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

October 21, 2021

The Westport Parks and Recreation Commission held a Meeting on Wednesday, October 20, 2021 @6:30pm. 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; Edward Iannone; Alec Stevens, Kate Kirby

Also Present:

Jamie Sabbach, President & CEO, 110% Inc.; Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation; Rick Giunta, Deputy Director; along with members of the public.

Charles Haberstroh began the meeting at 6:30pm. He opened the meeting by apologizing for his comments at the end of the Oct 6th Parks and Recreation Commission meeting. He said his words were poorly chosen and it was inappropriate for a public official to single out a private citizen or group, no matter what the circumstances. He also said he regrets any pain that his comments may have caused. With that, Mr. Haberstroh continued with the approval of the minutes.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

Upon a motion by Kate Kirby, seconded by Edward Iannone, the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting of July 21, 2021, were approved 3-0-1 (one abstains)

Charles Haberstroh briefly spoke about the three different types of minutes that can be approved. Action Minutes (states the resolution and voting results), Summary Minutes (this was adopted approximately eight years ago by the Commission. The recording secretary summarizes the minutes) and third are Verbatim Minutes (the only organization in Westport that uses verbatim minutes is the RTM). This Commission approves Summary minutes as they are either televised, recorded or both. Anyone interested can access the minutes and/or listen to them via the Town of Westport website.

1. **Approval of Minutes (cont.)**

Upon a motion by Edward Iannone, seconded by Alec Stevens, the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting held @6pm on September 1, 2021, were approved 4-0

Upon a motion by Kate Kirby, seconded by Alec Stevens, the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting held @7:30pm on September 1, 2021, were approved 4-0

Upon a motion by Alec Stevens, seconded by Edward Iannone, the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission held on October 6, 2021, were approved 3-0-1

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Charles Haberstroh turned Public Comment over to Edward Iannone. Mr. Iannone reviewed the guidelines with the public: 1) comment(s) cannot be an agenda item 2) there cannot be conversations back and forth between the public and Commission members 3) limit comments to three minutes.

2. **Public Comment**

Caroline Walshon, 67 Roseville Road said she would like to donate her three minutes to her husband, Jay Walshon.

Jay Walshon, 67 Roseville Road asked if the Commissioners received his email and letter regarding his edits/revisions and corrections to the July 21, 2021, and September 1, 2021, minutes. Mr. Walshon doesn't believe those minutes were comprehensive or accurate. He spent several minutes articulating how the minutes should be chronicled.

3. **To take such action as the meeting may determine to adopt the Town of Westport Parks & Recreation Financial Sustainability Policy.**

Charles Haberstroh turned the discussion over to Jennifer Fava. Ms. Fava stated that this discussion has been before the Commission twice. The first time was the development of the continuum, the second was the development of the policy that addresses the implementation of this strategy. This policy will be an internal policy which will help support the financial sustainability of the Parks and Recreation Department. Based on input obtained during the policy work session, the policy has been revised and is being presented tonight for final approval. Ms. Fava introduced Jamie Sabbach from 110%, Inc. Ms. Sabbach shared her screen and provided a thorough discussion regarding the adjustments made in the Success Metrics portion of the policy. The discussion moved to a review on addressing gaps between existing cost recovery performance and target (goals).

At the end of the presentation, Ms. Fava stated that she feels assured with these changes and endorses this policy. She asked if the Commissioners had any questions.

Commissioner Comments:

Edward Iannone said this is a great idea and will help us collect data to make better decisions and allocate our finite resources. He is in support of this policy.

Kate Kirby thanked Ms. Sabbach for her time and effort working on this policy. She said the Commission wants to ensure that dollars are spent in a responsible way and for the best possible use for the community and she feels this policy accomplishes this.

Alec Stevens agreed with Ms. Kirby and he fully supports it. He feels this is an incredibly helpful process.

Charles Haberstroh asked Ms. Sabbach if the department would have their support in the beginning as they go through "real life" situations? Jennifer Fava said understandably there will be a learning curve with the software, however the department will reach out for help as needed.

Public Comments: None

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

RESOLVED: that the Parks and Recreation Commission approves the adoption of the Financial Sustainability Policy dated 10.5.21 as provided.

4. Reports of:

Boating Advisory Committee – Reported by Jennifer Fava

- Winter boat storage beginning on November 1st.
- Boats to be out of the water by November 30th.
- Wrapping up this season and preparing for next season.
- Charles Haberstroh asked about the winter boat storage being offered by Parks & Rec. Rick Giunta said about 75% has been paid for and reserved. There is still availability for smaller sized boats. Boats on trailers will be stored on the gravel lot at Longshore.

Golf Advisory Committee – Reported by Jennifer Fava

- September rounds were: 4,677
- YTD rounds are: 31,995
- Brad Brown is the new golf course Superintendent. He started about 4 weeks ago and we have already seen improvements.
- Greens were aerated last week with the fairways are currently being aerated.
- Bid documents are being prepared for the leveling of the tee boxes and the greens drainage.

Parks Advisory Committee – Reported by David Floyd

- Their last meeting was on September 20, 2021 where they formally approved the improvements for the Riverside Park.
- Their next meeting is scheduled for November 1, 2021.

Racquets Advisory Committee – Reported by David Ascelrod

- There has been continued high use of the racquet facilities.
- There is talk about the lack of paddle and pickleball facilities.
- Tennis season is drawing to a close. There was some feedback about the courts being on the dry side with a need for some calcium chloride. However, this may be a supply chain issue, versus a maintenance issue.
- It's difficult to reserve a paddle court. Two years ago the RAC requested two additional paddle courts and a warming hut. The RAC is still interested in moving forward with that request.
- There was discussion about creating pickleball courts on the gravel lot at Longshore. The RAC would like that location added to the Longshore Site Plan as well.

Levitt Pavilion Sub-Committee – Reported by Charles Haberstroh

- Their last meeting was on April 29, 2021.
- The next scheduled meeting is next week, October 28, 2021.

Jennifer Fava updated everyone on the status/timing of the Longshore Capital Improvement Program. Assurance was made that the consultants will be informed of the RAC request.

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5. **Review of Commission accomplishments during the last 8 years and outstanding issues.**

Charles Haberstroh prefaced this review by saying it would have been helpful if he had known the accomplishments and outstanding issues of his predecessor(s) on the Parks and Recreation Commission. With that in mind, here are the list of accomplishments by location.

Compo Beach:

- Shore stabilization and walkway at the Ned Dimes Marina
- Upgraded power heads at the Ned Dimes Marina
- Installed pickleball courts
- Replaced basketball courts with height adjusting baskets. The courts are also regulation size.
- Installed east beach walkway
- Renovated the pavilion restrooms
- Converted interior restroom in the Ned Dimes Marina to handicapped accessible
- Converted all restrooms within Compo Beach to be handicapped accessible
- Relocated the guardhouse to improve traffic flow
- Installed bathrooms (ADA accessible) on south beach
- Installed walkway on south beach with handicapped accessible picnic areas
- Replaced the roof on the pavilion and established additional dining next to the restaurant
- Replaced the concessionaire at Compo beach and Longshore
- Completed dredging of Compo channel

Longshore:

- Leveled and repaved lower lot “B”
- Implemented outsourcing of maintenance of Longshore Golf Course
- Added second platform tennis court
- Upgraded powerheads and replaced T heads including wave attenuation (to sustain wave action) at the E.R. Strait marina.
- Restructured the Golf Pro operations
- Completed the bunker improvement project at the Longshore Golf Course
- Switched holes #9 and #14 on the golf course

Other Parks:

- Instituted the Riverside Park Improvement Plan
- Created and “refurbished” 38/40 Old Mill Park

Recreation/Field Improvement of Facilities:

- Replaced four synthetic turf fields
- Replaced the Greens Farms field lights with LED

Levitt Pavilion:

- Renovation of Levitt Pavilion
- Established the Governing Sub-Committee
- Worked with Levitt Pavilion management to improve sound control and other governance issues

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Administrative:

- Added “Public” comment and Committee Reports to the Parks and Recreation Commission meetings
- Expanded Golf Advisory Committee attendees to include the Golf Pro, Golf Superintendent and the Presidents of the three golf associations
- Selected a new Parks and Recreation Director
- Created the Parks Advisory Committee
- Created the Racquets Advisory Committee
- Established a Financial Sustainability Policy

Commissioner Comments:

Edward Iannone said he was impressed with everything that was accomplished during these eight years and was proud to be part of this Commission. He thanked the Parks and Recreation employees and leadership, Jennifer Fava, Rick Giunta, Dan DeVito, Stuart McCarthy. Mr. Iannone said that they make Westport special and it's done with limited resources and difficult environment. He's impressed that every season the Parks & Rec turns out world-class programming and facilities. He thanked Jim Marpe and Jen Tooker who gave him the opportunity to serve on this commission. He is thankful for their leadership and vision. He also thanked Charles Haberstroh for his leadership and thanked his fellow commissioners. Lastly, Mr. Iannone thanked the residents for bringing their different views and passion to every meeting, but asked them to listen to one another, as by listening, opinions may change. Mr. Iannone said his goal over the last eight years was to maximize the variety of programming and facilities that are offered by the Town of Westport and to lead Westport to a better place.

Alec Stevens said he enjoyed his time on this committee. He echoed Mr. Iannone's feelings but wanted to add that he was proud that the committee hired Jennifer Fava, Director of Parks and Recreation. Mr. Stevens said Ms. Fava is doing a wonderful job.

Kate Kirby told the Commissioners that it has been a privilege to work with them and that the folks at Parks and Rec and the town are a group of passionate people who only want the best for their Town. She hopes to continue to be on the Commission and make wise decisions for the Town.

Charles Haberstroh said that Westport could not have gotten through the pandemic as well as it had, without the extra effort put in by the Parks and Recreation Department. Mr. Haberstroh reviewed the outstanding issues below.

Outstanding Issues:

- Longshore Capital Improvement Plan
- Parks Master Plan
- Baron's South
- Location for additional pickleball courts
- Skate Park

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Charles Haberstroh spoke about his tenure on this Commission and how important recreation and its facilities are to the residents of Westport. He also learned how controversial things are, as well as how passionate the citizenry is. He has tried to keep perspective, be respectful and keep moving forward. Mr. Haberstroh thanked Jim Marpe and his fellow Commissioners. He thanked the Committee Chairs and their committees, along with Jennifer Fava and her staff for their dedication, and to the citizenry of Westport. He thanked Jon Janik, the Longshore Golf Pro.

Public Comment:

Jay Walshon, 67 Roseville Road said he was upset that the Commissioners didn't thank the residents of Westport who have tried to contribute, engage and guide the Parks and Recreation department.

Mr. Iannone replied to Mr. Walshon's comment by saying he did thank the residents of Westport for their passion and input. Mr. Iannone reiterated his thanks to the public for their passion and input.

6. Commissioner's Report – None

7. Administrative Report – Jennifer Fava

- Pasacreta Park will be under construction about 45 to 60 days during the Dec/Jan time frame while a new sewer line is installed.
- Halloween Parade is scheduled for October 27, with a rain date of October 28.
- The Parks and Recreation Department hired a new Parks Superintendent Michael West.

Jennifer Fava thanked all the Commission members for their support over the years. She thanked the public for using our facilities and attending the programs and looks forward to the future.

Upon a motion by Edward Iannone, seconded by Kate Kirby, the meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

Respectfully,
Debbie Detmer, Recording Secretary