

FINAL MINUTES



July 22, 2021

The Westport Parks and Recreation Commission held a meeting on Wednesday, July 21, 2021 @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, Stephen Axthelm, Edward Iannone, Kate Kirby (7:33pm)

Absent:

Alec Stevens

Also Present:

Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation; Rick Giunta, Deputy Director; Steven Edwards, Consultant; Suzanne Schore, SLR Consulting

Prior to the approval of the minutes, Charles Haberstroh announced the resignation of Stephen Axthelm from the Parks and Recreation Commission. He spoke about Stephen's contributions to the Commission over his 11 years of service and extended a heartfelt thank you for his participation and dedication.

1. Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion by Edward Iannone, seconded by Stephen Axthelm, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting of April 21, 2021, were approved 3-0-1 (one abstains, one absent).

Upon a motion by Kate Kirby, seconded by Stephen Axthelm, the minutes of the Parks & Recreation Commission meeting of June 16, 2021, were approved with one change 3-0-1 (one abstains, one absent).

2. Public Comment:

John Kantor, 73 Grove Point extended his thanks to Stephen Axthelm for his service on the PRC Commission.

Gabrielle Dick, 143 North Avenue (a Parks and Recreation Skate Camp Counselor) would like to see the skate park at Compo Beach revamped into a new cement skate park.

Nancy Axthelm, 33 Minuteman Hill, extended her thanks to her brother Stephen Axthelm on his service on the PRC Commission.

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Reports of:

Boating Advisory Committee

- This committee has not meet due to lack of members and there were no comments.

Golf Advisory Committee – Jennifer Fava Reported

- The Golf Advisory Committee did not hold a meeting in July.
- June rounds were 6,209, this is slightly lower than 2020 due to this years' hosting of the golf charity events. However, it is still higher than all other Junes dating back to 2008.
- The intense rain from Tropical Storm Elsa created some water damage. Water pooled between the #4 & #5 fairways causing the grass to burn out. Aeration and seeding are taking place to repair the area.
- The perimeter netting at the driving range was replaced this week with new netting.

Parks Advisory Committee – Reported by David Floyd

- The Parks Advisory Committee met on June 28.
- David Floyd deferred is comments until Agenda Item #4 regarding the Riverside Park Improvements.

Racquets Advisory Committee – Reported by Jennifer Fava

- The RAC cancelled their July meeting.

Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee – Reported by Charles Haberstroh

- The last meeting was in June and the next meeting is scheduled for October.
- A few performances have been rained out this season, but the ones that performed didn't have any sound complaints. Everything is going well.

4. To take such action as the meeting may determine to approve the plan and an appropriation request relative to the Riverside Park improvements.

Charles Haberstroh stated that the PRC Commission is not a funding body for the Town and the Commission has not analyzed the appropriation nor will it provide a seal of approval on the exact amount of the appropriation. As this plan moves through the Town processes, and if it is determined that additions or subtractions of monies are needed, then the funding bodies will be the approving entities.

Jennifer Fava began by stating that Riverside Park is designated as a DOSRD 3 property by Planning & Zoning and is limited to passive use. The focus of improvements is to improve accessibility and to create/enhance the multiple vistas within the park. She asked Suzanne Schore, SLR Consulting, who also has been working closely with the PAC, to further explain the concept plan.

Suzanne Schore, SLR Consultant spoke in depth about the conceptual plan for Riverside Park, which included a full color map of the park, illustrating areas of improvement, along with possible future phase improvements. Also discussed was the budget for these improvements. Steven Edwards also included comments regarding the plan and David Floyd stated that the PAC is in full support of this plan.

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Commissioner Comments:

There was an open discussion between the Commissioners, Suzanne Schore and Steven Edwards. Edward Iannone stated that he would like to see the kayak launch be included in the initial plan. David Floyd said the kayak launch was a priority for the Parks Advisory Committee and Charles Haberstroh wanted to proceed with the plans concurrently to include the kayak launch.

Public comment:

Jay Walshon, 67 Roseville Road asked if there was ever a budget item of \$500,000 to upgrade Barons South?

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

RESOLVED: that the Parks and Recreation Commission approves the plan and appropriation request in the amount of \$510,000.00 relative to the Riverside Park improvements.

5. To take such action as the meeting may determine to approve an appropriation request relative to the Longshore Capital Improvement Plan.

Jennifer Fava stated that prior to the pandemic shutdown, an RFP was issued for architectural, and engineering serves to establish a Capital Improvement Plan for the Longshore Club Park. This project is included in the Parks and Recreation Department's Five-Year Capital Forecast. Eight (8) proposals were submitted, with costs ranging from \$69,500 to \$122,000. Based upon proposals and information, three (3) firms were granted interviews. It was determined that Stantec was the best company for the needs of this project. This project is expected to take approximately six (6) months once underway. The fee for Stantec is not to exceed \$95,000.00.

The objective of this project is to create a plan that will best meet the needs of the public and utilization of this facility.

Commissioner Comments:

There was an open discussion between the Commissioners, with the overall opinions being extremely positive.

Public comment:

Jay Walshon, 67 Roseville Road asked about a "wish list" and if items could be added to it at this time.

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 appropriation request in the not to exceed amount of \$95,000.00 relative to the Longshore Capital Improvement Plan.

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- Stephen Axthelm spoke about his tenure on the Commission.

9. Administrative Report: Jennifer Fava

- 16,069 resident beach emblems have been sold to date.
- 1,220 Weston beach emblems have been sold to date.
- 297 non-resident beach emblems have been sold to date.
- A total of 17,586 beach emblems have been sold to date equaling \$1,344.455. This is above pre-COVID 2019 numbers.
- 547 Tennis Handpasses have been sold to date, above 2020 numbers.
- 2,246 Golf Handpasses have been sold to date, above 2020 numbers.
- The Park Superintendent Position is still in the interviewing stage. A decision should be made shortly.
- Working with the Youth Commission on the Skatepark. Hoping to meet in August.
- A Winter Boat Storage announcement went out yesterday and the response was quick. 9 spaces have already been reserved.
- P&Z is looking at Baron's South to potentially change a portion of the zoning for other uses than passive. If approved, this could be an opportunity for additional outdoor recreation like pickleball courts or bocce courts near the Senior Center.

Upon a motion by Steven Axthelm, seconded by Edward Iannone, the meeting adjourned at 9:36pm.

Respectfully,
Debbie Detmer, Recording Secretary