



Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
June 11, 2020

Via Remote Participation

Commissioners Present: Jane DeBarbieri, Scott LaBombard, Kenneth Magarian
Douglas Morash, Vincent Olinski, Michael Tirrell, Sara Unger and
Robert Veronesi

Staff: David Billips, Director and Jim Blascak, Program Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm by via remote participation with Michael Tirrell, Chairperson presiding asking commissioners for a voice roll call by calling out a "Yea".

Commissioners Present:
Jane DeBarbieri, Yea, Scott LaBombard, Yea, Kenneth Magarian. Yea, Douglas Morash, Yea, Vincent Olinki Yea, Michael Tirrell, Yea, Sara Unger Yea and Robert Veronesi Yea.

Staff: Michael Tirrell said we also have David Bills, Director and Jim Blascak, Program Coordinator via remote.

Michael Tirrell asked if anyone had any questions regarding the March 9 minutes and if anyone wanted to set motion.

Motion made by Scott LaBombard to accept the minutes of March 9, 2020 motion seconded by Jane DeBarbieri. Vote as follows: Jane, Yes, Scott, Yes, Kenneth. Yes, Douglas Yes, Vincent Yes, Robert, Yes, Sara, Yes and Michael Yes. All in favor.

Motion passed

Public Participation: None

Michael Tirrell read outload the Public Participation as follows: Due to technological and staffing constraints, public participation/comment will be temporarily suspended at this time. In the event of a Public Hearing, both the applicant and the public will be notified on the agenda for said meeting of how to call in and participate.

City Council Communication: None

Business or Items for Discussion:

1. Mike Tirrell presented the detailed Covid-19 Readiness plan from the Starfires (see detail in report) Mike read from the pages. General statement, communication messaging, ballpark cleanliness/enhanced cleaning practices, socially distant seating, staffing policies, player policies, entry/exit ballpark, payment methods, ticket purchase servicing and fan experience. He also said he spoke with Chris Thompson from Star Fires.

Motion made by Scott LaBombard to accept the Covid 19 readiness plan presented by Starfires contingent upon local and state guidelines. Motion seconded by Robert Veronesi. Vote as follows: Jane, Yes, Scott, Yes, Kenneth. Yes, Douglas Yes, Vincent Yes, Robert, Yes, Sara, Yes and Michael Yes. All in favor.

Motion passed

2. It was also discussed that the Starfires want a delay of their lease payment for 2020 due to COVID-19. He has a lease with the city and wanted to add on a year to extend it. Michael

says Chris Thompson is looking for the blessing of the commission to move forward under the state and local guidelines. He said the Park and Rec commission does not have authority but they wanted us to vote on it anyway as a show of support. Discussion it was noted that this is a vote of support of the commission and cannot waive any lease payments due. Doug asked how much the lease payment he thought \$3,500. Doug said the Starfires could not apply for the payroll protection program and it was explained that the Starfires do not have true employee but rather contract workers.

3. Scott Lombard said Star Fires has been a great community partner with little league in town.
4. David Billips responded that Tammy Tefft, Purchasing Director would be involved with the lease along with the Mayor and law to make the decisions regarding a change in lease or waive the fee this year. He will contact them.
5. Michael Tirrell said we can vote in support of starfires starting up and Vincent Olinski said as long as contingent upon approval of the health dept. and local and state. Michael Tirrell said there is nothing for the commission to approve regarding the delayed lease because we do not have the authority. Nor can we give them approval to start up.

Motion made by Kenneth Magarian to support the request by the Starfires to delay their lease payment, motion seconded by Jane Debarberi. Vote as follows: Jane, Yes, Scott, Yes, Kenneth, Yes, Douglas Yes, Vincent Yes, Robert, Yes, Sara, Yes and Michael Yes. All in favor.

Motion passed

6. Michael Tirrell brought up Sadie Knox Playground. He reminded commissioners we had a public meeting and neighbors attended. Some of them did not want a paved parking lot and some did. He believes we did not have an official vote on the parking lot however can check previous minutes.
7. David Billips said we talked about putting in a paved parking lot with Eversource and they said they could put in a dirt parking lot or make it a grass area. Commission discussed that we thought a paved parking lot was agreed upon. Dave Billips said a dirt parking lot would be better solution or a grass area field to park and used only for the parking overflow. Otherwise, we will need to go to the planning board, for drainage per storm water ordinance. He asked what the commissioners want.
8. Sara Unger said it was an informational meeting only regarding Sadie Knox parking. The goal was to get the traffic and parking issues off the Streets. We need to move forward with a parking lot.
9. Scott Lombard indicated they support a paved parking lot, as this is what was agreed upon and we would need lights by the parking lot.
10. Ken Magarian said we should research past minutes and notes to see what was agreed upon with Eversource and then revisit next meeting.
11. Robert Veronesi suggested moving the girl's league to another ballfield due the concerns at the public informational meeting.
12. Michael Tirrell said he appreciates everyone's comments and Sadie Knox is a great area for a ballfield. He came up with options plants grass, concern with lighting if having night games. Do we want to go forward with it being paved.

13. Michael Tirrell said we could add to the next month's agenda after David Billips does his research. He said there was no official vote to pave the parking lot.
14. David Billips will contact Eversource and research documentation from them regarding the parking lot not sure, if it was a formal agreement.
15. Michael Tirrell asked Sara Unger to go over her concerns regarding people using parks without commission approval and permits.
16. Sara Unger brought up large groups at Park Square to the recent protest. Was this a planned event and who knew about it. I think we should be notified prior to an event and all permits need approval.
17. David Billips said the website should have the proper permit procedure, and if people do not have an approved permit from the commission that we also give a copy to the police dept. Then he is suggesting that the police dept. can issue a no tress pass notice for groups not approved.
18. Douglas Morash said it was all over social media, facebook and snap chat of the protest.
19. Kenneth Magarian is suggesting that Michael Tirrell, Chair and David Billips have a meeting with the police chief and the Mayor to go over our use of area permits and procedures. He believes the police and Mayor knew about these events in advance the police were there. We the commissions are requesting to be notified.
20. Michael Tirrell said he has a business downtown and all the businesses received a heads up notice regarding the protest. He was in his office that day and it might have been a last minute event.
21. Sara Unger asked if any damage was done to Park Square due to the protests and David Billips said none he has heard of just the trash was full from pizza boxes.
22. Scott LaBombard said there are some things he disagrees with people have a right to gather and protest it is their constitution. It has always been this way and this is a grey area. We cannot stop a peaceful protest.
23. Michael Tirrell said he would reach out the Mayor and police chief and bring it back to the commission at the July meeting.
24. Michael Tirrell brought up permit for Ann Mundy –First Congregational Church request to use Park Square for a prayer vigil June 14 at 7:30 p.m. (Permit on file) The commission then discussed the permit request by Ann Mundy for a Prayer vigil on Park Square on June 14.

Motion made by Robert Veronesi to approve Ann Mundy permit as presented motion seconded by Scott LaBombard. Vote as follows: Jane, Yes, Scott, Yes, Kenneth. Yes, Douglas Yes, Vincent Yes, Robert Yes, Sara, Yes and Michael Yes. All in favor.
Motion passed unanimously.

25. Scott Labombard brought up signage in the parks regarding governor's guidelines. David Billips said Little League could post them for their programs from his permits. Scott LaBombard said he disagrees and feels the city should post them for safety reasons because it is city property.

Schedule of bills – (Attached) Designated board members -Approved by Vincent Olinski (Attached) Due to the Covid 19. Vincent said about 80% of them were refunds due the covid-19 pandemic and spring programs canceled and all others were regular bills. (Vincent was close by for signatures Robert Veronesi said he did not signed no calls made to him).

Reports:

Scott Hathaway, Emailed report working on Whitney Playground and new posts and did some roadwork (Pictures emailed) Robert Veronesi said the roads look great.

Jim Blascak-Report (Emailed) He went over staff hired, schools will not allow us in this summer due to the covid-19. We canceled Adventure zone, volleyball, cartoon and theater arts. Jen Dorgan art classes have been canceled due to her safety.

He went over the Cross Street renovations design the city is using synthetic grass for wheel chairs to go over easier and not wood chips.

David Billips says there are three fields at Cross St. that is the footprint. Michael Tirrell explained that not all the property is under the department. Parking lot to Ashley St. under the control of the School dept. There is nothing in the works to have that property transferred to the parks and recreation dept. he said the parking lot to Cross Street is under the parks and recreation dept.

Sara Unger asked if the playground program will have a limit of children due to the adventure zone not being offered this year and follow guidelines.

Jim Blascak responded it is a free program open to all it is not offered as childcare. We will follow governor's guidelines. All of our other program parents sign a waiver upon registration to protect the city.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Robert Veronesi, Motion seconded by Scott LaBombard All in favor. Motion passed.

The next meeting is scheduled for July 13, 2020 (We are not sure if city hall will re-open or held by via remote)

Documents used:

Reports

Cross Street update

Star Fires Covid-19 Readiness Plan

Douglas Morash Secretary of Commission

Typed organized by: Peggy Goralczyk, Head Clerk