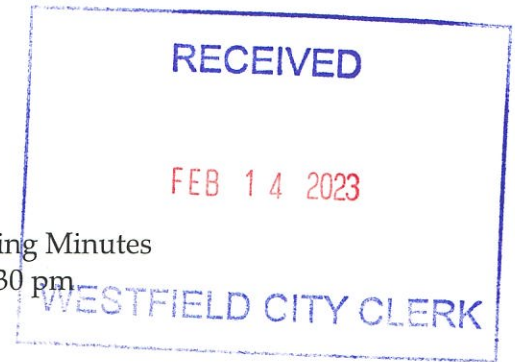




Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes  
City Hall 59 Court Street - Room 315 at 6:30 pm  
January 9, 2023



Commissioners Present: Roll Call All Yes -Jane DeBarbieri, Scott LaBombard, Peter Lurgio, Kenneth Magarian, Douglas Morash, Vincent Olinski and Sara Unger

Commissioner Absent: Michael Tirrell

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm with Scott LaBombard, Chair presiding.

Scott LaBombard asked if anyone had any questions regarding the December 12, 2022 minutes and if anyone wanted to set motion and called for a roll call vote as Yea.

Motion made by Vincent Olinski to accept the minutes December 12, 2022 motion seconded by Kenneth Magarian. All a Roll call vote as yea Motion passed.

Scott LaBombard asked if anyone here tonight that was not listed on the agenda and explained the 15 max minutes of speaking time per person.

Scott LaBombard noted there was no City Council communication to discuss as the liaison was not present.

Public Participation: William Babinski, Richard Gendreau, Mike Raposa, Heather Witalisz, Ted Drummy, Ann Lentini, Greg Vauros, Mark Fedora, Bill Schneeloch and George Barnet

Motion made by Vincent Olinski to move the Health Department Agenda item to be first on the agenda motion seconded by Sara Unger. All a Roll call vote as yea, motion passed.

Business or Items for Discussion:

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Ted Drummy for Juanita Carnes from the Health Department to discuss a renewal permit for a Silent Tribute at Park Square.
- Ted Drummy explained that they would like approval for a renewal permit for Park Square for a silent Tribute on Valentine's Day from 4pm to 8pm. They will do a vigil with battery candles and asked that the lights be dimmed. Pete Lurgio asked for more info about what the vigil is about. Ted Drummy explained that it started for Drug Overdoses but now they added COVID to the purpose of the vigil also. Jim Blascak asked about the date. It was moved to Feb. 14 per updated permit from the Health Department.
- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set motion to approve the permit.

Motion made by Vincent Olinski approved the renewal permit for the Westfield Health Department motion seconded by Pete Lurgio. All a roll call vote as yea motion passed.

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Heather Witalisz to discuss a permit to celebrate National Women's History Month on Park Square and asked her to discuss the request for a permit.

- Heather Witalisz explained that they would like to place white ribbons on the pokes at Park Square to commemorate International Woman's Day on March 8, 2023. They would like to place the ribbons Wednesday through Sunday to commemorate the day. Heather explained that they did this last year and they would like the ribbons up for a few days to create awareness. She asked if signs could be placed also.
- Sara Unger noted that signs can be placed for the duration of events. Heather said she could come back with what the signs will look like and will follow back up.
- Sara Unger asked if the signs would be at the end of Park Square near the stage. Heather said it is more of a quiet event and most info is online on their Facebook page. If people get out and walk around the signs would help explain the event.
- Jane DeBarbieri asked for more details and Heather explained that their Facebook pages has profiled important women of Westfield and beyond for the past few years. Women like Alice Burke, Jean Cole and others.
- Vincent Olinski asked how long the event would last and Heather said it was 5 days like last year.
- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set a motion to approve the permit.

Motion made by Jane DeBarbieri to approve the permit for Witalisz Real Estate, motion seconded by Sara Unger All a roll call vote as yea motion passed.

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Greg Vouros from the Westfield Public Schools to discuss the permit to use Whitney Playground and Sadie Knox for Softball.
- Greg Vouros explained that they would like to use Whitney playground for WTA practices and games and use Sadie Knox for senior night.
- Kenneth Magarian asked who preps the field for Softball and Jim Blascak explained that the school department does.
- Sara Unger asked if there were parking issues with senior night and Greg said he wasn't aware of any issues.
- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set a motion to approve the permit.

Motion made by Sara Unger to approve the permit for the School Department as presented, motion seconded by Kenneth Magarian. All a roll call vote as yay motion passed.

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Bill Babinski from the Westfield Horseshoe Club to discuss the renewal permit for Municipal Playground.
- Bill Babinski explained that the permit is for 15 weeks every Monday starting in April.
- Discussion occurred that this was the 15<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> year of requests and the club itself is around 100 years hold
- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set a motion to approve the permit.

Motion made by Vincent Olinski to approve the renewal permit for the Westfield Horseshoe Club motion seconded by Sara Unger. All a roll call vote as yea motion passed.

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Bill Schneelock from St. John's Lutheran Church to discuss the Easter sunrise service on Park Square.

- Bill Schneelock explained this is a renewal permit for a service on Easter morning from 5:45 am to 7:00 am and about 50 attendees would be present.
- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set a motion to approve the permit.

Motion made by Pete Lurgio to approve the renewal permit for St. John's Lutheran Church motion seconded by Sara Unger. All a roll call vote as yea motion passed.

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Rick Gendreau to discuss the permit for Westfield Girls Youth Lacrosse to use Boardman Field for practices and games.
- Rick Gendreau explained that they would like to use Boardman Fields from March to June for practices and games and they will coordinate with St. Mary's like they have in the past.
- Peter Lurgio asked if we can monitor to make sure fields are ready for use before first use and Scott Hathaway said we can monitor that.
- Sara Unger asked if other fields are available for use and discussion followed on other possible fields like Woronoco Soccer Complex.
- Rick Gendreau explained that he was told Woronoco was not available. Further discussion followed. Commission members said they would look at past permit requests for Woronoco Soccer Complex and research this.
- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set a motion to approve the permit.

Motion made by Vincent Olinski to approve the renewal permit for the Westfield Girls Youth Lacrosse use of Boardman Fields motion seconded by Sara Unger. All a roll call vote as yea motion passed.

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Mike Raposo from Westfield Little League to discuss permits for use of Sadie Knox, Papermill, Cross Street and Hampton Ponds baseball fields.
- Mike Raposo explained these are renewal permits for games and practices at all fields.
- Sara Unger asked if there were any issues last year at Sadie Knox from neighboring properties and Mike Raposo explained that there were not.
- Mike Raposo said the scoreboard at Cross St. was failing and Scott LaBombard asked Mike Raposo to come back to a future meeting to discuss a plan for replacement.
- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set a motion to approve the permit.

Motion made by Pete Lurgio to approve the renewal permits for the Westfield Little League motion seconded by Jane DeBarbieri. All a roll call vote as yea motion passed.

- Scott LaBombard welcomed Mark Fedora, George Barnet and Ann Lentini to discuss placing a sign near the Purple Heart Monument in Kane/Wojtkiewicz Park.
- They explained that they would like to place a sign on the light pole near the monument. They wanted to explain their plan to the commission before proceeding with any research and pricing of a possible sign.
- The commission explained that they would be open to having them come back with a formal proposal at a future meeting. (No vote was needed on this discussion item)
- The Salary Sub Committee provided an update and explained the proposed increases salary rates for the 2023 charts for seasonal staff to help keep pace with inflation and to allow

the parks and recreation department to attract and retain high quality candidates for seasonal job positions. It was noted that the committee did research on salaries using national recreation groups to benchmark salaries.

- Scott LaBombard asked if anyone wanted to set a motion to the 2023 seasonal salary charts
- Motion made by Jane DeBarbieri to approve the 2023 seasonal salary charts as presented by the subcommittee member motion seconded Sara Unger All a roll call vote as yea motion passed.
- It was also noted that playground salaries come out of the city budget but all other positions are funded from the revolving fund.
- Peter Miller was unavailable to be on the agenda as he was in attendance at the School Committee meeting to discuss the skate park parcel. He will come to a future meeting to provide an update.
- Sara Unger explained the Sign Subcommittee met and is continuing their work and the next meeting is Feb 1. She asked that Scott Hathaway or Jim Blascak attend the Feb 1 meeting so more details on pricing and procurement of signs can be discussed.
- Schedule of Bills - Attached
- Staff Reports- Scott Hathaway and Jim Blascak
- Scott Hathaway provided an update on the Natural Resource Dept. staffing through (the Public Works division) and said they are still struggling to hire at appropriate staffing levels. Open positions going unfilled and they are advertised in papers, on city webpage, job posting boards etc.
- Scott Hathaway is working on Parker Park redesign with students from the Technical Academy School.
- Jim Blascak provided an update. He said United Basketball sign ups were good and that the high school division is full and other divisions have seen an increase in sign-ups from 2021. He explained that the adult basketball league has begun and is full with 12 teams.
- Jim explained the Spring/Summer Brochure is out for print quotes.
- Jim explained the Father/Daughter Dance and Mother/Son Luau may both be canceled due to low interest and sign ups.
- Jim explained that the Adult Softball league will have a board meeting in February and a Captains meeting in March to set proper expectations and guidelines for the season. The Parks and Rec department will provide bats for all games so they are uniform across all games with all teams.

Motion made by Jane DeBarbieri to adjourn motion seconded by Pete Lurgio. All a Roll Call vote as Yea motion passed.

The next meeting is February 13, 2023

The meeting ended at 7:46 pm

Documents:

Permits

2023 Salary Charts

Staff Reports

Approval of minutes respectfully submitted: Douglas Morash, Secretary of Commission