

**TOWN OF MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT  
PARKS AND RECREATION ADVISORY COMMISSION  
THURSDAY, MAY 21, 2009  
MINUTES**

Meeting began at 7:05 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chairman: Ron Conyers; Commissioners: Ken Miffitt, Frank Livingston, Bill Gochee, Tom Tierney, Dennis Cumberbatch; Parks and Recreation Staff- Scott Sprague

GUEST: Marcus Curry Sr, Aamir Shakil, Okeem Moore

**MINUTES:**

The minutes for April 2009 were unanimously accepted.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

None

**RECREATION REPORT:**

The indoor recreation season is winding down. Programming is now in full outdoor mode. The campsites are basically full, just a week or two available here and there.

The national/regional/local economic issues are being felt. 58 out of 60 lifeguards want to return. Due to the closing of Waddell and Verplanck pools, there is not enough life guarding positions for all the guards that want to return. Some will be moved to campsites, as they are good employees. Some have been referred to Vernon and Bloomfield, as they are looking for lifeguards. Extra funding has been appropriated for busing campers from Waddell and Verplanck to swimming pools. The Counselor in Training program has youths ready to work, however there are only 12 openings to fill. There are lots of very qualified applicants who are not teens (including recent college graduates, teachers, etc.). Training includes: First Aid, CPR, crisis intervention and sexual harassment awareness.

Pride in Manchester week is coming up June 6th through the 13th. The concert in Center Park during the first weekend will be Peter Dinklage (former Monk). Heritage day and the Fiddle Fest will be held during the second weekend.

**FIELD SERVICES REPORT:**

The graffiti at Northwest Park was taken care of in time for the Rebuilding Together picnic.

They are currently working on ball fields. The high school track will be the site for the JI meet, Midnight Meet, State Class S and LL Championship Meets and the Eastern Regional Hershey Meet.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

The plan is for the LL Bean Adventure School kayak trailer to be placed near the water. However, approval must be obtained for the trailer to be within 100 ft. of wetlands. A map and memo will need to be submitted for Planning & Zoning approval. The trailer will be placed in Northwest Park near a building until the matter is resolved.

Joe Camposeo's records show Joel Janenda took the oath of office for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission in September 1972. Joe spoke with Joel and he states he started sometime in late 1971 to early 1972. Bill O'Neill served from January 1984 until 2007, 23 years. Tom Tierney will work with Scott on the plaque and "Where As" write up, as well as determining Joel's availability. They will seek a Mayor's Proclamation also. Colleen from the Manager's Office can also help with the write up. Bill O'Neill was very knowledgeable with engineering issues. He was the champion of the bikeway/greenway system and he always promoted "more green, less paved". The greenway between Gardner Street and Highland Park has been held up due to archeological/historic matters. The date and time for Joel's recognition will be announced.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Marcus Curry, Aamir Shakil and Okeem Moore reside on Wilfred Road. It is a cul-de-sac with a little park. In 1996, residents of Wilfred Road requested playground equipment, a backboard and a basketball hoop with a small paved area be installed in their park. The request was put in the capital budget and approved. The items were installed. The residents who requested the hoop had good intentions. They wanted it for the neighborhood to use. During this same time period, Squire Village took out their hoops and the residents there discovered the new hoop at Wilfred Road. Six weeks after the installation, those same residents submitted a petition to have the backboard and hoop removed. Many problems were occurring. \$7,000 was the estimated cost for the 1996 work. At this time, the Wilfred Road residents are requesting the hoop and backboard be re-installed. They feel they have a tight community in the area now. The neighborhood youths went around with a petition to gather support for the installation. 90% of the households in the Wilfred neighborhood said "Yes" and signed the petition. They would like the hoop to be re-installed on a trial basis. All their request would involve is a backboard, hoop and some maintenance. The neighborhood youth tried to put up a hoop on their own, but it was not safe. The pavement that was laid in 1996 is in good shape, just needs lines painted. Currently, the bare pipes coming out of the ground are an eyesore. They would also like the playground equipment checked for safety. There are houses around it. There is open property on either side of the park. It would help if Squire Village re-installed their hoops. It is sad to see the neighborhood youths have to go out of the neighborhood to play ball. Mr. Curry will come back to the Commission and request the removal if problems occur again. Parks in Town are open from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. It was questioned if a sign could be installed stating the park closes at dusk. In the past, cars were brought up to shine their lights and continue play. Perhaps if the rules are enforced initially, it should solve potential problems. The police should be invited to patrol the area. Squire Village is private property, Parks and Recreation has no control. School is getting out soon and Mr. Curry would like to have a place for the youths to play. Mr. Curry would also like speed bumps installed, but he doesn't know who to talk to. The Commission referred him to the Police Dept. There is no reason to go fast on this street. Those

who live in the area are careful of the youths on bikes. The neighborhood has grown and is very diverse. There are youths in the neighborhood age 2 to 17. The older youths will need to let the younger ones have a chance to play. The neighborhood can self-police to an extent. If the hoop had to be removed again, the neighborhood youths would understand why it was taken away.

**A motion was made to re-install the backboard and hoop at the Wilfred Road playground, as well as inspect the playground equipment and do required maintenance. Motion unanimously approved.**

Scott Sprague will check the inventory and order a new back board if necessary. Trash barrels provided at the site will need to be emptied on a regular schedule. Scott's records show the original request for the equipment was made in 1993, however it took until 1996 to obtain the funds.

The basketball hoops at Verplanck School were removed at the request of the principal, as older kids and young adults were playing during the school day.

Adjournment

Respectfully Submitted,