

New Haven Board of Park Commissioners

Meeting No. 1490

Commission Conference Meeting  
720 Edgewood Ave  
New Haven, CT 06515

September 18, 2024

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**Present:** President David Belowsky, Commissioners Kenya Adams, Carl Babb, Harvey Feinberg, Emily Sigman, Honda Smith, Hector Torres

**Absent:**

**Staff:** Deputy Director Stephen Hladun, Tariq Dasent, Jennifer Velasquez, Jacqueline Gaudioso-Levita, Joshya Price

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I. **Minutes of Meetings #1488 & Special Meeting # 1489: Motion to approve Special Minutes of Meeting 1489. Motion Seconded. Unanimously approved. Closed. Motion to approve Minutes of Meeting 1488. Motion Seconded. Unanimously approved. Closed.**

II. **Treasurer's Report: No report. Tabled.**

1. **Proposal to Name Areas of the Ralph Walker Rink – Mark DeCola**

- Mark DeCola of 165 Townsend Ave requested to rename the lobby of Ralph Walker Rink after Wilbur Cross Hockey Coach John “Red” McDonough. DeCola also requested to have the locker rooms renamed after Bill Seward and Georgia Miller both active members in the hockey culture of New Haven. The renaming would include a plaque with their names, a small biography, and a picture. This would be of no cost to the city and money would be raised through fundraising.

**Motion to approve the renaming the lobby and locker rooms at Ralph Walker Rink. Motion Seconded. Unanimously approved.**

2. **Tree Division Updates – Annie Mixsell**

- Anastasia Mixsell of 19 Laurelwood Drive, Wallingford, CT updated commissioners on the Urban Community Forest Master Plan. Three proposals have been received and Mixsell will update the commission once one has been selected.
- Mixsell requested funding from the commission to address removing Beech trees in 4 parks throughout the city. These trees are facing a disease that is defoliating the leaves. This could be completed in the winter as it will not cause damage to the trees. Mixsell will return to the commission with an exact cost to complete the removal. Commissioners were invited to take a tour of the infected areas. ARPA can not be used as it all accounted for, however, Trust funds can be used.

3. **Bayview Park Baseball Field – Marc Potocsky**

- Mark Potocsky of 223 Valley Road, North Branford, and Peter Solomon of 9 Townsend Ave requesting permission to pursue the use of Bayview Park Baseball Field. Potocsky is the principal of Sound School and they currently use the Pardee Greenhouse to run their agriculture program. They have faced the challenge of transporting students 40 minutes away to attend programming. Sound School would take full management and

responsibility for the area (including installing fencing, mowing, beautification, and providing a hands-on learning experience for students). There would be no cost to the city and no permanent structures will be built on the field. Currently, this field is not maintained or used and has poor drainage. The current lease at the Greenhouse is set to expire on November 1<sup>st</sup>. Community outreach needs to be done before this can move forward.

**4. Chapel Day Sitting Area – Carolanne Patterson**

- Carolanne Patterson of 39 Wooster Place requested to beautify the sculpture located at Chapel & Day St. There would be no cost to the city. Patterson will work with 20 ten- and eleven-year-olds from LEAP to beautify the sculptures. The Parks Department will continue to maintain the area. Patterson also requested the installation of 3 benches in the sitting area.

**Motion to approve the painting of sculptures and the installation of benches. Motion Seconded. Unanimously approved.**

**5. Natural Play Area at Beaver Ponds Park – James Cramer**

- James Cramer of 375 Bellevue Road presented a draft design for the natural play area at Beaver Ponds Park and requested permission to move forward with the plans. No cost to the city as a grant was awarded in the amount of 27K to make renovations (must be used by March 2025).

**Motion to approve the park design at Beaver Ponds Park. Motion Seconded. Unanimously approved.**

**6. Fairmont Park Update Request – Sylvia Dorsey**

- Sylvia Dorsey requested updates on Fairmont Park Renovations. There was a delay in all projects when the former Chief Landscape Architect Katherine Jacobs resigned. Joyshua Price has since filled the position and will provide updates once he settles in.

**7. Goodwill 30<sup>th</sup> Annual Fantasy of Lights – Nancy Shapiro**

- Nancy Shapiro seeking approval for the 30<sup>th</sup>-year Fantasy of Lights. The event will run from November 21<sup>st</sup> – December 31<sup>st</sup>. Payment for staff and a portion of the proceeds from last year were delivered to the Parks Department.

**Motion to approve the Fantasy of Lights event. Motion Seconded. Funds are deposited to the donation account while money for staff is reimbursed for overtime. Unanimously approved.**

**8. Musical to Wooster Square Park – New Haven Symphony Orchestra**

- Elaine Carroll of 30 New St on behalf of the New Haven Symphony Orchestra would like to make a gift of a musical toy to the city in honor of Music Director Alasdair Neale. The toy would be installed by the city in Wooster Memorial Park (located after Sally's but before Pepe's).

**Motion to approve musical flowers in Wooster Park. Motion Seconded. Six commissioners approved with Commissioner Harvey Feinberg abstaining.**

**9. Park Equity Accelerator Project – Trust for Public Land & Stephen Hladun**

- The Trust for Public Land uses the 10-Minute Walk Program to work with local communities to close the park equity gap in communities across the country. They use three programs to support cities: 10- Minute Walk Community of Practice, Technical Assistance/ Tools, and the Park Equity Accelerator. Seeking to increase price equity, bring equity to scale, and integrate the community. This is a free service with no cost to

the city. Once approved by the Commission and the Board of Alders this project would run for roughly 9 months. This is a next step in the initial survey provided by URI on the status of city parks.

**Motion to approve the Park Equity Accelerator Project. Motion Seconded. Unanimously approved.**

### **III. Parks Director's Report: POSTED ON PARKS COMMISSION PAGE**

#### **IV. Old Business:**

- 1.) The work done with the throwing cage at Bowen Field is fantastic and the athletes who use it are very pleased with it. Commissioner Carl Babb requested a ribbon cutting for the throwing cage. Spring will be the best time to review and have a ribbon cutting.

#### **V. New Business:**

- 1.) The Columbus statue will be moved to the Lost Museum in New Haven. This will be at no cost to the city.
- 2.) New Parks Department staff were introduced to the commission.
- 3.) Prepared for tree trimming. Contractors are also on call and ready to go to address Oaks and Elms. The priority is standing trees. URI will assist with stump removal. Brush piles should be reported to the department for removal as they are not typically left behind when removing a tree.

#### **Meeting Adjourned 8:00 P.M.**

Minutes submitted by: Tariq Dasent, Executive Administrative Assistant Dept of Public Works

Next Meeting: October 16, 2024

Location: 720 Edgewood Ave, New Haven, CT 06515