

DRAFT MINUTES/APPROVED

To: Parks & Recreation Commission Members  
From: Eileen Pettit, Assistant Director of Recreation  
Re: Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting September 17, 2012

Meeting was called to order by Chair, Mary Lou Stamp at 5:30pm.

I. Attendance:

*Commissioners Present:* Joe Capucci, Al Centone, Suzanne Lewis, Frank Montagna,  
Michael Pomichter, Susan Puzycki, Mary Lou Stamp.

*Staff Present:* Eileen Pettit, Assistant Director of Recreation  
Lynn Sadosky, Director of Public Works  
Victor Palma, Director of Field Operations  
Carla Riccio, Secretary

II. Acceptance of Minutes:

Al Centone made a motion to accept the May 21, 2012 minutes, seconded by Joe Capucci.

III. Correspondence:

Ms. Stamp received a request via email from First Selectman Michael Freda to arrange a time to meet with resident Deborah Mahon who had initiated a petition to get the Town to create safe recreational spaces for kids to ride their bikes such as bike trails and dirt tracks. This petition had been created in light of the recent passing of Connor Kusmit who was killed by a driver while riding his bike on Route 22. Mary Lou indicated that she will be meeting with Deborah Mahon and Mike Freda on September 28<sup>th</sup> and will report the outcome of that meeting to the Commission at the November meeting.

IV. Director's Report/ Old Business:

*Eileen Pettit, Assistant Director of Recreation*

Ms. Pettit provided a summary of the success of the summer programs. This year there were a tremendous number of participants in the summer programs. The playground programs were held at Clintonville, Montowese and Ridge Road schools. Each site averaged over 100 children on a daily basis. The Day Camp program, held at the Recreation Center, accommodated an average over 60 children for each of the 6 weeks. Ms. Pettit mentioned that the sport camps were very popular, especially volleyball and the Strength and Conditioning program.

The "Music Under the Stars" concert series concluded on August 28, 2012. All concerts were extremely well attended. Ms. Pettit has received great feedback from the public. She extended a special thanks to all the corporate sponsors for their continued support. She also thanked Police, Fire and Public Works for their assistance at each concert.

Swim lessons went very well. Over 150 children took lessons during the summer.

The adult softball league ended on August 6th.

After the summer programs concluded, Recreation went into their shut down schedule. The pool was closed during the week of August 13<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Pettit was happy to report that there were no major issues this year. The pool was drained, and an inspection of the tiles, plugs, and drain showed all were in good condition. Damaged tiles on the pool deck were replaced. This is typical maintenance that is done every August.

During the following two weeks, the Recreation Center was cleaned from floor to ceiling. Ms. Pettit acknowledged maintenance man Rich Gaudio for his efforts, as the cleaning of the Pool and the Recreation Center is done solely by Rich. Ms. Pettit commented on what an amazing job he does.

Summer pool hours ended September 1st. Fall hours are now in effect.

Registration is underway for fall recreation and pool programs. Many programs will begin in the next week or so.

Moppet Minders Nursery School, which is licensed by the State of Connecticut Department of Public Health, began on Sept. 5<sup>th</sup> and will continue through June.

The track lights are on at the Mike Vanacore Field. Lights will be on Monday through Thursday evenings, as weather permits, until December 14<sup>th</sup>. An attendant monitors that proper foot attire is worn, that there are no pets, and that all the other posted rules are adhered to. Ms. Sadosky asked that any light outages at the field be reported to her.

North Haven High School Girls swim team began their season on August 29<sup>th</sup> (M-F from 2:30 - 5:00 PM)

Hamden North Haven Swim team began their practices today. (M-W-F – 5-7 PM/Sat. 6:30-8:30 AM)

This Friday September 21 we will be hosting our September Friday Night Dance Party for our adults with special needs.

Recreation will be hosting the first Zumbathon on September 28<sup>th</sup>. Krissy Kanakis met with Eileen Pettit and John Bimonte to discuss hosting the event. Ms. Kanakis' idea was to help with the Diaper Bank. As they further discussed the event, they decided to have the entrance fee be either diapers for the local Diaper Bank or a non-perishable food item for our Food Bank. Krissy will be donating her services as the Zumba instructor and John is donating his DJ services. Flyers promoting this event were distributed to the commission members.

The annual Halloween Party is scheduled to take place on Wednesday, October 31, 2011, from 4:30 – 6:00 PM. There will be face painting, refreshments, pictures with the Great Pumpkin and entertainment. McDonald's of Washington Avenue is again co-sponsoring this event. Ms. Pettit cordially invited the commissioners to attend.

Michelle Mele, Inclusion Coordinator for the department put together a summary from the summer programs. Ms. Pettit provided the commission with this summary, which includes the demographics of the population served (those with special needs and/or health concerns). Ms. Pettit commented on how the population has changed showing a steady increase in the number of students with health concerns and/or special needs over the course of the years (as the graphs in the summary indicate) including autism, epilepsy and severe food allergies.

Michelle works part time during the school year. She is a North Haven resident and Special Education teacher in Naugatuck. Michelle has worked with this department for over 15 years. Ms. Pettit welcomed any of the commissioners to contact her if they had any questions on the summary provided.

The Fall 2012 Brochure and track flyers were distributed to the Commission.

Lynn Sadosky, Director of Public Works

Ms. Sadosky reported that the Department of Public Works delivered the Showmobile to the Memorial Day Parade on May 26, 2012. The event was successful and well attended.

Max Sinoway Baseball closed out its Spring - Summer Baseball Season on Montowese, Gateway, Green Acres, Clintonville School, Brook Field, and Bailey Road fields on July 30, 2012. Max Sinoway's Fall Baseball program started August 29<sup>th</sup> and will continue through November 7, 2012.

The Department of Public Works provided the Town's Showmobile to the Sons and Daughters of Italy event, which occurred on August 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup>, 2012.

North Haven Lacrosse completed its Spring – Summer season on the Aces, Vanacore, Recreation fields on July 2, 2012.

North Haven Soccer Club completed its Spring – Summer program on Memorial, Rock Road and Ridge Road fields on June 30, 2012. North Haven Soccer Fall sports program started September 3<sup>rd</sup> and will continue through November 18, 2012.

The Department of Public Works completed field preparations for the Recreation Special Olympics on Green Acres field from June 15<sup>th</sup> through September 5, 2012.

Recreation Softball completed its Summer season on the Gateway Complex, Grover Wyman and North Haven High School fields. Fields were utilized through July 26, 2012.

North Haven Girls' Softball Sundown League completed its Spring – Summer season on Gateway Fields 2 – 7 on July 31, 2012.

The Town's annual Summer Concert Series commenced with the High School Alumni Band on June 12, 2012 and concluded on August 28, 2012 on the Town Green.

North Haven Youth Football started its Fall season on the Gateway Complex on August 1, 2012 and will continue through November 10, 2011. Games will also be played on Vanacore Field, schedules permitting.

Flag Football started its Fall program on September 7<sup>th</sup> at Grover Wyman (every Friday) and will continue through November 2, 2012. The championship game will be held on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 at Vanacore Field.

CT Bombers Fall Baseball (16 – 18 years) – August 28<sup>th</sup> through October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012, with practices on Recreation Field (Tuesdays and Thursdays afternoon) and games at Bailey Road Field (weekends).

North Haven Junior Indians are scheduled from August 27, 2012 through November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2012 with practices at Green Acres and games on DeMayo Girls Varsity Softball Field.

USAELITE Softball held the second of its college recruiting softball events on July 12<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. This event drew thousands of recruits, their families, coaches and members of the public to North Haven for the 4-day event. If approved by the Commission and Town again for July 2013, management at USA Elite plan to host the event in North Haven again. The event would run July 11<sup>th</sup> – July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

The Department of Public Works delivered the Showmobile to the Town Green for the Arnold's Jeweler's 55<sup>th</sup> Year in Business Event and 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday, while the event was hosted by a private entity it was open to all residents in Town and very well attended.

The Department of Public Works provided the Town's Showmobile to the North Haven Fair Association for the annual North Haven Fair event, which occurred on and September 5<sup>th</sup> through September 10, 2012.

The Department of Public Works delivered the Showmobile to Washington Avenue and again, to the North Haven Fairgrounds for the 100<sup>th</sup> Year Celebration of the Fireman's Parade for which North Haven is this year's host.

The annual Walk-a-Dog-a-Thon with approvals from the Commission, is scheduled to be held on the Town Green on Sunday, September 23, 2012.

Ms. Sadosky also provided an overview of the work being done at Todd's Pond and an update on the milling and paving project that is currently underway in town.

Upon the conclusion of both director's reports, Mary Lou acknowledged both Ms. Pettit and Ms. Sadosky for a great job that both departments do year round.

## V. New Business

*North Haven High School's Interact Club Project Proposal:* Upon the request of the Interact Club, First Selectman Michael Freda met with the executive members of this group along with Lynn Sadosky, and commissioners Al Centone and Frank Montagna on August 20<sup>th</sup> in order to listen to a proposal of projects that the club would be interested in taking on. Al Centone provided a summary of the meeting. The club's proposed projects included either making improvements to the concession stand at Blakeslee field (improving and reopening a concession stand), and the other involved making repairs to the Playscape (and making it handicapped accessible). Ms. Sadosky indicated that the improvements to the park would cost upwards of \$250,000.

Ms. Sadosky indicated that she has been in touch with Ellie Mulligan, one of the parent advisors for the club, and have established a summary of agreed upon tasks that both the club and the Town (Public Works staff) would complete. Ms. Sadosky emailed (and mailed a copy of the email to) Ms. Mulligan providing an update on the status of the completion of their agreed upon tasks (which she stated was  $\frac{3}{4}$  complete) and has requested an update from the Interact Club's progress. Ms. Sadosky is currently waiting to hear back from Ms. Mulligan.

The commission's sentiment is that while these proposed projects sound great, they require a lot of funds (to raise) and will take a long time to complete. The commission's sentiment is that they find a smaller project in town that could leave a mark.

*Summer Concerts vendor request deadline for non-profits:* Based upon the requests that trickled in throughout the summer, Mary Lou Stamp recommended that a deadline be set for non-profit

organizations (as the for-profit vendors abide by) requesting to be vendors on the green for the summer concerts. A discussion ensued among the commission that the deadline for non-profits to submit their vendor applications mirror the deadline that is already set in place for the for-profit vendors.

Suzanne Lewis made a motion to set the deadline for June 1<sup>st</sup> as an annual deadline for both non-profit organizations and for-profit businesses to submit their requests to be a vendor at summer concerts, seconded by Michael Pomichter. All were in favor.

*Field Use and Scheduling for Non-Profit Sporting Clubs:* Ms. Sadosky reported that this Fall when scheduling fields for baseball, a shortage in fields occurred and a disagreement took place. An altercation was avoided but future requests need to be addressed earlier and consideration needs to be given to costs for field preparations, supplies, and other essentials. Ms. Sadosky provided the commission with a great detail of background on the challenge being faced by Public Works.

Since Ms. Sadosky started in January 2009, she explained how she has watched the Club teams in Town, including Max Sinoway, NH Lacrosse, NH Soccer and the American Legion teams all increase in size. However, the largest increases have been in the membership of NH Soccer and Max Sinoway clubs, some almost doubling in size.

She goes on to explain that the constant has been the number of fields available for play and the number of staff, both Public Works (PW) and the Board of Education (BOE) available to maintain, rehabilitate and line the fields. No new fields have been added to the supply list and no new staff have been allocated to either the BOE or PW teams.

Ms. Sadosky explained the issues. As of late, there have been multiple requests from not only the usual Club teams (Sinoway, Soccer and Lacrosse) but also new teams or non-profit teams representing North Haven students. Just this Fall PW has accommodated the "North Haven Junior Indians" a new group of a dozen 8-year old boys playing in the Central CT Fall Baseball League AND Tim Binkoski's team, including 2 dozen 16 - 18 year old students, all North Haven residents.

She explained the balance that is needed. To address safety issues as outlined earlier this year by the Adult Softball League for example - will require Public Works and BOE staff to start to take fields off-line. Taking the fields off-line will allow for rehabilitation and the much needed resting of the fields. This period of time will be dedicated to rehabilitate and address the safety issues on such fields.

Ms. Sadosky refers back to the challenge. Given the increased membership of the Club Teams, the new teams looking for field space and the safety issues identified by the Teams already receiving financial support from the Town, how does one go about resting and rehabilitating the fields in need.

Ms. Sadosky provides a proposed solution. The Town and BOE begin to schedule various fields for rest and/or rehabilitation. These fields may include both Town and BOE fields, simultaneously. As these schedules are made, the Club teams who receive Town financial support are the first notified and these Teams have first priority over those who are 'for profit' or teams that do not receive financial support from the Town.

When the Town or BOE says 'No, we don't have a field for play' - that's it. If a team is told they cannot use the field and they go ahead and use it anyway, they will be escorted off the field by Public Works or if we are not available, by the NHPD.

Ms. Sadosky explained that the costs to support fields in Town is becoming overwhelming. For example, she explained that PW has not had a single weekend off since last October. Staff have been working

every weekend, including field support work such as purchasing and installing clay, mowing, seeding, fertilizing, installing new fencing, addressing bees and pest complaints, replacing lights, addressing painting needs, line painting for games, among other tasks.

## VI. Public Participation.

Tim Binkoski, who coaches a group of twenty six 16-18 year old boys (North Haven High School students), was in attendance at the meeting, along with his coaches, a handful of his players and parents. The purpose of their attendance was to receive support from the commission in helping them find a solution to share fields with Max Sinoway.

Several weeks ago, Mr. Binkoski asked Ms. Sadosky for access to Montowese Field 4 for two nights per week for practices and for Bailey Road for games on weekends. Ms. Sadosky had first advised Tim to speak with Bob or Linda Powers of Max Sinoway as the Max Sinoway schedule suggested that they had reserved all four Fields (Montowese Fields 1,2,3 and 4) for the Fall baseball season. The hope was that they could try and work something out amicably. The conversation with Max Sinoway had not been a successful one, and Max Sinoway indicated that they could not accommodate Tim's request for two night's weekly of practices.

Shortly after that, Mr. Binkoski noticed that Montowese Field 4 was not being used on those two days a week between 2:30pm to 4:30pm. Tim then decided to practice his teams during those hours for two weeks until he was caught and asked by Bob Powers to leave the field.

Mr. Binkoski provided a bit of background on how his team was formed and details of the success that he has seen and continues to see with the group. He went on to explain his history with Mr. Powers. Mr. Binkoski discussed his dissatisfaction with the overall unwillingness of the Max Sinoway league to accommodate his requests for a field.

While Max Sinoway has reserved the field from 2pm-11pm regularly each day this Fall, it has been noticed by Mr. Binkoski's group that Montowese Field 4 is not being used the entire time (specifically between 2:30pm-4:30pm). Thus Mr. Binkoski's group would simply like to be able to utilize the field during the time that the field is not being used. Since Mr. Binkoski has indicated that Mr. Powers has been unwilling to have a conversation with him, it was requested that the Commission act as a liaison in assisting to facilitate a conversation with Bob Powers in order to see if a solution can be reached in sharing the fields.

Chair Mary Lou Stamp indicated, upon the agreement made by the Commission, that she will reach out to Bob Powers to request a meeting between he, Mr. Binkoski, Ms. Stamp and Ms. Sadosky.

## VII. Adjournment:

Chairman Stamp asked for a Motion to Adjourn. Motion made by Al Centone, seconded by Susan Puzycki. The meeting was adjourned at 7:26pm.

The next meeting will take place on Monday, November 19, 2012 at 5:30pm.