



SHELTON PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

The Shelton Parks and Recreation Commission held a regular meeting on Thursday, January 19, 2017 at 7:30 pm at the Shelton Community Center, 41 Church Street, Shelton, CT.

Commission Members

John Papa, Chairman
David Zamba, Vice Chairman
Lorenzo Durante
Michelle Haywood (absent)
Stanley Kudej
Debra McGlone
Jeff Van Scoy
Gary Cahill (excused)
Joseph DeFilippo
Terrance Gumbs
Anne Gaydos
Robert Zuraw

Ronald Herrick, Jr., Director of Parks and Recreation
Brett Beatty, Recreation Supervisor
Jonathan Taylor, Aquatics Director
Bill Manion, Recreation Supervisor
Dean Cawthra, Parks Superintendent

Chairman John Papa opened the meeting at 7:30 with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Cheryl O'Brien, Valley Shakespeare Festival– 153 Village Drive

Cheryl O'Brien: I have brought photos to support what I am going to say. I am representing the Valley Shakespeare Festival tonight; I am the Director of Development for the Valley Shakespeare Festival. For those of you who don't know who we are, we are a 501c3 non-profit theatre company based here in Shelton. We conduct several activities in the City of Shelton throughout the year. In December, we always do 3 scripted, hand readings of "A Christmas Carol"; this picture is at the Plumb Memorial Library. Twice a year, we hold an event called

“Shakespeare in the Bar”. We have performed in Porky’s [Café], we have performed in Calorosso; here are some photos from that. One of the other things we do, is we have an Education Initiative Program; for the last 2 years we have performed workshops and plays for Shelton students in Elementary and 5-6 Schools and we will be expanding this year into the Intermediate School. We practice every year at the [Shelton] Community Center; here is a picture from the first year that he held something in the [Shelton] Community Center. We also participate in a lot of things that go on in Shelton; we marched in the parade, we participated in Shelton Day, Soup Stock. We have also partnered with the Shelton Historical Society, and the Young Emerging Professionals of the Valley Chamber of Commerce. One of our biggest things that we do is our Summer Play, which we do every year in July, in Veterans Memorial Park. Just so you know, we also receive support from the Valley Community Foundation, Pitney Bowes, Katharine Matthies Foundation, UBS, the City of Shelton, as well as donations from individual patrons; that is what we run on entirely. So, our most ambitious endeavor throughout the year is our summer play. This year will be our 5th year. This is the year that I guess we have a problem because you guys seem to have something scheduled for Wednesday, July 12 [2017], which is right in the middle of our meet. Now, I went down Wednesday, January 16 [2017] to reserve for July of ’16, at the same time I went to reserve for the week of July 10-16 of 2017, so we wouldn’t have any issues or any conflicts. I know you guys get first priority and I am more than well aware of it, but I am here to ask you to please, please, please, I beg of you, don’t take that day away from us. First of all, the reason that we try to book either the first or second week of July, because believe it or not, there are other companies that do Shakespeare in the Park in our area; if you would like to know where they are and when they schedule their performances, I have that information for you. The point is, we are all aiming towards the same thing; we provide free theatre to as many people as possible, with a family-friendly atmosphere, so we make a concerted effort every year; not to schedule anything where there is a conflict. So, we will kind of know where we are, and we are locked in. That is why those two (the second and third week of July) are so important to us. So, the reason why we really need that full week, I will tell you what our schedule is. The first day, we have to put up the stage, it takes an entire day; it’s an expensive proposition, this is a picture of what it looks like after the stage is put up and people begin to come in. We do draw about 1,000 people in the 4 days that we perform in the park over the summer. The 2nd day is the first time our actors come in and actually rehearse on the stage. Up until that time they spend 3 weeks here in the [Shelton] Community Center rehearsing. As you may know, rehearsing in a room like this is not the same thing as getting onto the stage, or getting onto the ball field, or anything else; it’s a completely different atmosphere. Tuesday, we start getting everybody acclimated to the stage, finding where everybody is supposed to come in and stand, where the best acoustics are, etc. Wednesday, the day we have the conflict, is the day that we have our dress rehearsal; we bring in the sound and we bring in the lighting. Our performances run from about 8 pm until about 10-10:30 pm. We really need that Wednesday night; we have 2 rehearsals that day, one in the morning where everybody can get accustomed to it again and we make some adjustments, and at night we bring in the sound and the lighting. Here’s a picture, from the sound board, to show you what it looks like; the stage and everything when we first set it up. Here’s what it looks like once nightfall hits. Here are 3 pictures of what it looks like; we start the play when it’s daylight, middle of the play it is starting to get dark, and

end of play it is black as night. You see we absolutely, positively need that night before. We start performances on Thursday; our performances are Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. We absolutely, positively need that Wednesday; I am begging you don't take the park away from us that week. We want one week and we really, really, really need that.

Robert Zuraw: You are done on the 16th?

Cheryl O'Brien: Yes, the 16th is the last performance, and the 17th is to break down the stage and clean the park. This is our 5th year; you can ask anybody we have been here the past 4 years. I know what you guys are planning for that night...

Chairman Papa: It's a concert.

Cheryl O'Brien: Ok, well they are usually on the Green. I've been here for 20 years.

Robert Zuraw: We set up for the 4th of July, and we pay for the stage to keep it another week; that is why we take the next week.

Chairman Papa: What we are going to do, is we are going to discuss it and Ronnie [Herrick] is going to call you tomorrow.

Cheryl O'Brien: Is there anything I can do or say to get you.

Chairman Papa: I think you have proposed everything, we understand the situation is.

Cheryl O'Brien: Because we would have to leave then, I guess.

Chairman Papa: Pardon?

Cheryl O'Brien: We don't want to leave Shelton, but I don't know where we can possibly go and how we can manage it

Chairman Papa: We will work something out.

Cheryl O'Brien: Can you move your concert to the Green?

Chairman Papa: The only thing is during the public portion, we don't have any agenda. We will discuss it and Ronnie [Herrick] will call you.

Cheryl O'Brien: Well, thank you for your time and hopefully you can find a way to accommodate us.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Robert Zuraw made a motion to accept the November minutes, seconded by David Zamba. All were in favor, motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE

Ron Herrick mentioned the annual closing of Parks to the Chief of Police that had been sent out. Dean Cawthra confirmed that East Village and Riverview Parks have been locked up for the winter. Ron Herrick also mentioned the letter to Dean [Cawthra] on cutting back part-time hours a little bit, starting next week (January 23rd). Ron Herrick also spoke about the conflict of slot with Valley Shakespeare Festival event and concert for City in July.

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Report:

Ron Herrick mentioned the financial report, and he gave a brief summary on the upcoming budget, to be discussed in further detail in the Chairman's Report. Also, Ron mentioned Little League baseball and softball have clinics and tryouts set. Also, the Football Cheer group is looking for more space to hold winter clinics; they are trying to work with them. Ron Herrick also mentioned that today was the last moving of the Christmas decorations; everything is put away. Ron Herrick also mentioned that a sign was vandalized, and their group was not happy about it. The City's sign is put away and is in safe keeping for next year.

Aquatics Report:

Jonathan Taylor gave his report, stating that fall swim lessons have ended. The classes went well and have not had many issues. Also, everything was fixed with the pool and all of the chemicals were tested and are where they should be. Jonathan Taylor also mentioned that the chlorine pump broke down, and currently the chlorine is being pumped manually. Chris Potucek is working on it and should be fixed shortly. Starting last week, there are 31 classes every week, which was not expected to have that many, so there is a lot of interest. Winter 2017 Swim Lesson registrations have begun. Most time slots have been filled, with the exception of Fridays. Wednesday night time changes seem to have helped grow the enrollment, as well as having 5 instructors available. During the 6pm and 6:35 pm time slot, all 5 instructors have a class, with another 2 classes filled at the 7:25 pm time slot. As per usual, the lower levels are in great demand, and higher levels tend to drop in enrollment as children choose to either stop swim lessons or join a swim team. We have filled a Level 5 on Thursday night, which is only the second time in my memory that this class has been held, so there are some children that wish to continue with lessons in the higher levels. Off the Deep End has been doing well with the new

instructors. The Friday morning class will run, but is working to build a large number of participants. H2O aerobics registrations continue to be strong. Water Zumba enrollment has dropped off slightly over the winter similar to last year. Over Thanksgiving, the pool was drained and the drain issue repaired, as well as the hand railing going into the pool and the tiles on the stairs that had fallen off. The pool was able to open Monday November 28th at a temperature of 80 degrees, and was up to the usual 83 degrees by Wednesday. Maintenance repainted many of the walls in the pool lobby and pool offices during the closure, as well as acid washing the pool deck. Chairman Papa asked Jonathan Taylor about the 220,000 gallons of water that needed to be drained, and asked if next year during maintenance if they would have to drain it all the way to the bottom. Jonathan Taylor stated that Chris Potucek would prefer to, and to drain it once a year rather than half twice a year because they will be closed the whole week of Thanksgiving regardless. It may not be necessary to drain it next year, but they will talk to maintenance and let us know if it is necessary. Jeff Van Scoy mentioned that a Milford resident who uses the pool had nothing but raves for the pool staff, the cleanliness of the Community Center and pool area, the people, etc.

Parks Superintendent Report:

Dean Cawthra went over his list of items done/to be done:

- a) Pick up trash and empty cans in parks, fields, downtown, and around schools weekly;
- b) Check playgrounds weekly; c) Work on equipment; d) Paint at Pine Rock Fire Department; e) Paint at Community Center; f) Work with Highways Department demo job at SHS; g) Work on clean up behind SHS shops; and h) Plow lots, clear walks.

Recreation Supervisor's Report:

Brett Beatty mentioned that the winter programs are beginning next week, there is a lot of interest in those classes; there are almost 70 classes scheduled. They are also beginning to form the schedule for summer camps; there are already 15 special interest programs scheduled. Brett Beatty also mentioned that the web site is doing well; there are already over 40,000 hits, and there were over 4,000 hits this month alone. William Manion mentioned that the Adult sports programs are all mid-season and are beginning to wrap up. There are no complaints. They are also working on getting a few pieces of new equipment for the fitness room, and they are trying to find them for the right price. William Manion also mentioned that they had gotten a free treadmill that was donated from somebody that was moving out of state. It is the same model as the ones that are currently there, so they were able to swap it with an older one because it was in better shape. William Manion mentioned that the maintenance technician had to fix a few minor things on the equipment, but it was much cheaper than buying a brand new machine. He also mentioned that somebody approached him about a senior rate for the fitness room; there is a senior rate for the pool, which drops it from \$80 to \$70, but there is no quarterly membership for the pool like there is for the fitness room. Right now, there is an \$85 yearly membership for the fitness room, and \$35 for quarterly option; there is no daily option because the fee would be too small. Chairman Papa asked William Manion how he felt about a senior rate. William Manion stated that he is not very sure, because our rate is so much lower than any other option, and he feels it may not be entirely necessary but he would not be against it. Chairman Papa stated that it

could be put on an agenda in maybe a month or two and discussed further in the future. Debra McGlone mentioned that there is a roof leak in the gym, and she is concerned that it is leaking on the recently redone floors.

Joseph DeFilippo made a motion to accept all Staff Reports, seconded by Jeff Van Scoy. All were in favor, motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Finance Committee: Terrence Gumbs went over various expenses, such as ASCAP, BMI, and CSEC for rights for music, which were \$341 each. Also, there was an expense for Al Preston's Garage of \$800 for parts. Also, there was an expense for tree removal at Pine Rock Park for \$1,200. The new treadmill spoken about earlier was \$650. Also, there was an \$800 expense for a cargo net that was damaged. There were a few reimbursements for the River Walk for \$900, as well as a reimbursement for the pottery teacher for \$695. There was also an expense for \$800 for the plaque for the bench on the Green. Other than that, there were various minor expenses.

Ad Committee: Robert Zuraw mentioned that the mailings will need to be done on the April 20th, 2017 meeting.

Gazebo Committee: Vice Chairman David Zamba stated that he is in the research phase for bands for the fireworks, and will probably begin booking the bands within the next 4 weeks or so. Chairman Papa mentioned the conflict in dates with the Valley Shakespeare Festival, and they would like them to move so they can have their concert. Vice-Chairman Zamba does not mind if the concert is moved to the Green, and the Committee agreed. Ron Herrick will notify Cheryl O'Brien that they can use the space for their play and the City will move the concert to the Green.

Field Maintenance: Stan Kudej asked about the no-parking signs at Sunnyside School mentioned at last meeting. It was passed on to the police department, and they will be needed for the start of the season. Mark Siglinger, who is in charge of traffic division, will put them on the opposite side where the homes are, and it will be done for April.

Park Improvements: Ron Herrick mentioned that the old clock on the Green will be coming down soon, and the tree next to it will be trimmed.

Robert Zuraw made a motion to accept all Committee Reports, seconded by Terrence Gumbs. All were in favor, motion carried.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

- Chairman Papa mentioned about removing the infield grass at Mingrone Field, which will be done when the ground is not frozen. Chairman Papa also spoke with Dean Cawthra about getting a new zero-turn mower, which they will look into getting.

OLD BUSINESS: No Report Given.

NEW BUSINESS:

Ron Herrick mentioned to Stan Kudej about a request from soccer for the spring season, and if they could possibly use Long Hill fields for one or two days, even if it is Saturday after 3 or some time on Sunday. Stan Kudej stated that they are having sign-ups this week, and Ron Herrick asked if Stan Kudej could give him an idea of whether it is possible or not in the near future.

- a. Elect 2017 Commission Chairperson and Vice Chairperson

Jeff Van Scoy made a motion to re-elect John Papa as Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Committee and David Zamba as Vice-Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Committee, seconded by Debra McGlone. All were in favor, motion carried.

- b. Discussion on 2017-2018 Budget Requests

David Zamba made a motion to accept the fiscal year 2017-18 Parks and Recreation budget request of \$1,671,030, seconded by Jeff Van Scoy. All were in favor, motion carried.

Discussion: Ron Herrick went over all line items on the 2017-18 budget requests with the Committee. He mentioned that it is a new format on the budget request form. A main change is Regular Payroll, and these are union positions and the raises are factored in and nothing can be done about it. There are also vacant full-time positions, which also need to be factored into the figure. There were also 2 raises for part-time employees that work in the gyms.

Robert Zuraw made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm, seconded by Jeff Van Scoy. All were in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nicholas Twigg

Nicholas Twigg
Clerk

1 tape on file in the City Clerk's office