

## New Haven Board of Park Commissioners

Meeting No. 1341  
January 21, 2009

Department of Parks, Recreation & Trees  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Board Room  
720 Edgewood Avenue  
New Haven, CT 06515

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**Present:** Vice President Bush, Commissioners Castro, DePino, Miller, Torres, Tucker & Walton  
**Absent:** President Belowsky, Commissioner Walton  
**Staff:** William Dixon, Deputy Director of Recreation

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- I. Minutes of Meeting 1340: Commissioner DePino motioned to approve the Minutes of Meeting 1340 seconded by Commissioner Castro and it passed unanimously.**
- II. Treasurer's Report: Vice President Bush motioned to approve the treasurer's report, seconded by Commissioner DePino and it passed unanimously.**
- III. Director's Report:** 1) Director Levine stated that the Department is running a Winter Vacation Camp for the week of school vacation. The camp will run from Tuesday through Friday at a cost of \$65 per camper. The camp will be broken into to age groups for 7-10 and 11-13 year olds. Campers will participate in team building exercises, swimming, ice skating, bowling, hiking in the woods and other activities. The camp was very well received last year. We are down to three Recreation Supervisor's. One of the people that had been laid off was able to bump so the city brought him back on the job. We are running programs at the same level as last year throughout the school system. We are using more part-timers. We have a couple of recent college graduates, one from Springfield College and one from Southern Connecticut who are going to be working out of a small building in Goffe Street Park. This building was previously used as a locker room with bathrooms :but, for the past 15 years has been primarily used for storage. Staff recently gutted the building and created a storage room, a big meeting room, two bathrooms and an office. We are going to utilize the space to run community programs. Staff has been working on this for about a year and a half whenever they had an opportunity. The two students, Nate & Roman, are going to be developing the program over the next 6 – 8 weeks. They will establish programs and invite in groups. Additionally a summer camp will be housed out of the Goffe Street building this summer.
- 2) We will not be utilizing Camp Cedarcrest this summer as a summer camp site. The camp is a 40 acre parcel in Orange that is owned and run by a consortium of civic groups. On and off for the past 50 years New Haven Parks has been running a summer camp at the site. There are a couple of reasons we will not be using the camp this year. One is they were going to start charging us to use the camp. The cost was reasonably going to be negotiated at about \$2.00 per camper per day or \$7200 for the season. This expense was not budgeted. Additionally, we spent over \$100,000 on busing for summer camps last summer; of which, a full third was related to Camp Cedarcrest. Eliminating this bussing will save a projected \$35,000 for a total savings of about \$42,500. To make up for the loss of Cedarcrest, we will be opening three additional city-camp sites in town. We currently anticipate that they will be run out of the new Barnard Nature Center, the newly renovated Goffe Street Park building and one other location that is up in the air ... possibly West Rock Nature Center. Staff are currently building a ropes course at the West Rock Nature Center. Director Levine additionally stated that the part-time employees noted above are all supervised by the Recreation Supervisors and Rangers. Finally, a lot of our part-time people have been with the department for years and need little direction. The plan at this point is to replace the position of Community Recreation Coordinator vacated when Roxanne Hayes retired. However, everything is up in the air with the city budget at this time.

3) The Blake skating rink is doing very well. It's busy all the time, all the ice time has been rented. They have open skating hours for the general public and they are very well attended.

**IV. Pardee Greenhouse Renovations:** Commissioner Tucker addressed the Commission regarding the planned renovations to Pardee Greenhouses A, B & C. If the Commission will recall, we received prices from Ludy to do the greenhouse renovations for \$179k at one point. The Commission decided to hire a consultant to guide us through the process. John Bartok was hired and submitted a proposal for the city to send out to bid for prospective vendors. Commissioner Tucker explained the line items and bid specifications in great detail as well as items that were not included in the original bid from Ludy. All these items would come up during construction and end up being change orders if we had selected Ludy as the contractor. Having a consultant go through the specifications was very cost effective. He was much more specific with the bid items. Director Levine stated that even the painting that was done earlier was a very special two-part paint that the consultant specified for use on the greenhouses.

Director Levine stated that the asbestos removal bid went through LCI's pre-approved vendor list with three competitive bids being received. He believed the pricing was fair and competitive. It is a very expensive service. Commissioner Castro asked if a vendor for the project was selected or if the Commission was voting on the matter tonight. Commissioner Tucker stated that he and President Belowsky met with Parks staff and went over the bids and a contractor was selected. The Loefstedt Trust Fund will be utilized for this project. The Loefstedt account is specifically designated for enhancements and improvements to the Pardee Greenhouses. A man named Loefstedt passed away and left 2.1 million dollars to the Park Commission for the upkeep of the greenhouses. We will use approximately \$316K from this trust account and leave the rest in the investment fund to generate money for future maintenance of the greenhouses. For this major project we will be dipping into the principal. After this project is complete we'll be in good shape with four working greenhouses. Commissioner Castro asked who applies for the funding for this project. Director Levine stated that the Commission went to bid based on these specifications and a contract is being executed for Capasso & Sons to do all this work. With the exception of the price for the benches which has been knocked down. The painting was done early to beat the winter weather. Commissioner Castro asked about the possibility of the City Health Department paying for the asbestos removal. She knows the City has been awarded funds for lead removal. Director Levine stated that the asbestos removal has already been done and that the structure is not residential so it probably doesn't qualify.

Commissioner Tucker passed out a "year in review" packet from the Friends of East Rock Park (FERP). This group is newly revived and is lead by Justine Elicker a young, computer savvy grad student. The group is thriving on the energy of a couple of people who've organized all these events and clean-ups in the park. Director Levine has met and worked with Justin. Commissioner Tucker expressed his wish that all the parks had such a strong core friends group. . There is a long list of friends groups associated with different parks and open-spaces. The people run programs and walks and the Parks Department supports their efforts.

Commissioner Tucker had to leave the meeting for another commitment.

**V. For Motion:**

*Holocaust Memorial Irrigation System*—Director Levine stated that there is a group that manages the Holocaust Memorial at the corner of West Park and Whalley Ave. This is the first Holocaust Memorial ever built in the country. The group has volunteers that raise funds for maintenance. One of the things they want to do is put in an irrigation system to water the shrubs, trees and grass. They have agreed to do all the work and maintenance. The group just wants our permission to install the irrigation system. They will provide a plan designed by a certified irrigation specialist. Currently they have a landscape service that maintains the lawn within the monument.

*Bayview Park Sound Barrier*—Some time ago Chris Sainsbury addressed the Commission regarding sound barriers at Bayview Park. If you may recall, Bayview is the Park that was split in half when I-95 went through. As the D.O.T. widens the highway they've removed trees and bushes that provided a buffer from the highway. The group and city support sound barriers at this location. Several years ago the group came to the Commission and the Commission was in favor of sound barriers. What they are asking for is another letter from the Commission stating that they are still in favor of the sound barriers. If you have ever stood in Bayview Park the sound from the highway is deafening. They will also get letters of support from the City Plan Commission and the Board of Aldermen. Commissioner Castro believes it did pass through the B.O.A. a couple of month ago.

*Mary Boyle Memorial*—As the Commission is aware, Mary Boyle was involved in a fatal motor vehicle accident just before the holidays. Ms. Boyle was instrumental both in raising funds to renovate the Carousel back in the mid-1980's and reviving the Friends of the Carousel. Ms. Boyle has no family in the area and we thought it would be nice to recognize her with a plaque at the Carousel. The Friends of the Carousel is still an active group, although very small. They will occasionally run an activity in conjunction with other activities at the park. There is an enterprise fund associated with events held at the Carousel. The fund pays for maintenance of the carousel horses and mechanicals. The carousel horses are hand-carved and hand-painted requiring a lot of yearly maintenance. The thought was to place a nice plaque in Ms. Boyle's honor inside the carousel building. The Director believes the cost would be between \$100-\$150 maximum. Commissioner Castro asked if we had any contact with any family members. Director Levine stated that they may have been contacted by Sabrina Bruno who has, in the past, worked closely with Mary Boyle. There is a sister in Ohio which is where they held the funeral services.

**Commissioner Torres motioned to approve the purchase and installation of a plaque in honor of Mary Boyle's contribution to the Carousel at Lighthouse Point Park, seconded by Commissioner Castro and it passed unanimously.** The wording will be worked out by staff.

**Commissioner DePino motioned to approve a letter of support for the Bayview Park sound barriers, seconded by Commissioner Miller and it passed unanimously.**

**Vice President Bush motioned to approve the Holocaust Memorial irrigation system, seconded by Commissioner Castro and it passed unanimously.**

**Other Business:** Commissioner DePino asked if the Director would take a look at the lights along the Pardee Seawall. There are five out at this time. She wasn't sure if they were broken or if there was an electrical problem.

Commissioner Miller stated that she had a wonderful time at the holiday gathering. The Director stated that the staff really appreciates the gathering.

Commissioner Bush asked about the construction area on Canal Street. Director Levine stated that they had sent a check which has been or will be deposited in the Donation Account.

Scantlebury Park is going coming along very nicely. When it's completed it will be a wonderful park. Commissioner Bush asked if anyone really knows who Ella B. Scantlebury is or was. He stated that she has a wonderful history in New Haven. Director Levine stated that we should have signage in the park that tells the background or history of the person the park is named after.

Meeting adjourned: 6:30

Next Meeting: **February 18, 2009**