MINUTES OF THE CHESHIRE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2010, AT 7:00 P.M. AT THE YOUTH CENTER, CHESHIRE, CONNECTICUT

Present: Jim Nankin, Chairman, Rich Pulisciano, Ira Kushner, Patrick Duffy and Karen Bertoni

Staff Present: Bob Ceccolini

Absent: Steve Trifone and Paul Fracasse

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Nankin called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Commission Pledged Allegiance to the Flag.

MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 6, 2010 MEETING

MOTION: Mr. Kushner made a motion to accept the October 6, 2010 minutes.

MOVED: Mr. Pulisciano seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion passed unanimously by those present.

COUNCIL LIAISON

None

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ben Aiken, 777 Marion Road, Cheshire, CT spoke to the Commission members regarding key issues he wanted to share with the Commission regarding Mixville Park. Mr. Aiken served as Chairman for the P&R Commission for approx. 8-10 years.

Mr. Aiken spoke highly of Brain Blair and that he is an outstanding individual and treats Mixville Park as his own backyard. Mr. Aiken said he and his wife take their dog daily to Mixville and said they like Brian alot. Mr. Aiken spoke of a young man, Andrew Lodynski, who was on the gate this summer and also is an excellent worker.

Mr. Aiken said he believes the pass system is working. There is alot less litter in the park and other problems.
The following is a list of Mr. Aiken’s concerns regarding Mixville Park:

- The old playscape needs to be removed due to safety issues. He noted the drops on the slides are beyond required specifications.

- The sledding hill area needs to become safer for people. The trees by the pavilion he feels are very dangerous. He suggested possibly channeling sleds towards the gate and not in the direction of the pavilion. Also, regarding the sledding, sleds travel into the backstop on the field. He suggested installing a soft fence.

- There are drainage issues on the field as everyone is aware. The volleyball and bocce courts have good drainage.

- Pavilion Usage – People come in and not know that the pavilion is being rented and they set up in the pavilion when the rental people haven’t even arrived yet.

*Ms. Bertoni arrived at 7:10 P.M.*

- Bridge across riprap – Mr. Aiken said he would like to see some kind of bridge across the riprap to separate the two ponds. Maybe an Eagle Scout could do this for a project. He referred to the partial trail that goes beyond the upper pond to Tucker Road; maybe the paths could be cleared.

- Speeding – Mr. Aiken said there is a lot of speeding going on in the park on a daily basis and it isn’t just teenagers. There are a lot of parents dropping their children off for camp that are driving too fast.

- Litter – It was expressed by Mr. Aiken that the fishermen that use the park are the worst litterers by leaving bait containers behind, plastic bags and food wrappers. He suggested more signage regarding litter.

- Dog stations – Although most people with dogs do pick up after their dogs and keep them on leashes where they are supposed to be, some do not. There are a lot of dog walkers on a daily basis at the park.

Mr. Aiken discussed that the linear trail and Mixville Park are both the most used parks on a daily basis. He doesn’t want Mixville to slip through the cracks and be forgotten.

Mr. Nankin thanked Mr. Aiken for coming in and voicing his concerns. He noted that he and Mr. Ceccolini visited Mixville this week and discussed the playscape and they have a few ideas for the sledding hill.
Mr. Ceccolini informed the Commission and Mr. Aiken that the pond dredging could be months to a year away before it’s done.

Mr. Nankin referred to Mr. Aiken’s list regarding the bridge over the riprap. This item was discussed at last month’s meeting and probably would be an Army Corps of Engineer issue.

Mr. Nankin said the speeding and fishing litter is something P&R can handle easily. Mr. Nankin also said dog stations could be installed and Mr. Ceccolini said they would supply the bags.

Mr. Aiken said when the fees went away after Labor Day, people that he had never seen before starting coming into the park.

Mr. Aiken said he is frustrated with the Canadian geese guy. He complained that the guy said he couldn’t chase the geese because they were molting. Mr. Aiken said he sees the geese flying in and out daily. He has also said the guy has had words with some people. Mr. Ceccolini said if people’s dogs interfere with his dogs and what he is trying to do then he will speak to people about it.

Mr. Duffy asked if P&R could put up signs that the pavilion is rented for the day. Mr. Ceccolini replied yes. Mr. Duffy suggested putting the signs up first thing in the morning.

Mr. Aiken asked what happened to the group “Friends of Mixville”. Mr. Ceccolini said Andy Falvey and Tim White organized that group.

Mr. Nankin said he forgot the get well card he wanted everyone to sign for Tom Ruocco, who had back surgery.

**CHAIRMAN’S REPORT**

**Communications**

Mr. Nankin said he didn’t have any communications to share.

**Pool Discussion**

Mr. Ceccolini said he is still waiting for the door to be fixed. He informed the Commission about a recent air quality problem. The heating unit got stuck in the on position therefore, causing kids on teams to not feel ill and have difficulty breathing. This past weekend the heater stopped working so there was no heat. The kids liked it because it was comfortable for them to do their timed swimming.

Mr. Ceccolini informed the Commission that P&R has requested a new bubble which was entered into the Capital Budget in the next two years.
Mr. Duffy said he sends his back patients whenever he can to the pool. His patients say the facility is wonderful and Sheila is a nice person and does her job well. Mr. Nankin noted that people who do not know anything about the facility and walk in and experience it think the facility is wonderful.

Meeting Dates for 2011

Mr. Nankin said the Commission will vote on the 2011 meeting dates at our next scheduled meeting in December. He wants a chance to look at the calendar year to make sure the dates do not conflict with any religious holidays.

WEST MAIN STREET

No report given.

DOG PARK

Ms. Bertoni questioned Mr. Ceccolini as to what is going on with the town regarding this issue?

Mr. Ceccolini replied he had a meeting with four people representing the dog park a couple of weeks ago. He said we talked strategies. He said Milone & MacBroom, Inc. (MMI) is going to draw an entrance way so it would be more visual for people. Someone from the Council will probably help out.

Ms. Bertoni referred to Boulder Knoll and said the dog park group is stipulated to use the property. Mr. Ceccolini reminded Ms. Bertoni that the group has only raised $4,000 in two years. Much more money is needed to get the project developed.

Ms. Bertoni said many committee members left because the board members were a little too controlling.

Mr. Ceccolini told Ms. Bertoni that the town isn’t sure about any piece of property for this park because of the maintenance and the liability of a dog park.

Mr. Nankin also stated that the Council is not getting a push to get things going from the dog park group.

Mr. Ceccolini said if the leadership of the group is changing people, that needs to change. Mr. Nankin said if someone is discouraged then they should step aside and let someone else do the job.
Mr. Duffy reminded the Commission that the dog park leadership issues, etc. are not P&R’s issues only when they come to us then it is a P&R issue.

**BEAUTIFICATION COMMISSION**

None given.

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

**Park Status**

Mr. Ceccolini said there were steps built behind Cheshire Park 2. An Eagle Scout, Alex Frederick, did the project and did a beautiful job.

CYB requested that a field at Cheshire Park be skinned. Kevin did the job. The field is the one that is farthest north to the parking lot. It is a clay field now.

Mr. Ceccolini said Chuck Sherwood recommends we raise the big field at McNamara with clay. Mr. Ceccolini met with CYB on Saturday and Monday and then there were five loads of clay delivered today. Kevin is working on this project now.

Mr. Ceccolini informed the Commission that the lacrosse field closest to the parking lot will be shut down starting Monday. P&R is putting organic compost down and over seeding it. The field will be closed down until the spring. Mr. Ceccolini asked Mr. Pulisciano to please inform Mr. Trifone.

**Recreation Programs**

Mr. Ceccolini said families will receive a tri-fold sheet mailed to them as a reminder for upcoming sports and events. Everyone should receive theirs before Thanksgiving. Mr. Ceccolini said there has been a big drop in the sign-ups from the post cards vs. the brochures but we cannot go back to the brochures because of the expense. Hopefully, the tri-folds will remind people.

Mr. Duffy suggested putting a big banner on display outside about enrolling in fall/spring activities. Everyone liked the idea.

Mr. Ceccolini said P&R is close to having the online registration program done. A software program is needed to help.
COMMISSIONER’S FORUM

Mr. Nankin wanted to hear what Commission members had to say about Ben Aiken’s visit here tonight.

Mr. Kushner said it is nice to get compliments when there is always so much negativity. It is nice to receive thanks because it reflects on us. Mr. Kushner told the Commission that the bridge on South Brooksvale would need some work. One of the timbers is starting to chip off. The one timber would probably have to be replaced next year.

Mr. Nankin reminded Mr. Kushner if he ever sees something that could be dangerous in any way, please do not wait until P&R’s meetings, contact Bob.

Mr. Duffy said it is nice to get objective appraisal. He added that Mr. Pulisciano should be recognized for his recent Hall of Fame award.

Mr. Pulisciano said on October 15 he was inducted into the Hall of Fame for football and lacrosse at Dean College formerly known as Dean Junior College when he attended. The ceremony was at Gillette Stadium up top at the 50 yard line. He said all of the names were flashing in the stadium with family present. It was a once in a lifetime experience.

Everyone congratulated Mr. Pulisciano.

Mr. Pulisciano said he has known the Aiken family for a long time growing up with Mr. Aiken’s sons and he sounds like he still cares about our parks. It was nice to hear his concerns.

Mr. Pulisciano referred to the parks men and said they do a lot in this town. They take care of their areas. He also said it is good that we have someone like Ben Aiken in our parks.

Mr. Ceccolini said the sledding area is safe because all of the jumps are removed daily. The volleyball nets have been removed. The orange fencing, as referred to earlier, cannot be put up because people would sled into the posts.

Ms. Bertoni said she feels frustrated because she feels she cannot do enough for P&R. She wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving as did Mr. Nankin.
ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Duffy made a motion to adjourn.

MOVED: Ms. Bertoni seconded the motion.

VOTE: The motion was passed unanimously by those present. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 P.M.

Attest:

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Claudia J. Baron, Clerk