

New Haven Board of Park Commissioners

Meeting No. 1467

Zoom Conference Meeting

May 18, 2022

New Haven, CT 06513

Present: President Belowsky, Commissioners Carl Babb, Harvey Feinberg, Ernie Santiago, Hector Torres, Kevin Walton; Alder Sal Punzo
Staff: Deputy Director William Carone, Director Gwen Williams, Katherine Jacobs, Tariq Dasent

I. Minutes of Meeting #1466: Motion to approve Minutes of Meeting 1466. Motion Seconded. Unanimously approved. Closed.

II. Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve Treasurer's report. Motioned Seconded.
President Belowsky would like to review the total debits line item. **Unanimously approved. Closed.**

III. New Business:

Fort Wooster Park - Alder Sal Punzo & Deputy Director William Carone

Deputy William Carone presented for Alder Sal Punzo as Alder Punzo was having difficulty with his audio. Carone gave an update on improvements at Fort Wooster Park. Park employees have cleared down trees, vines, and poison ivy caused by past storms. The goal is to make the park look more inviting to the public.

- There is an issue of overlapping play at Clinton Avenue Park. Twice children playing baseball had to be moved so they would not be hit by people playing cricket. Katherine Jacobs mentioned the cricket pitch is between two baseball fields and baseball and cricket should not be scheduled at the same time. Jacobs suggested talking to the permitting staff.
- From July 8th – 10th police from Puerto Rico will be participating in baseball games at Criscuolo Park.
- Commissioner Ernie Santiago proposed a tournament/fundraiser between Parks, Alders, and City Staff in July or August.
- President Belowsky saw an article in the newspaper regarding adding a walking path at Marginal Drive. President Belowsky thinks this will be a good idea. Commissioner Hector Torres questioned who gets proceeds for parking when there are events at Yale Bowl. Carone stated they are not supposed to charge for parking as that is outlined in the permit.

IV. Old Business:

- Commissioner Carl Babb was informed a motor at Bowen Field needed to be replaced as it was over 40 years old. Katherine Jacobs stated she would talk to the contractor to see what they were referring to.
- Commissioner Babb questioned if the Board of Alders approved the throwing cage at Bowen Field. Commissioner Babb is concerned about the safety of the current throwing area and would like an update. Director Gwen Williams will follow up with Commissioner Babb within 24 hours.
- Commissioner Harvey Feinberg questioned if a decision was made about the sign along the Canal Trail. President Belowsky stated the sign was approved last month.
- Commissioner Santiago asked Jacobs if 3 softball fields in Blake Field were approved for renovation about 3 years ago. Jacobs stated she does believe they saw a plan for Blake, and it

was approved. However, the plans have changed, and she will present a revised plan in the upcoming months.

V. Director's Report Parks & Public Works:

- Full swing grass cutting operations
- Seeing 60-75 permits a day, increases to about 100 a weekend.
- Renovated the stone paths at Quinipiac River Park.
- Replaced 30 grills across city parks.
- Held interviews Monday for four Caretaker positions. There are still vacant positions for Caretaker, so HR has reposted the position.
- Working to keep parks clean, safe, and provide support through permits.
- Stairs at Beecher Park need masonry work.
- Currently working 7 days a week.
- Still willing to do a park tour with all commissioners to address concerns.
- Thomas Verderame and Carone are working on the paperwork for the July 4th fireworks.

Commissioner Babb mentioned the Beaver Hill Group had a meeting and stated they do not have available trash cans for upcoming events. Carone stated they can request more trash cans via email. Commissioner Feinberg asked if we were able to hire enough seasonal employees. Carone stated he currently has 13 available slots. Commissioner Babb asked if students still worked in the summer helping to clean up parks. Carone stated Youth@Work will start soon. Carone has also reached out to the Friends Groups to get seasonal help.

Director's Report Youth & Recreation:

- Having difficulty recruiting youth. The goal was to hire 1,000 young people and after going into schools there are only a little over 500 applications. Applications have been out since the first week of January. Still looking for 25 to 30 people 16 and older to fill positions.
- Filled 2 park ranger positions.
- Working with the Engineering Dept and have started a plan to work on the aesthetics of park buildings. The first three buildings to be addressed will be East Rock Trowbridge, Coogan, and Barnard Nature Center. Work will continue through the summer and be completed in the fall.
- Working on having youth centers in all different parts of the community.
- Working on getting bonding for the old Barbell Club on Carlisle Street. The goal is to have it open again.
- There will be an RFP for organizations to use the building in the parks to offer their programming. This is a non-fiscal RFP. The city will not pay anyone to come in and do their programming.
- Justice Education does programming at Eli Whitney, and they reached out and would like to donate student-built benches to put in parks. Williams will provide pictures to the commissioners for review.

Meeting Adjourned: 6:19 PM

Minutes submitted by: Tariq Dasent, Executive Administrative Assistant to Parks & Public Works

Next Meeting: June 15, 2022

Location: Zoom