

TOWN OF DARIEN
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING
November 19, 2014

Attendance: Mary Flynn, Chairman; and members Susan Daly; Marianne Gutierrez; Lorene Bora; Amy Doering; Marc Ioli; Kevin Webb

Staff: James Coghlan, Interim Director

Guests: Linda Hannett and Jen Burgess, Darien Jr. Sailing Team

PUBLIC HEARING

DISCUSSION OF DOGS BEING ALLOWED AT BEACHES IN THE OFF SEASON:

Chairman Flynn opened the Public Hearing at 7:30 p.m. Several members of the public commented on allowing dogs at Weed Beach during the off season. Much of the discussion focused on the months of November through March. The approximate 15 persons that commented were evenly divided both in favor of dogs and against allowing dogs at beaches.

Those who spoke in favor were looking at Weed Beach exclusively as a location to exercise their dogs. Some commented that other towns in the area allow dogs at their beaches in the winter months. Those who were not in favor were concerned about any health factors as well as the safety of the playground area. Chairman Flynn thanked everyone for their comments and informed everyone that the Commission will be discussing this issue again in the spring. She also noted that any changes to the rule would not take effect until October 1st.

There being no further comments, the Public Hearing was closed.

REGULAR MEETING

The regular meeting was called to order at 8:00 p.m.

PRESENTATION FROM DARIEN JR. SAILING TEAM:

Linda Hannett and Jenn Burgess of the Jr. Sailing Team updated the Commission on the status of fundraising efforts for the sailing building at Weed Beach. Ms. Hannett presented a time line of the sailing program and the relationship between Parks and Recreation and DJST throughout the years.

Ms. Hannett highlighted the fact that the structure is required to be on pilings which added \$75,000 to the cost of the building. As such, Ms. Hannett asked if the Commission would consider including the costs for these pilings for the building in their Capital Budget request for the 2015/16 fiscal year.

It was decided that the Commission will take this request into consideration when they put their budget together in December.

MINUTES:

The minutes of the October 15, 2014 meeting were approved with corrections.

****MS. DALY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 15, 2014 MEETING
AS AMENDED.**

****MR. IOLI SECONDED**

****MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

DISCUSSION OF SHORT LANE PROPERTY:

Commissioner Bora provided the Commission with an update of the Short Lane property. The subcommittee met and initial discussions were held on the use of the property and time line of project. Ms. Bora will reach out to Jeremy Ginsberg, Planning and Zoning Director; and Jim Coghlan, Interim Parks and Recreation Director for clarification on questions that arose from subcommittee meeting.

BUDGET FISCAL 2015/2016:

Mr. Coghlan presented DRAFT copies of FY2015/16 Operating and Capital budgets to Commission members. He highlighted key differences in the current and requested Operating Budgets. The Commission requested that copies of the 1996 Open Space Plan be provided. Mr. Coghlan will have them available at the December meeting. Chairman Flynn informed the Commission that they will be discussing the budget at the December meeting and that they will prioritize the requested Capital projects at that meeting.

DEPARTMENT FEE SCHEDULE:

Commissioners reviewed the current fee schedule and discussed possible changes to the Park Facility Fees. Commissioner Ioli requested a breakdown of Park Facility revenue by group size. Commissioner Bora asked that the Paddle Building rental fee be included on the recreation fee schedule. The Commission also asked for a breakdown of vehicle beach permits sold by quantity. Chairman Flynn said that the fee schedule will be further discussed at the January meeting.

REPORTS:

Mr. Coghlan presented his report and a short discussion on the software update was held. He informed the Commission that most of the replacement equipment has been purchased. Also, the restrooms at Pear Tree Beach had been re-painted by the maintenance crew. New lighting for Pear Tree bathhouse is in the works, and the maintenance crew is planning on refurbishing the gazebo at Pear Tree.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Scott Hutchason and Doug Traver from the Darien Community Band were present. They asked if funding for the Community Band could be included in next year's budget request. Chairman Flynn said the Commission will consider this request along with entire budget at December meeting.

NO OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURN MEETING:

**** MR. WEBB MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING**

**** MR. IOLI SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

