

Town of West Hartford Parks and Recreation Advisory Board

6/15/2020 5:30 – 6:30

Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Meeting began at 5:35PM.

In attendance: Brian Clifford, Kim Evans, Shawna Kitzman, Tanja Low, Kate Eikel, John Minze

Missing: Greg Shimer, Terry Schmitt, Robin Collins, Sarah Needham

Staff: Helen Rubino-Turco, Director
Marc Blanchard, Leisure Services Manager
Gina Varano - Corporation Council
Jennifer Evans, WHCI
Andrea Ruggiero, Town Council Host

- Committee Chair script was read by John Minze
- Minutes of the last meeting were approved unanimously: John moved; Brian seconded.

Old Business:

1. Outdoor classroom at Westmoor Park in underway
 - Foundation slab has been poured. More than \$220,000 has been raised.
 - The structure is built offsite, erected onsite – scheduled for early July.
 - Hardwick Post & Beam will construct the timber-framed building; T+T is doing earthwork, foundation and chimney
 - Physically distance ribbon cutting was executed with the Mayor and Brigid Curtain family in attendance
 - The project is on schedule and on budget
2. Wolcott Park - Received \$750,000 from the state
 - Using funds from state to redo the parking lot. Plan calls for additional parking spots and a more user-friendly layout. The bid will go out this summer.
 - Lights have been updated to LED. The paths will be redone.
 - Community garden fencing replaced with buried fence to address animal pests.
3. Eisenhower Park
 - Standalone restroom was demolished and on schedule to be rebuilt on the same place.
4. Whiting Lane new tennis courts with post tension concert is being planned
5. Additional pathway paving in Vanderbilt park is planned
6. Temporary Dog Park -
 - Dog coalitions paid for fence to go up from Mid Dec and came down mid-March
 - Ran for 3 months
 - It was a success with only minor issues, such as being little muddy at times. It was never overcrowded.
 - This tapped out the dog coalition funding so it is unlikely they will have the funds to execute this again any time soon.

New Business

7. Discussed impact of Covid-19.
 - Parks have been an oasis when everything else was closed
 - Golf volume very high; all transactions done upfront, online through Club Prophet
 - Tennis and pickle ball were opened at 50% and going to 100% with safety protocols.
 - The tracks at the high schools have reopened.
 - Playgrounds are scheduled to reopen with capacity limits. The recommendation was to have playgrounds/playscapes open on the 17th with new signage - Keep social distances. Water fountains would be closed. Keep groups to 25 or less

- Ball fields will open to the leagues, who must submit safe operating plans; Marc reported that they are authorized to start/open on June 17 pending protocols from each league. They would need to approve to then issue permits. Most interest is baseball and softball. They will need a updated waiver system.
 - Basketball is not scheduled to open but optimistic to open by end of summer
 - Plan to open splash pads but not set up yet. Plan under review.
 - Kate - There were questions about restrooms on golf course – They are open on course, but locker rooms remain closed; awaiting a plan from the golf pro to open the locker rooms.
 - Shawna ask what methods are leveraged and best for communicating openings. Helen stated:
 - Renee McCue is the Town communications director.
 - Leisure Services updates their Facebook page and town website. It was noted that updating the website is a longer process because the town developing a new website.
 - Summer camps moving forward at 2 locations Westmoor Park and Elmwood Community Center
 - Westmoor - Limited to 40 campers (rules is groups of 10 max)
 - Elmwood - Limited to 50.
 - Registrations went live last Thursday, June 11.
 - Leisure Services will have tents in parks for family activities. It is not kid drop off. Starts June 22 and will be every weekday from 9:00AM to 2:00pm, ending August 14.
 - The town has new park ambassadors since mid-March. They are promoting/explain rules and offerings. Shawna asked if it is a paid role, Helen stated it is.
 - Pools: Town management originally decided no outdoor pools this summer. Due to the pressure from other towns and communities opening their pools, the Town is trying potentially to open two pools before the end of the summer. They may outsource the staffing to Cornerstone. Going to the pool might be online reservation based.
 - Shawna and Kate voiced concern about people who do not have internet access to advance appoints. Helen explained they are looking to alleviate that by potentially setting up call in reservations and/or signing up at the pool location.
8. Facility reopenings:
- Town Hall - Leisure services staff has been working from home and remote. Looking to bring in 50%. They laid off some part time and might hire a few back as operations resume.
 - Cornerstone is still in discussions. Not cleared to open by state or town
 - Veterans Rink will open June 22; Hoping hockey to be approved middle of July
 - Westmoor Park is closed to public but open to camp
 - Elmwood community center open for camp but closed to public
 - 2 senior centers remain closed; will be reassessed in late August.
 - Producing Leisure Services Fall/Winter Program Guide online online. Will not print it due to changing environment with Covid-19.

Next meeting: Monday, September 21st @ 5:30pm room 217 or via WebEx

The meeting adjourned at 6:28pm

Town of West Hartford
Office of Town Clerk
50 South Main Street, Room 313
West Hartford, Connecticut 06107

To: Essie Labrot, Town Clerk/Council Clerk

From: Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
(Name of Board or Commission)

Contact Person: John Minze, Chair Telephone Number: C 917-699-7815
E-mail Address: jtminze@jtminze.com

In compliance with Section 1-225 of the Connecticut General Statutes the following is a listing of dates of the regular meetings of the Parks & Recreation Advisory Board
(Name of Board or Commission)

MONTH	DATE/DATES	TIME & PLACE OF MEETING
JANUARY 2020	Monday, Jan 27	5:30 PM, Room 217
FEBRUARY		
MARCH	Monday, March 16	5:30 PM, Room 407 – note location change
APRIL		
MAY	Monday, May 18	5:30 PM, Room 217
JUNE	Monday, June 15	5:30 PM, Room 217
JULY		
AUGUST		
SEPTEMBER	Monday, September 21	5:30 PM, Room 217
OCTOBER		
NOVEMBER	Monday, November 16	5:30 PM, Room 217
DECEMBER		
JANUARY 2021	Monday, January 25	5:30 PM, Room 217

Yours very truly,



(Signature) Chairman

(Signature) (or)
Secretary

12/12/19
(Date)