

**TOWN OF DARIEN  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 15, 2010**

**ATTENDANCE:** Jane Branigan, Chair; Charles Goodyear, Andrew Hunter  
Robert Marchesi, Susan Daly

**STAFF:** Sue Swiatek, Director of Parks and Recreation

**OTHERS:** Cheryl Russell, RTM Park and Recreation Committee; James  
Howe, Weed Beach Building Committee; Deb Parnon, Weed  
Beach Building Committee, Laurie Bora, Board of Finance

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Branigan called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

**APPROVE MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF JULY 21, 2010**

**\*\* MR. HUNTER MOVED THE MINUTES OF JULY 21, 2010**

**\*\* MR. MARCHESI SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JULY 21, 2010 AS  
SUBMITTED.**

**JOINT MEETING WITH WEED BEACH BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Ms. Branigan reported that Ms. Swiatek had spoken at a recent Board of Selectmen meeting and requested that the Board release the funding for Weed Beach. She added that Mr. Bayne had given a very nice presentation for moving the project forward.

Mr. Hunter asked if the 1.1 million was going come out from the bond or from the General Fund. Ms. Swiatek said that originally 3.6 million had been approved, 2 million which would be bonded and 1.6 million from the general fund. However, the general fund has suffered significant reductions. This project started in 2001 with a survey and with a reduction of the project finances down to 2 million through the bond, this would reduce the project down to a one third of the original plan. This would basically reduce the project to the bath house. However, many of the items were intertwined with this, such as the electrical lines for the bath houses, the warming hut and the parking lot lights.

Ms. Swiatek then gave a brief synopsis of the Board of Selectmen's meeting and how much funding the Committee will be asking for. Ms. Swiatek said that the Commission needed to decide whether to ask for 1.3 or 1.6 million. Discussion followed.

Ms. Swiatek said that she would be meeting with Ms. Parnon and Ms. Stevenson on Friday about this project. Ms. Swiatek said that she had gone back to the original 21 point plan and noted which portions of the project were funded by donations, which ones were value engineered out and what items remained. Ms. Swiatek also said that following the meeting with Selectwoman Stevenson, there would also be a meeting with the local Y about some grant funding for healthy towns. Discussion about the process and the details then followed.

**\*\* MS. DALY MOTIONED TO REQUEST THE RELEASE THE BALANCE OF THE ALREADY APPROVED WEED BEACH IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, FUNDED AT 3.6 MILLION.**

**\*\* MR. MARCHESI SECONDED.**

**\*\*THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**DISCUSS AND TAKE ACTION ON THE REQUEST FROM FRANK AND NANCY ALBRIZIO FOR SCREEN PLANTING AT HOLAHAN FIELD**

Ms. Swiatek said that she had been contacted by the Albrizeo family. This item will be addressed at another time.

*Mr. Goodyear left the meeting at 8:20 p.m.*

**DISCUSS DARIEN LITTLE LEAGUE CONCEPT OF GIFT TO THE TOWN OF RENOVATING GALLAGHER BASEBALL FIELD AT CHERRY LAWN PARK**

Ms. Swiatek said that this item was on the agenda in order to get a sense of the Commission regarding the renovation of the baseball field at Cherry Lawn Park. This field is used by those who are in third grade and up. McGuane is recognized as the best baseball field in town followed by Baker. It was pointed out that the field has a severe crown and that one can not see home plate from the parking lot. The field needs to be leveled and some fencing should be installed behind the dugout, which is only about 15 feet from Brookside Road. The Little League Association would like to do some improvements to correct these issues. These would include leveling the field, replacing the clay with a better grade of clay and installing a sod infield. It would be best to install the sod in the fall, but if it is installed in the spring, it would take about six weeks to have the sod take. Ms. Swiatek said that she had spoken with Jim Flynn about this and these improvements need to be done. She added that there was no change in use and the public still has access.

*Mr. Goodyear joined the meeting at 8:26 p.m.*

Ms. Russell said that she was instrumental in having the this field dedicated to Bo Gallagher, the former Director of Parks and Recreation. She said that she did not want to see this turn in McGuane Field with batting cages. Ms. Swiatek said that if this was approved, then the donation would have to follow the normal procedure. Ms. Russell said that it would be important to not lose sight of the history of the field. The discussion then focused on the details of the proposed improvements.

It was the sense of the Commission that this would be a worthwhile project to pursue. Ms. Swiatek said that this was a preliminary discussion and the value of the project has yet to be determined by Little League.

### **REPORTS:**

**Director** – Ms. Swiatek said that most of her time had been devoted to the Senior Center.

Ms. Swiatek said that Mr. Coghlan was not able to attend the meeting, however, Mr. Coghlan has been able to move a number of Fall and Winter programs forward.

Ms. Cheryl asked about the plantings and trees at Weed Beach from the Garden Club. Ms. Swiatek said that the planting cannot go in until the parking lot is reconfigured. Mr. Goodyear said that the Garden Club wants to be part of the planning for the landscaping.

**Assistant Director** – Fall and Winter programs are starting up and a significant number of registrations have been done online. Ms. Swiatek said that having a warming hut could easily become a revenue stream. Ms. Swiatek said that she believe that there would be more

**Chairman** – No report

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS (TWO THIRD VOTE REQUIRED)**

There was no additional business to discuss at this time.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No one present from the public wished to comment at this time.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

- \*\* MR. GOODYEAR MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- \*\* MR. MARCHESI SECONDED.**
- \*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services