

New Haven Board of Park Commissioners

Meeting No. 1459

Pardee Rose Garden  
150 Park Rd.  
Hamden, CT 06517

July 21, 2021

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Present: President Belowsky, Commissioner Carl Babb, Commissioner Kevin Walton; Patricia Wallace, Alexandria Givan, Allan Appel, Roxanne Condon, Susan Klein, Shaunnaya Williams, Nicholas Noheimer, Josh Randall, Jane Comins, Olivia Martson, Win Davis,  
Absent: Commissioner Ernie Santiago, Commissioner Hector Torres; Thomas Verderame  
Staff: Director Jeff Pescosolido, Deputy Director William Carone, Director Gwen Busch, Deputy Director William Dixon, Tariq Dasent, Katherine Jacobs, Rebecca Bombero, Giovanni Zinn, Melissa Kops

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**I. Minutes of Meeting #1458: Motion to approve Minutes of Meeting 1458. Motion Seconded.** Commissioner Kevin Walton requested more information on the resignation of two members. Georgia Miller and Ronnell Higgins resigned effective July 1<sup>st</sup> because they moved. This leaves 5 active commissioners. Three commissioners will make a quorum.  
**2 approved and 1 abstained. Closed.**

**II. Treasurer's Report: Motion to approve Treasurer's Report. Motion Seconded.** **2 approved and 1 abstained. Closed.**

**III. Old Business:**

- Giovanni Zinn provided updates on Lighthouse Park and Alling Golf Course.

**1. Enhance Lighthouse Park Bathhouse:**

- Move the maintenance yard out of the bathhouse and to a dedicated facility.
- Construct a 4,000 sq ft building – drive thru garage bay, more vehicle and maintenance equipment storage, small office, bathroom, and a break room.
- Dumpster pad area in the back.
- Cut an access drive in existing island that separates the parking lot from the drive.
- Add an island to provide a separation from the maintenance functions and the boat launch functions.
- Improve the curbs around the island to protect the island from compactions and people driving over it.
- Improve the storm water handling in accordance with section 60 of the City ordinance
- The foundation is a timber structure and would like to wait until timber prices come down. Anticipated construction start would be in the Fall.

**2. Golf Course Clubhouse Renovations:**

- The original plan was done in 2018. It was sent out to bid and came back at 3.3 million, but the budget was 2.1 – 2.2 million. A new design was developed and is more affordable.
- Minimize changes the public does not directly enjoy.
- Maximize public facing improvements, update the aesthetics, update bathroom and locker area, flexible community spaces, and create a unique destination.
- Finalize design by end of summer, start demolition by end of the season, construction through fall, winter, and spring, and have completed by mid-2022.

President Belowsky is concerned about the cost of the materials at the present time. Zinn stated wood futures are down from their peak and are continuing to come down. Commission Carl Babb has concerns about the flat roof and snow. Zinn explained the roof was designed to structurally support the snow.

- Commissioner Kevin Walton wanted an update on the electricity at Wilbur Cross. Parks and the electrician for the BOE met and found a way to feed the press box out of existing building. The electricity will be restored in time for football to be played.
- Commissioner Babb asked about the sprinklers at Bowen. Zinn stated the baseball renovation is out to bid.

#### **IV. New Business:**

##### **Ralph Walker Rink – Rebecca Bombero**

Deputy Chief Administrative Officer Rebecca Bombero presented the operator agreement for the Ralph Walker Rink. Wonderland of Ice applied to be the operator. Wonderland of Ice has over 30 years of experience in the industry and manages both the Wonderland of Ice in Bridgeport and the Norwich ice arena. The terms of the agreement are:

- October – April operation for rink and locker rooms
- Concessions will be year long
- 5-year contract term with a 5-year renewal option
- \$5,000 monthly base rent along with 10 % of net revenue above \$100,000
- Concession's rent will be at a flat 10% per month for gross revenues
- Maintenance plan will include operator completing a daily checklist
- The City will continue the contract to maintain new compressor system
- The vendor has agreed to make every effort to hire locally

Commissioner Babb questioned how the revenue would be monitored. Bombero stated the contract requires the operator to provide both monthly financial reports and a yearly audit which will be analyzed by the City.

Commissioner Walton questioned the option agreement and wanted to know who would have the option, the operator, or the city. Bombero stated the option is for the City, the vendor can also choose not to enter the agreement, but the City has sole discretion. There is no automatic renewal.

Commissioner Walton wanted to know should the commissioners be privy to the monthly reports. Bombero stated there is an advisory board which will receive these monthly updates and there is a designee from the commission on the board who will receive this information.

Commissioner Walton would also like when hiring locally to have people not only from New Haven but people that reflect the community. Commissioner Walton would like to know the plan for hiring locally and how will the community be informed about any employment opportunities at the rink. Bombero was open to suggestions. Currently, a connection with New Haven Works is being made and good faith efforts and monitoring will be done to ensure local hiring.

Rebecca Bombero is asking the commissioners for their approval to move forward with the operator and send the recommendations to the Board of Alders for their review and approval. Commissioner Babb asked if Commissioner Walton's recommendation for hiring locally and reflecting the community will be included in the proposal. Bombero stated yes there will be language in the contract to include hiring locally. Commissioner Walton would like outreach

to be the focus rather than just the language in the contract. Bombero asked is there any place that postings should be required. Bombero stated there can be language in the contract to include all job posting be forwarded to the City to distribute to the management teams, New Haven Works, and Athletic Department. Commissioner Walton stated all entities should be notified. Bombero agreed to talk to commissioners to establish a list of places these postings should be published.

**Motion to approve with recommendations included. Motion Seconded.**

Bombero will update the term sheet to reflect the recommendations. Commissioner Walton questioned how much opportunity there will be for open skate and things of that nature. Deputy Director William Dixon stated Bauer Nike will teach middle school kids how to play hockey. Per the ordinance there will be at least 8 hours of open skate for the community. **Unanimously approved. Closed.**

**Throwing Cage Upgrade at Bowen – Alexandria Givans**

Proposal to rebuild the throwing cage at Bowen Field. The University of New Haven (UNH) is willing to purchase a throwing cage (NCAA double circle cage) for an estimated cost of \$45,000 this will include the cage and spikes. The cage will be locked, and this will eliminate unauthorized use. UNH would like to get in year-round and use it in the morning and when available in the evenings. The net can stay up year-round. The circle would need to be cleared in the winter which UNH will do. This cage can allow for larger events to take place and bring in revenue for the city. UNH is asking the city to install the cage.

There are 2 options. The first option would be to use the cage that is already there and build around it. There are 2 issues with this option. The first being the current cage is not strong enough and second the bleacher proximity. If someone gets a long throw it will go over the fence and cause injury to someone on the bleachers or in that area. The city would need to purchase 11 new poles and netting that are higher and a better cage if the cage stayed in the current location. This would cost approximately \$35,000 for the city. The second option is to move the cage and the throwing area to the opposite side of the field which allows for a safer area. There is no fee for poles as the existing poles will be sufficient.

Commissioner Babb asked if the city's engineer could look at the cage and he was informed yes, they can. Katherine Jacobs stated she can put together a cost estimate for the total project for the commissioners so they can make a final decision.

**Motion to investigate project. Motion Seconded.** Commissioner Walton has unreadiness as he is unsure if the Parks Commission has the authority to make this approval or if they needed the approval of the Board of Education. Director Willam Carone stated this will also need the Board of Alders approval. **Unanimously Approved. Closed.**

**Playground Policy – Patricia Wallace**

Patricia Wallace proposed the Parks Commission adopt a policy that would include:

- Not giving up the only public park in a neighborhood
- Have at least 1 playground in the neighborhood that includes a playscape, splash pad or water element

President Belowsky stated he will take this under consideration, have a meeting, and come up with recommendations.

**Removable Security Bollards for Temple Plaza – Win Davis**

Temple Plaza is a pocket park located directly across the street from the Omni Hotel. Win Davis proposed adding removable security bollards to stop illegal traffic through Temple Plaza. The bollards would be locked (Town Green and Parks will have a key). Town Green will pay for the installation of the bollards and maintain them. **Motion to install 4 security bollards. Motion Seconded. Unanimously Approved. Closed.**

**Small Sign for Scantlebury Park – Roxanne Condon**

Roxanne Condon proposed installing a sign near the skateboard park, pickle ball, and basketball courts identifying Scantlebury Park. Currently there is a sign on the corner of Webster and Ashmun however many people are entering from the Farmington Canal Trail. Condon is requesting a small sign it does not have to be as large as the one on Ashmun and Webster. Bombero confirmed there is a sign on Webster and Ashmun as that was once the front of the park, but the park has since transformed so the “front” of the park is now where the Canal line is. President Belowsky asked if the sign at Webster Street can be moved to the new location that Condon is requesting. Bombero suggested Katherine Jacobs could put together a nice update to the rules sign that welcomes you to Scantlebury. This would reinforce the rules and pay homage to Scantlebury.

**The Commissioners will talk with William Carone, Jeff, and Katherine to develop a sign for Scantlebury.**

**V. Director’s Report Parks & Public Works:**

- Making progress with vacant positions.
- Tree System Coordinator Annie started Monday.
- Supporting camps, park permits, and events 7 days a week.
- Supporting Covid vaccine sites city wide.
- Safety Training for staff in August.

**Director’s Report Youth & Recreation:**

- All programs are running in full.
- Summer employment program ends in 7 days.
- Everything is going well.

There will be no meeting in August, the next meeting will be in September.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:58 PM

Minutes Submitted by: Tariq Dasent, Executive Administrative Assistant to Park & Public Works

Next Meeting: September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Location: Zoom