

New Haven Board of Park Commissioners

Meeting No. 1367
November 16, 2011

Department of Parks, Recreation & Trees
720 Edgewood Avenue
New Haven, Connecticut 06515

Present: President Belowsky, Vice President Bush, Commissioners Castro, Miller,
O'Sullivan-Best, Torres & Tucker
Absent: Commissioner Walton
Staff: Robert D. Levine, Director of Parks, Recreation & Trees

I. Minutes of Meeting 1366: Commissioner Bush Motioned to pass the Minutes of Meeting 1366; seconded by Commissioner Castro. The Minutes passed unanimously. Closed.

II. Treasurer's Report: Report was not available.

III. Director's Report: **1) Margaret Pastore Memorial Clock**--Director Levine stated that the Margaret Pastore Memorial Clock has been installed, the site work is complete; however, it has not been inspected. David Moser will do a final inspection on Friday. The plaque was installed a few weeks ago. Everyone should make an effort to stop by and see the clock. The Commission discussed arrangements for a dedication ceremony. **2) Pardee Seawall Gates**—Director Levine stated that one of the gates at the Pardee Seawall disappeared. We are having new ones made and they'll be approximately \$3,000. The new ones will be stainless steel & equipped with grease fittings that will help the gates operate smoothly year round. The old gates didn't have this feature and rusted badly. **3) Pardee Seawall**—Director Levine stated that in 2004 the Pardee Seawall was pointed and refurbishment was completed. The engineering firm performed a final inspection and recommended that another inspection be performed in approximately 5 years. They expect that the wall will need more repairs 7 to 10 years after the 2004 inspection. We would probably use the same firm since they have all the documentation and photographs. They also did a very nice job in 2004. Funding for the inspection would come from the Pardee Land Account. **Commissioner Bush motioned to authorize an inspection of the Pardee Seawall to be funded by the Pardee Land Account, seconded by Commissioner Miller and it passed unanimously. Closed.** **4) Holiday Gathering**—Director Levine stated that the Park Commission sponsored annual holiday gathering is taking place on December 15 at Leon's Restaurant on Long Wharf at 12:00 noon. **5) Fantasy of Lights**—Director Levine had special preview night passes for the Fantasy of Lights for the Commissioners from Easter Seals Goodwill. The preview night is 11/17/11; however, if you go any other night, it's only \$10 per car. **6) Turner Construction**—Director Levine stated that Michael Crow, Project Manager for Turner Construction stopped by the office today. Mr. Crow provided a proposal to use the site

by Scantlebury Park as a “lay down area” for a large construction project for Yale. It’s the same piece of land that Fucci just used. The Park Commission required a bond from Fucci but did not charge them for use of the site; they should be off the site soon if they aren’t already gone. Director Levine stated that if the Commission grants Turner permission to use site they should speak with Fucci and let them know not to restore the site. Turner Construction would be utilizing the site for a three year period. The area is 150’ x 200’ or so in size. They want to use it from April 2012 through July 2015. The site has never been used for anything except for lay down/parking areas for construction projects. Commissioner Torres asked if the area would be used for any other purpose if it wasn’t being used as a lay down area. President Belowsky suggested we ask them for \$25,000 per year for use during a three year period and prorated for any time over the three year period. Director Levine will invite them to the January Park Commission Meeting. **7) Golf Fees at Alling Memorial**—Director Levine stated that there was a meeting of the Golf Course Advisory Board and they recommended that certain fee categories be raised by \$1 or \$2 dollars. The fees had been frozen for three years due to the economy. The Board discussed the fee, the enterprise fund and other golf course topics. **Commissioner Castro Motioned to move forward to recommend the fee increases proposed by the Golf Course Advisory Board to the Board of Aldermen, Seconded by Commissioner Tucker and it passed unanimously. Closed.**

IV. Common Ground—Up-date: Melissa Spear, Executive Director of Common Ground and Kyle Bradley of Gray Organschi Architects addressed the Commission. Ms. Spear stated that Mr. Bradley is designing the new building for Common Ground. They are still developing the schematic designs and hope to submit the site plans to City Plan in December for their January meeting. Ms. Spear explained the site conditions and issues with waterlines, wet lands, the berm, the parking area and bus flow. She spoke about the buildings configuration and what classrooms would be in the building. Mr. Bradley answered some of the Commissions questions regarding zoning, wet lands and storm water management. He also covered building materials and solar panel options. Ms. Spear stated that they will begin doing some community outreach after the holidays. They have already met with the new Alderperson and all of the community groups in the area. The next time they come back they’ll have the final plan that they would have submitted to City Plan. Ms. Spears and Mr. Bradley thanked the Commission for their time.

VI. Other Business: 1) Soccer Field Use—Director Levine stated that the two adult soccer leagues (New Haven Soccer & Virgin del Cisco) had agreed to go to community mediation concerning field use. At the first mediation there were some very heated moments. Another mediation was scheduled and the men’s league pulled out of mediation and said they no longer wanted to participate. Director Levine recommended that there be a Park Commission Meeting in December and that both leagues be invited. We will set some guidelines on time to speak and make their presentations to the Board. Then the Board would discuss and decide what to do about the field use. The Board could come up with different scenarios for equitable use of the Boulevard fields on Sundays. It’s in both their best interests to go back to mediation and come

up with a solution that they can agree with. If they don't meet and make some sort of agreement; they'll end up having to abide by whatever it is the Commission decides. Commissioner Castro stated that there is a very diverse community that loves soccer. There are people from Ecuador, Columbia, Puerto Rico and they all have different cultures. She'd like to look at other locations where soccer could be played like Kimberly Field.

Director Levine stated that it doesn't matter what other fields there are; the conflict revolves around the fact that both leagues want to play on the Boulevard Fields at the same day and time. Commissioner Castro stated that there is tension in the community over this issue.

Commissioner Torres stated that he believes the best way around it would be for the Parks Dept. to run the leagues and everyone would have to join through parks department. The group that has been at the Boulevard for years has learned to get along with the city after some issues. Commissioner Castro stated that this is more than just sports; it's about culture, religion and a way of life. We don't want to pit one group against the other.

Director Levine stated that they need to come together in front of the Park Commission so that they can be heard.

Commissioner Castro said she is very supportive of all the groups; she is friends with everyone. The group at the Boulevard has been there for 20 or more years. They have a feeling of ownership over those fields. We really just need to find a "home" for the newer league so they can be happy.

2) Occupy New Haven—Commissioner Tucker asked about the Occupy New Haven group on the New Haven Green. Director Levine stated that the City administration has decided to be supportive and accommodating to the group. Parks, Police, Fire and Public Works have all had meetings with the group. Parks is picking up the garbage from the site and providing portable toilets. We established guidelines with the group; and, to date, they have been very respectful.

3) Temple Plaza—Commissioner Tucker asked about the use of Temple Plaza for Jell-O-wrestling. Director Levine hasn't heard another word about this matter. The lawyers and State Liquor Commission are dealing with the business owner.

4) Employee Gifts—Commissioner Tucker asked about the employee gifts for this year. President Belowsky stated that Bill Dixon has made arrangements to get shirts with the department logo.

5) Soccer Field Use (Cont.)—Director Levine had been out of the room during the end of the discussion about soccer field use. He thought that the Commission should have a December meeting so two leagues could come before the Park Commission. The Commission might then convince them that they should go back to community mediation. Commissioner Torres asked what would happen if we made a decision and they don't like the outcome. He suggested a City-run league that all adult teams would be required to join if they wanted to play on City fields.

President Belowsky stated that there will be a meeting held on December 21 to hear from both the soccer leagues.

(Since the last Commission meeting Ald. Castro has made arrangements through the CAO to hold a meeting of both parties and a group of Hispanic politicians to see if this issue can be amicably resolved between the two leagues. That meeting is to be held on 1/12/12 at 720 Edgewood Ave. The results of this meeting will be available at the Commission meeting scheduled for 1/18/12.)

Meeting Adjourned: 7:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: ~~December 21, 2011~~ (Canceled)

January 18, 2012