

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

(meeting taped)

Monthly meeting: Monday, May 13, 2013 in the City Hall.

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

By roll call, members present: Andrew Cota, Beverly Moran, Red Clynch, Ronald Sill, and John Monahan. James Benanto and Nick Serednitsky were excused.

Parks and Recreation Director Dennis O'Connell was present and Athletic Director Joseph Orazetti was excused.

ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA:

Motion made by Beverly Moran and second by Ronald Sill. Move to accept the agenda, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion made Ron Sill and second by John Monahan. Move to accept the March 11, 2013 minutes, as written. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC PORTION:

Laura Harris of 511 Roosevelt Drive and Board of Education member came this evening interested in the ongoing discussions the Commission has had on capital improvements for recreational and athletic facilities. She stated that the Middle School Track Team has 40 members and are doing very well. Unfortunately, Derby does not have a facility and they have to use out of town resources. For years now, practice has been by running the local streets surrounding the High School. She questioned whether grant funding had been explored for the upgrades to the Ryan Field Complex field and field house.

Mr. O'Connell explained that the existing field is multipurpose for football and baseball as well as a cinder track. Upgrading the track would require eliminating the baseball use. Grant funding has been explored revealing scarce opportunities. The roof of the field house is in need of replacement and the Commission has determined that prior to expending funds for any repairs that it would be financially prudent to explore estimates for restructuring the current building or more likely building a new structure. Mr. Cota indicated that the Commission was seeking funding to perform the cost study. Mr. O'Connell noted that the recreational plan prepared in the late 90's did represent a new field house and a turf football field surrounded by a modern track with baseball being relocated. In that plan, the field house had to be relocated to accommodate the footprint of the field. Mr. Clynch questioned why the school system did not pursue fields during the recent school project? Consensus was that financial constraints are a persistent limiting factor. Ms. Harris was hopeful to prompt the conversation between the Board of Education and the Recreation Commission for the betterment of youth activity in the city.

CORRESPONDENCES:

Nothing was presented.

DIRECTOR REPORTS:

Parks & Recreation Director's Report: Mr. O'Connell reported that work on the basketball courts at the picnic grove continues. A contractor has been selected and the courts should be done by mid June.

The tennis courts at Bradley School will be dismantled by Public Works. They will be installing a new section of fence along the property line once the court removal is complete.

Little League is going well. Playing in the regional league has enhanced the program. It appears that there will be a Babe Ruth league and they will be playing with Ansonia, Seymour, Oxford and New Haven. The Fireman's softball league is also going well. Youth Soccer is at Witek Park two nights a week. The Men's Soccer league plays on Sunday mornings. Plans are underway to have a teen age basketball league at the Derby Veteran's Community Center.

High School Athletic Director's Report: Mr. Orazetti was excused.

NEW or OTHER BUSINESS:

Budget: Mr. O'Connell reviewed the current budget and the projections for the 2013-2014 budget. He noted that the increases were minimal and necessary. The salaries were increased by the 2% authorized by the Board of Alderman. He is working out the details as to when this increase is to be implemented. The budget reflects a retroactive increase of 2%. He raised the maintenance for Witek Park by \$1,000 as the current budget is already more than 50% and the spring work has not begun. He requested an increase in the building and field supplies and the office supplies. He indicated that the Derby Colt Baseball line item is for the Babe Ruth program. He does not anticipate having a team this year but placed \$1 in the line item to allow it to remain open on the budget. Small increases were made to the girl's softball program and to playground supplies.

Dept 3700 - Capital Projects			
1	Grass Cutting Machine	\$15,765	diesel
1	OR Grass Cutting Machine	\$12,859	gas
2	Little League - Permanent Fence on West side bank area	\$8,000	
3	Ryan Field Complex - Home Bleachers completion	\$62,000	
4	Ryan Field Complex - Lighting system	\$200,000	
5	Ryan Field Complex- visitor's bleachers	\$60,000	
Special notation - Consideration of artificial turf field and building of a new field house requested Also request that capital funding for field house roof be reallocated for an engineering study for new structure			
TOTAL w/ diesel machine		\$345,765	
TOTAL w/ gas machine		\$342,859	-

The Commission previously considered pursuing a referendum vote for the Lighting System and the Visitor's Bleachers. A subsequent conversation with the Treasurer has indicated that the funding could be secured through a lease purchase program the City has available to them. This would allow the project to go forward without having to go through the referendum process.

As discussed earlier in the public portion, a request will be made to reallocate the funding for the field house roof toward the engineering study for a new building. Regarding the field house and the track, it was noted that they are primarily used by the schools. Members encouraged the Board of Education to

explore alternative funding avenues. Consensus is to work with the Board of Education and Sheila O'Malley to search for funding sources to accomplish these projects.

Motion made by Ron Sill and second by Red Clynch. Move to recommend to the Board of Alderman to seek lease purchase funding for the purchase of new football field lighting, for the purchase of new visitor bleachers and completion of the home side bleachers at the Ryan Field Complex in the amount of \$400,000. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion made by Ronald Sill and second by Beverly Moran. Move to adjourn the meeting at 8:09 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully prepared,

Karen Kemmesies

Karen Kemmesies, secretary

These minutes are subject to the Commission's approval at their next scheduled meeting.