

**TOWN OF DARIEN
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2013**

ATTENDANCE: Jane Branigan; Susan Daly; Mary Flynn; Bob Marchesi;
Kevin Webb; Mark Crouch; Marianne Gutierrez (8:05 p.m.)

STAFF: Susan Swiatek, Director; Jim Coghlan, Assistant Director

OTHER: Linda Hannett, Pam Ha-Stevenson – DJST; Dave Sinclair;
Kim Crosby; Will Andrae; Randy Tankoos; Ruth and
Lynnie Strothers; Peggy O’Halloran

Ms. Branigan called the regular meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. She introduced Kevin Webb as a new Commissioner.

- ** MS. FLYNN MOVED TO AMEND THE AGENDA TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT THE END OF THE REGULAR MEETING FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING LAND ACQUISITION.**
- ** MS. DALY SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**PRESENTATION OF MID-SEASON STATUS REPORT AND DISCUSSION OF FUTURE DIRECTION; DARIEN JUNIOR SAILING TEAM:
LINDA HANNETT, PAM HA-STEVENSON**

Ms. Hannett provided an in-depth overview of the Darien Junior Sailing Team (DJST), explaining that they are supported 100% by parent volunteers. They have paid instructors. They are an independent not-for-profit 501C3 status. They have full financial responsibility for the organization, and they list the Town of Darien as the co-insured on their insurance policy. They are a member of the Long Island Sound Junior Sailing Association Program, and they are the only community sailing program that offers leisure and competitive sailing. DJST offers a 7 week program, which consists of two 3-week sessions with one week of clinics. There is no investment required from the families.

Ms. Hannett then went on to explain Phase II, saying that they are halfway through the program. The temporary space has worked out well, and the storage pod has been fine. The tent used as classroom space has been fine as well. The paddle court building has only been used for staff to drop things off, and there was no use of the office due to the radio reception not working. She said the DJST considers the most important part of

their program is the shed, and as it was lost in the storm, she said they need the support of the Commission as they plan to go through the P&Z process to get it replaced. She said they are not asking for money; they are only asking to have the shed rebuilt in it's previous location. It was mentioned that Ms. Flynn and Mr. Crouch have agreed to be on the Committee, and there is a meeting scheduled with Mr. Ginsberg next Thursday.

It was noted that there is now a sense of urgency regarding the area where the sailing building was previously located because the property behind it is now on the market. It was requested that the Commission request a placement card be held for the DJST property so that they don't lose out.

Ms. Daly mentioned that the DJST sailing program has done a fantastic job and offers a terrific program for the young sailors.

Ms. Swiatek responded to Ms. Flynn that the town has to cover itself with anything within its parks and under its policies. She said they asked the DJST to provide their own insurance, naming the town as their co-insured because they deliver their own program and insure their own boats.

Ms. Branigan explained that the original sheds were built by the founding fathers, and another shed was built by a DJST volunteer in 1984. The boat storage racks were all built by the DJST. The work being done on the area after the storm includes demolition and removal of the shed, as well as abatement and restoration work within DEEP guidelines. A short-term immediate need was noted for storage and materials; a long-term need was noted for what the future holds for that area and what the Commission will propose for the site. A committee will investigate the direction needed for restrictions, zoning regulations, etc.

Ms. Gutierrez arrived at 8:05 p.m.

It was formally stated that a sense of the Parks and Recreation Commission is to continue to support the DJST to remain in the same location that they've operated in since 1972, which may or may not include future construction of structures.

Ms. Branigan then asked for questions from the audience members.

Mr. Dave Sinclair started the program in 1972 and said the Optimists were started in Darien. It was mentioned that several families have joined the Noroton Yacht Club as a result of being in the DJST program.

Several supporters and past and present instructors then spoke of the benefits of the DJST program and the need to support them in their effort to remain in their location, including

Kim Crosby, a parent of DJST participants; Will Andreae, former participant and instructor; Randy Tankoos, Commodore of Noroton Yacht Club; Ruth and Lynn Strothers, mother and daughter involved with DJST; and Peggy O'Halloran, former DJST registrar. It was further mentioned that eight e-mails have been received in support of the DJST program, and copies of them were distributed at the meeting and e-mailed to the Commissioners.

APPROVE MINUTES OF JUNE 19, 2013

The changes to the minutes of the regular meeting of June 19, 2013 are as follows:

On page 1, under Discuss and Take Action on Request from Darien Junior Football for Five Year Permit for Temporary Lighting on Holahan Field, 1st paragraph, the 1st sentence should read: "Mr. John Sini submitted his presentation and he reviewed the background and previous approvals related to the lighting proposal."

On page 1, last paragraph, the motion should read: **"MS. FLYNN MOVED TO APPROVE PERMIT TO DJFL TO UTILIZE LIGHTS ON HOLAHAN FIELD AS PRESENTED FROM 2ND WEEK IN OCTOBER TO THANKSGIVING MONDAY-FRIDAY DUSK TO 7 PM AT A HEIGHT OF 30' FOR A MINIMUM OF FIVE (5) YEARS.**

On page 2, under Report on Status of Storm Damage and Repairs in Parks, the 6th sentence should read: "New electrical lines have been installed, and pumps were re-installed at Pear Tree Point."

- ** MS. DALY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF JUNE 19, 2013 AS AMENDED.**
- ** MR. CROUCH SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR (4) VOTES IN FAVOR (BRANIGAN, CROUCH, DALY, FLYNN) AND THREE (3) VOTES ABSTAINED (GUTIERREZ, MARCHESI, WEBB).**

REPORT ON STATUS OF STORM DAMAGE AND REPAIRS IN PARKS

Ms. Swiatek said the playground surface has been removed and replaced. The playground reopened last Friday. She explained the timeframe and details regarding the repair work and why it wasn't prepared prior to the 4th of July.

She explained that the DJST program's shed has been demolished and all the abatement of hazardous materials has been completed. One concrete slab of a four-slab section has

been removed, but the other three slabs contain oil, so further abatement work needs to be done by soil scientists and the oil recovery team.

Ms. Swiatek then explained that the tennis courts mobilization effort for the front and back courts will begin on Monday, July 22nd. She met with the Project Manager on Monday, July 15th. Traffic will be affected for the duration of the project, which will finish approximately the third week of September.

REPORTS

a) Director

Ms. Swiatek said her Director's Report was provided in the Commissioner's packets, and the items to discuss were covered in the Report on Status of Storm Damage and Repairs in Parks. Pictures of the demolition of the DJST shed were included in the Commissioner's packets.

b) Assistant Director

Mr. Coghlan joined the Commission Meeting late as a result of being at Weed Beach to attend the Wednesday night movie. There was also a sand castle contest, a concert, and lifeguard training. He reported that there was a drowning between the Cove and Weed Beach in June, and they had their lifeguards at the ready to assist. He said the Fall and Winter brochure will be mailed in August. Nobu will be creating the cover of the brochure.

c) Chairman

There was no report.

d) Sub-Committee

Ms. Flynn reported that she has met with Ms. Morris and they will have more information at the next meeting.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS (TWO THIRDS VOTE REQUIRED)

There was no new business.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN MEETING

- ** MS. FLYNN MOVED TO ADJOURN THE REGULAR MEETING AND ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING LAND ACQUISITION.**
- ** MR. HUNTER SECONDED.**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Ms. Swiatek, Mr. Coghlan and the Commissioners came out of Executive Session at 9:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Marr
Telesco Secretarial Services

**NEXT MEETING: Regular Meeting August 21, 2013, 7:30 p.m;
Darien Town Hall, Room 119**