



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes - Final

12 Van Tassel Drive
Gales Ferry, Connecticut 06339

Chairman
Kenneth DiRico

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, December 20, 2022

7:00 PM

Parks & Recreation/Senior Citizens
Center

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman DiRico called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner Lucrezia Finegan
Commissioner Jessica Cobb
Commissioner Thomas Olsen
Commissioner Loretta Kent
Commissioner Shaileen C. English
Chairman Kenneth J. DiRico
Commissioner Jessica Buhle
Commissioner Charles Gallagher

Excused Commissioner Deondre Bransford

In addition, the following were present:
Scott Johnson - Parks & Recreation Director
Tom Staigers - Ledyard Youth League President
Matt Duerr - Vice President Ledyard Little League
Brian Love - Resident

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

Brian Love 1 Little John CT, gales ferry, CT 06335

I am opposed to the Parks and Recreation and Senior Citizens Merger proposed by the Mayor and town Council as the senior citizens program is the only one that will see benefits of the merger.

Mayor Allyn cited the following benefits:

1. He stated Parks and Recreation has been operating in the building on Van Tassel Drive in Gales Ferry and working in tandem with the Senior Citizens Center providing oversight of the facility. From a budgetary perspective, the care and maintenance of the senior citizens center is

not paid for by parks and rec or the senior citizens. It's in public work's budget. So there is no benefit from either group on this.

2. He noted Mr. Scott Johnson, Jr. has been serving as the Director of both the Parks & Recreation and the Senior Citizens for the past few years and he stated that it may be time to combine the two Commissions. This only continues to benefit the senior citizens' budget as they get a director for free.

3. He explained Ordinance #200-009 Ordinance providing for the Transfer of Revenue from the Real Estate Conveyance Tax to the Park and Recreation Capital and Non-Recurring Expense Fund", calls for forty percent (40%) of the revenue received from conveyance tax to be deposited into the Parks and Recreation Capital and Non-Recurring Expense Fund. He stated by merging the Senior Citizens Commission with the Parks & Recreation Commission that both groups could benefit from these funds. Parks and Rec is already getting the %40 percent and has asked for \$241,732 in capital improvements so how do they gain money by absorbing the senior citizens' budget and providing them access to it?

Per the towns budget for 2023, the senior center programs are allotted \$97,182. Parks and Rec is allotted \$464,467. On July 6th the state Senate appropriations committee sent a letter to Mr. Scott showing the state was making 26 million dollars in grants available to senior programs around the state. This money will only be allowed for senior programs, so our kids will not benefit from this. If we combine it will be very easy to move money from the higher budget to the lower budget especially when one organization's money comes from taxes vs grants.

Councilor Rodriguez provided the following comment to the mayor's request:

1. She stated combining the two groups would be a positive step forward for the Senior Center, noting that it would attract a higher percentage of residents to attend the Center's programs. There is no mention of how this will benefit parks and Rec and clearly, the senior citizen program is the priority in this town, even though out of a population of 15,413; 3,853 are under 18(25%) and 2,311 are over 65(15%).

That's why I urge the commission to reject the merger.

Thank you.

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

V. COMMISSION MEMBER COMMENTS

None

VI. REPORTS

1. November Director’s Report

- Everything winterized
- Water main break on Clarks Field. GU will make repairs and reseed in the spring.
- State contract pricing finally released to purchase a new truck
- Football field light proposal accepted, and lights have been ordered
- Wood chips delivered to all playscapes except Model Park because it is too wet.
- Public Works fixed a drainage issue at Ericson that was washing out the boat launch.
- Winter edition of the Events magazine has been delivered

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to approve the Parks & Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of September 20, 2022 and the Parks & Recreation Commission Special Meeting Minutes of October 12, 2022.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Shaileen C. English

SECONDER: Thomas Olsen

AYE 8 Finegan Cobb Olsen Kent English DiRico Buhle Gallagher

EXCUSED 1 Bransford

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Boy Scout Skate Park Project Proposal

There was no additional discussion.

RESULT: CONTINUE

Any Old Business proper to come before the Commission

None

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Discussion and possible action regarding the Judge Crandall irrigation water bill.

Motion for Director Scott to request to overspend to pay the current Judge Crandall irrigation water bill.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Kenneth J. DiRico

SECONDER: Shaileen C. English

AYE 7 Finegan Cobb Olsen Kent English DiRico Buhle

EXCUSED 1 Bransford

ABSTAIN 1 Gallagher

Motion for Director Scott Johnson to include the Judge Crandall water bill in the proposed FY 2024 budget.

A motion was made by Chairman DiRico, seconded by Commissioner English, that this be Approved and so declared. The motion carried by the following vote:

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Kenneth J. DiRico

SECONDER: Shaileen C. English

AYE 7 Finegan Cobb Olsen Kent English DiRico Buhle

EXCUSED 1 Bransford

ABSTAIN 1 Gallagher

2. Senior Center Commission / Parks & Recreation Commission merger

The Senior Center / Parks & Recreation merger and the benefits to both departments was discussed.

RESULT: CONTINUE

3. New Safe Sport Law - Public Act No. 21-64

Director Scott Johnson discussed the affect the new Safe Sport law will have on the leagues and summer camp.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

4. Discuss CIP Projects

- New Park on Lantern Hill Road (pavilion, boat launch, parking lot, signage, site furnishings)
- Replace fencing at Pfizer and Judge Crandall fields.
- Replace GFCC ramp
- New benches at Pfizer Field
- Walk way up to Clarks field

RESULT: CONTINUE

5. Motion to approve the Parks & Recreation Commission 2023 meeting dates

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Thomas Olsen

SECONDER: Jessica Cobb

AYE 8 Finegan Cobb Olsen Kent English DiRico Buhle Gallagher

EXCUSED 1 Bransford

Any New Business proper to come before the Commission

1. Motion to support the Town of Ledyard acquiring land on Lantern Hill Road to be used as a

park.

Director Scott Johnson discussed the potential donation of a property on Lantern Hill Road to be used as a park.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Cobb

SECONDER: Lucrezia Finegan

AYE 8 Finegan Cobb Olsen Kent English DiRico Buhle Gallagher

EXCUSED 1 Bransford

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Olsen moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Ms. Finegan.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

VOTE: 8 - 0 Approved and so declared

Respectively Submitted,

Chairman DiRico
Parks & Recreation Commission