

**NEWINGTON PARKS & RECREATION  
BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 21, 2023**

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
IN NEWINGTON, CT

2023 APR -3 AM 9:09

  
Town Clerk

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Jay Bottalico called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Board Members Present: Jay Bottalico, Richard DaSilva, Billy DeBlasio, Eileen Francolino, Tom Gill, Ed Marchion (virtual), and Nicole Pane (virtual)

Board Members Absent: Tim Hutvagner, Anthony Kulowski, Matthew Kulowski, and Don Woods

Council Members Present: Tim Manke and Kim Radda (virtual)

Staff Members Present: Bill DeMaio, Superintendent, Nancy Glynn, Recreation Supervisor, Sam Lostocco, Administrative Secretary, and Melissa Miller, Administrative Secretary

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**IV. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – February 21, 2023 Meeting**

Eileen Francolino mentioned that the minutes from the February 21, 2023 meeting referred to federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA). The federal funding should be recorded as the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Melissa Miller will make this correction to the February 21, 2023 meeting minutes.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Eileen Francolino to approve the minutes of the meeting on February 21, 2023, as amended. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

- Todd Mortensen (62 Patriot Lane) spoke on behalf of the Men's Basketball League, consisting of roughly 100 participants. He shared his concerns regarding the increase in pricing for the league this season.

**VI. CORRESPONDENCE**

**a. Donation from Pamela Lavery**

The Department received a donation, in the amount of \$100.00, from Pamela Lavery.

**b. Thank You Notes from Kindergarten Students at Paterson School**

The Department received thank you notes from the kindergarten students at Paterson School. The kindergarten classes visited the Town Hall and Mortensen Community Center on a recent field trip, learning about the Town of Newington.

**VII. SUMMARY REPORTS**

The Monthly Report and Tree Warden Report for February 2023 were given to the Board to review.

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

**a. Mill Pond Park Geotech Update**

A report was shared with the Board, regarding the water table at Mill Pond Park. The report was prepared by Mike Fortuna, from TLB Architecture. Melissa Miller read an editorial that was sent to the press by Jay Bottalico and Don Woods. Bill DeMaio added that a new Mill Pond Pool and Splash Pad on Garfield Street would have a positive impact on preschool, after school, and summer camp programming. Eileen Francolino added it is hard to ask the public to support a project that they haven't seen. She would like to see the plans and pictures put online so they are available for the public to view.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Field Turf Renovation**

The Department included field turf renovation as part of the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The current field turf was guaranteed for eight years, and it is now on its twelfth or thirteenth year. It is ripping at the seams. There is a very short

window to construct; between soccer and lacrosse ending on Father's Day and youth football starting to use the field the first week of August.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Billy DeBlasio to approve the installation of replacement field turf at Clem Lemire Field, if the funding is approved by the Town Council in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget. Richard DaSilva seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**b. Proclamation – 33<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary of the ADA**

The proclamation was shared with the Board for their review.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Richard DaSilva to whole-heartedly accept the ADA Proclamation and forward it on to the Mayor and Town Council to proclaim the day at the Town Council meeting on July 11, 2023. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**c. Proclamation – July is National Recreation and Parks Month**

The proclamation was shared with the Board for their review.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Tom Gill to endorse the NRPA campaign that July is Recreation and Parks Month and request that the Town Council and Mayor proclaim this month at the Town Council meeting on June 27, 2023. Eileen Francolino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**d. Beechwood Park Grand Opening Sponsorship Agreement – Tropical Smoothie Café**

Bill DeMaio invited the Board to the Grand Opening celebration of the Beechwood Park Playground on Saturday, April 15, 2023 at 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Ed Marchion to accept a public/private partnership agreement with Tropical Smoothie Café for the Beechwood Park Grand Opening event on Saturday, April 15, 2023. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**e. Newington Goes Country and Food Truck Friday Sponsorship Agreement – Soccer Club of Newington**

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Billy DeBlasio to accept a \$1,000.00 public/private partnership agreement with The Soccer Club of Newington to sponsor the hay wagon rides during the following special events at Mill Pond Park: Newington Goes Country on Thursday, June 8, 2023 and Food Truck Friday on Friday, June 9, 2023. Eileen Francolino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**f. Newington Goes Country and Food Truck Friday Sponsorship Agreement – GEICO**

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Richard DaSilva to accept at \$2,800.00 public/private partnership agreement with GEICO to sponsor the following special events at Mill Pond Park: Newington Goes Country on Thursday, June 8, 2023 and Food Truck Friday on Friday, June 9, 2023. Tom Gill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**g. Food Truck Friday Sponsorship Agreement – Berlin Stone & Mulch, LLC**

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Nicole Pane to accept a \$1,600.00 public/private partnership agreement with Berlin Stone & Mulch, LLC to sponsor Food Truck Friday on Friday, June 9, 2023. Ed Marchion seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**h. "Sundaes on Wednesday" Sponsorship Agreement – The Flood Law Firm**

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Church of Christ Congregational to accept a \$1,000.00 public/private partnership agreement with the Church of Christ Congregational for the "Sundaes on Wednesday" event on Wednesday, July 12, 2023 at Mill Pond Park. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**i. Craft Beer Night Sponsorship Agreement – The Flood Law Firm**

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Richard DaSilva to accept a \$1,600.00 public/private partnership agreement with The Flood Law Firm to sponsor Craft Beer Night at Mill Pond Park on Friday, July 14, 2023. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**j. Life. Be in it. Extravaganza Presenting Fireworks Sponsorship Agreement – Cedar Ridge Construction**

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Ed Marchion to accept a \$10,000.00 public/private partnership agreement with Cedar Ridge Construction to be the presenting fireworks sponsor at the Life. Be in it. Extravaganza on Saturday, July 15, 2023. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**k. 3Step Sports Agreement – Lacrosse Tournament**

3Step Sports is a lacrosse organization that is going to rent our facilities. The organization had a connection to previous lacrosse tournaments hosted in Newington and they have decided to bring their own New Jersey lacrosse tournament here this October. These events will be high school lacrosse college showcases for boys and girls. Bill DeMaio credited Sam

Lostocco for helping to negotiate agreements, such as this one. This lacrosse tournament will have a great economic impact on the Town of Newington.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Nicole Pane to accept the 3Step Sports Letter of Agreement for the lacrosse tournaments on Sunday, October 1, 2023 and Sunday, October 8, 2023. Richard DaSilva seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**I. CT Wolves Agreement – Lacrosse Tournament**

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Billy DeBlasio to accept the CT Wolves Letter of Agreement for the lacrosse tournament on Sunday, October 15, 2023. Tom Gill seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**X. REPORTS**

**a. Spring Registration Statistics**

Melissa Miller reported the Department took in \$42,099.58 on March 1, 2023, the first day of program registration for spring programs. The Camp RECreate program is for children entering kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This is the first year that the Department is offering online registration for the Camp RECreate program. As of 11:30 a.m. this morning, there were already 99 children registered for Camp RECreate. Patrons are encouraged to call the Parks and Recreation office if they need assistance with the online registration process. Summer Sunshine is the summer program that is offered by the Department for preschool-aged children. There are twelve children registered for the program. These numbers are a great start to summer camp registration! As for spring aquatics offerings, the preschool and parent swim class, along with semi-private lessons, level one through level three, all have full capacity for registration. Zumba Gold classes, one of the older adult class offerings, has 56 participants registered for the spring session. The pickleball and badminton programs, both held at the Mortensen Community Center, continue to be popular offerings by the Department. Nancy Glynn, Recreation Supervisor, added that the Department is currently looking for people who are interested in receiving their Water Safety Instructor (WSI) Certification. The cost of the course is \$375.00. If the participant passes the WSI class, is hired as a lifeguard for the Department, and works for the entire summer, the class will be of no cost for them. They would also receive a 50-cent increase on their hourly rate of pay.

**b. Parks and Grounds Staff Update**

Bill DeMaio reported Steve Tofeldt received a promotion and is now the official Grounds Foreperson for the Parks and Grounds Division. He is doing a wonderful job!

**c. Municipal Parking Lot Pavilion – AARP Community Challenge Grant Program**

Bill DeMaio reported that he worked with Melissa Miller on a \$158,000 AARP grant to build a pavilion at the municipal parking lot.

**d. Kindness Counts**

Bill DeMaio reported Sam Lostocco will be overseeing the Kindness Counts program. You can nominate neighbors, friends, and relatives who have performed an act of kindness. Nominations can be completed online on the Parks and Recreation website. Volunteers will be delivering Kindness Counts signs to be displayed on the nominees' front yards.

**e. Beechwood Park Grand Opening – Saturday, April 15, 2023**

This event was discussed earlier in the meeting. Everyone is welcome to join us for the Beechwood Park Grand Opening event on Saturday, April 15, 2023 at 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

**f. Memorial Day Parade**

Bill DeMaio invited all Board members to join the Department in marching in this year's Memorial Day Parade. The Department will be displaying the mobile Veterans Memorial, as well as the trackless train. Music will be playing and it is a fun time. We will be passing out free ice cream coupons, during the parade, for people to use at the concession stand at Mill Pond Park.

**g. Memorial Day Weekend – Elite Basketball Tournament at the Mortensen Community Center**

Bill DeMaio reported that arrangements were made for people to park at the stone parking lot on Alumni Road and be shuttled, by bus, to the Mortensen Community Center for the event. The shuttling will take place from 7:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. and after that, the parade will be cleared out, and people can park at the Mortensen Community Center. We are trying to work with the town and recognize the parking situation. We are doing the best we can to make it work.

**h. Newington Goes Country – Thursday, June 8, 2023**

Bill DeMaio asked the Board members to volunteer for the event. A sign-up sheet was passed around for Board members to sign up for a volunteer task/time slot. It's a fun night!

**i. Food Truck Friday – Friday, June 9, 2023**

As with Newington Goes Country, a sign-up sheet was passed around for Board members to sign up to volunteer for this event.

**XI. COMMENTS BY THE BOARD**

Billy DeBlasio said the Department is doing a nice job...keep up the great work! He also mentioned that Newington Fire Company No. 1 is wrapping one of their firetrucks, for one year, in support of autism awareness. People can donate towards the cause. Bill DeMaio added that it would be wonderful for the firetruck to visit our Creative Playtime Preschool Program, the Exercise the Right Choice (E.R.C.) after school program, and the summer camp programs.

**XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

NONE.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Jay Bottalico made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Richard DaSilva seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Melissa Miller*

Melissa Miller