconded by Steve Axthelm, and passed unanimously 3-0 (2 absent)

AMENDED RESOLUTION: that the Parks and Recreation Commission supports the request to name the Staples Wrecker Field the “Coach Paul Lane Field”

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8. Commissioners Report

- Stephen Axthelm requested that the Skate Park be on the agenda next month.

9. Administrative Report: Rick Giunta

- The Longshore pool is open as normal.
- Total beach emblem sales:
 - 2020 - 14,079
 - 2021 YTD - 16,688
- There is a significant increase in Weston beach emblem sales.
 - 2020 - 759
 - 2021 YTD Weston emblems sold are 1,130
- Tennis handpass sales:
 - 2020 – 339
 - 2021 YTD – 415
- Golf handpass sales:
 - 2020 - 1,682
 - 2021 YTD – 1,772
- Camp Enrollment – Note that 2021 enrollment was limited to adjustments for COVID guidelines.
 - RECing Crew
(Comparing 2019 to 2021, as camp was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID)
 - 2019 - 1,188
 - 2021 - 493
 - Camp Compo
(Comparing 2019 to 2021, as camp was cancelled in 2020 due to COVID)
 - 2019 - 789
 - 2021 – 585

Charles Haberstroh spoke about the Longshore Site Plan and some of the reasonings for its delay in getting off the ground. Progress has been made, as eight (8) bids were reviewed by the three (3) person committee. Of those eight, 2 are in the final questioning stage. It will not be a Masterplan, but a series of projects.

Upon a motion by Stephen Axthelm, seconded by Kate Kirby, the meeting adjourned at 8:47pm.

Respectfully,
Debbie Detmer, Recording Secretary