

**SUFFIELD PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**MONTHLY MEETING**  
**April 13, 2016**

The Suffield Parks & Recreation Commission held its regular meeting on Wednesday, April 13, 2016, in the lower level conference room, Town Hall, 83 Mountain Rd., Suffield, CT.

ATTENDANCE: .....Lou Casinghino, Chairman  
.....Cindy Nicholson, Vice Chairman  
.....Jay Bombard  
.....Leeayn Burke  
.....Brian Casinghino  
.....Amy Egan  
.....David Rusnock

ABSENT: .....Kerri Milne, Clerk  
.....Scott Tobey

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: .....Wendy J. LaMontagne, Director  
.....Gerry Crane, CRC Representative  
.....Tim Lewis, Travel Soccer Club President

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

**PUBLIC INPUT:** None.

**MINUTES:** Brian made a motion to accept the minutes. Cindy seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Wendy passed out the summer brochure and thanked the staff for the work that was done. There are a few new camps and programs and registrations have begun.

Brian and Rebecca Klein will be doing the summer pick-up basketball program and this year there will be a girls program. Wendy explained that there will be girls on one court and boys on the other. Brian said that there are a lot of other helpful volunteers that make this program work.

Wendy said that she was able to secure a donation from Praxair Corporation for two trees in observance of Earth Day. The trees will be planted on the south side of Kent Memorial Library. The fire department and public works departments are also involved with this.

**PROGRAM REPORTS:** No comments

Lou asked to move Babb's update (under Old Business) to the number 1 position. Brian made a motion to move the Babb's Update to the first position. Cindy seconded and vote was unanimous.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Babbs – update:** Wendy gave an update on Babb's explaining that the plan is to open the beach for swimming for August. July 1 would be when the money from the budget would be available. The public works department would be taking care of the services to clean-up the driveway entrance and clean up the beach etc. Wendy said that the water needs to be raked since it has been over 10 years since the beach has been used and with Gerry's report, there is a lot of muck under the water. Wendy will be working on setting up some clean-up days at the beach.

The commission invited Gerry Crane to the meeting and he reviewed what has been done on the upper level to the building, and he feels bathrooms should be put in and how that would generate more revenue and increase awareness of the beach. Gerry also explained that at present the muck under the water is ankle deep and he reviewed the time line for procuring permits, the fact that dredging equipment is not available and that the lake belongs to Massachusetts. He also explained in detail why he feels it makes more sense to put the money into water/bathroom improvements for the upper portion of Babbs. Gerry explained that CRC has \$75,000.00 in a grant and \$25,000.00 in donations and Gerry has applied for a Zak grant. Wendy said that the money currently allocated in A.C.C.E. (\$25,000) for a water line/septic has been reallocated to the beach opening. Since this money has been reallocated, the water line/septic amount is \$50,000.00 short. Gerry said that since there isn't enough money to work from the road, working from the building out would be the way to go.

Gerry met with Melissa Mack (1<sup>st</sup> Selectman) to discuss and try to convince her to put the \$25,000.00 A.C.C.E. money back to the water/septic for the building instead of using it to open Babb's Beach. Gerry said Melissa thanked him for his input but would not change her mind.

The commission discussed the A.C.C.E. \$25,000 that was reallocate to opening Babb's Beach vs. putting bathrooms in the building/water on the upper level; the several major problems with dredging the water; how opening the upper part of the park for different uses would be the better use of the property.

Brian made a motion that the Parks and Recreation Commission supports the original plan concerning the Babb's Beach project which was usable bathrooms and that all allocations of funding, as was approved in the past, be used for this purpose rather than supporting the re-allocation of funds for re-opening of the beach as a primary project. Cindy seconded and the vote was unanimous

Lou asked Wendy to coordinate a meeting with, Cindy, Amy, Gerry and herself to go forward with this motion and meet with the 1<sup>st</sup> selectman as soon as possible.

The commission thanked Gerry.

**Field Scheduling:** Lou introduced Tim Lewis, President of the Travel Soccer Club. The commission invited Tim to the meeting to discuss the tournament in June and Packard field use. Lou reviewed last month's meeting at which time the commission decided to allow the travel soccer club to use the Packard Field for 2 days. Lou said that Dave, Mark Cervione, Wendy and he were involved in discussing field use and Mark said the Packard Field is in very good shape and can handle the use by the younger players without damaging it. After this discussion it was decided to allow the club to use the field 3 times a week along with the weekend. Wendy said that over the years there have been a lot of changes both in fields and the size of the program. Wendy said that she wanted to be sure that Tim and commission members were aware of the history behind Packard Field.

Wendy said the Packard Field was originally built because the high school field was in poor condition and the town needed a premiere field. The field was built in 1997 with the help of the Sports Council (now defunct), the community and the soccer club. This field was originally used by the high school and for certain soccer club games. The intent was to ensure the Packard Field was not overused to ensure the town had a premiere field. Over the years new athletic clubs started, new sports were added to the program and new fields have been added. With this increase in clubs and fields the field schedule meeting was started to ensure that fields use is divided between the different sports during traditional seasons and done fairly.

Under the Scott Lingenfelter administration, a lease was drawn up between the Town and Travel Soccer Club in March 2008. Scott gave exclusive use of the Stratton Farms Fields, now known as the Cervione Fields, the Fleming Field and Babb's Field to the club. This arrangement made it so that the soccer club would not need other fields except for their Tournament. The soccer club was to be totally responsible for the maintenance of these fields and thus saving the town money along with easing up the scheduling needs.

Wendy asked Tim if he was aware of the lease and if he had a copy. Tim said he was aware of the lease but did not have a copy. Wendy suggested that Tim renegotiate the lease as the original one stated that the soccer club would not use any other fields in town and at present the soccer club is requesting to use other town fields.

The commission discussed with Tim the needs of the soccer club, the maintenance of the fields under the lease and Packard Field and how the extra use will affect this field. A question was asked if other sports could use the fields. Wendy said she would have to read that portion of the lease. Cindy asked Tim if he would allow a Park and Rec Soccer coach to use one of the club fields for practice and Tim said he would be agreeable to allowing this but it all depends on the insurance coverage.

Brian made a motion that the commission grants to the Suffield Soccer Club usage of Packard Field in the following amounts: 3 week days per week and both weekend days. Jay seconded and the vote was unanimous.

Lou discussed the donations that were received in the past from the Soccer Club for the use of all the town fields for the June tournament. Lou asked Tim if he was aware of this and that it has not happened recently. Wendy reviewed the different items that were purchased with these donations. Lou said that these donations have benefited the entire community and the soccer club.

Cindy and Lou commented on the nice job Wendy did on compiling the information on this issue.

Wendy passed out a survey she did with surrounding towns asking if they charged their local sports groups for the use of the town fields. All but 1 town answered no they do not charge.

**Bridge Street Community Center – update:** Wendy said the environment report was done and came in at \$2,000,000. The original estimate a few years ago was between \$200,000 and \$250,000. The commission discussed the number and that the company that did the report is a premiere company and they put in for an onsite consultant and items that may or may not be a problem.

Brian said Wendy did a great PowerPoint presentation for the subcommittee on what should go into the rooms. Wendy said that the subcommittee wants to be sure that when they present their needs to the architect, it will be exactly what we want for each room. Lou asked Wendy to bring this information to the next meeting so the commission can see.

Wendy asked if everyone can be at the meeting Wednesday, May 4. The meeting has been changed from May 11 since that day is the date for the Town budget meeting.

Leeayn voiced her concern about the budget and the reallocation of the Babb's money. The commission discussed in detail the Babb's situation and the switch from the upper part of Babb's to the opening of the beach. They also discussed how this switch of money and request for money to open the beach affects the view people have of Parks and Recreation.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

No new business.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Brian made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Leeayn seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Scheitlin, recording secretary for  
Kerri Milne, Clerk