

NEWINGTON PARKS & RECREATION  
BOARD MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 16, 2023

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
IN NEWINGTON, CT  
2023 MAY 24 PM 3:59

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Jay Bottalico called the meeting to order at 6:08 PM.

  
Town Clerk

**II. ROLL CALL**

Board Members Present: Jay Bottalico, Richard DaSilva, Billy DeBlasio, Eileen Francolino, Ed Marchion, and Don Woods

Board Members Absent: Tim Hutvagner, Anthony Kulowski, Matthew Kulowski, and Nicole Pane

Council Members Present: None

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

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

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

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

NONE.

**VI. CORRESPONDENCE**

**a. Email from Daniel Shaw**

Bill DeMaio, along with the Town Council, received an email from Daniel Shaw regarding his concern about the consideration of a new municipal pool, near the playground, at Mill Pond Park.

**b. Email from Girl Scout Troop 10535**

Bill DeMaio received an email from Girl Scout Troop 10535 regarding a clean-up project at the Bob Stanley Nature Trail.

**c. Email from NCTV**

The Department received an email from NCTV requesting a fee waiver for their use of the multi-purpose room on May 11, 2023. However, the NCTV reception did not take place in the multi-purpose room.

**d. Letter from Christa Cote**

The Department received a thank you letter from Christa Cote, Biology Teacher at Newington High School, for the donation of a \$50.00 Newington Parks and Recreation Department gift certificate for the Ciara McDermott Basketball Classic.

**e. Letter from Dr. Maureen Brummett to Dr. Stuart Calle**

Bill DeMaio shared a response letter from Dr. Maureen Brummett to Dr. Stuart Calle. Dr. Calle had several areas of concern regarding the town. Dr. Calle mentioned West Meadow Cemetery in his original letter and Dr. Brummett responded about the cemetery gate.

**f. Letter from Newington Volunteer Fire Department Cadet Division**

The Department received a thank you letter from the Newington Volunteer Fire Department Cadet Division. The Parks and Recreation Department loaned out a bunny costume for the Newington Volunteer Fire Department to use for an Easter event.

**VII. SUMMARY REPORTS**

The Monthly Reports and Tree Warden Reports for March and April 2023 were given to the Board to review.

**VIII. OLD BUSINESS**

NONE.

## IX. NEW BUSINESS

### a. Summer 2023 Program Guide

The Board members were provided with the 2023 Summer Program Guide; 32 pages of programs, special events, and advertising. The Department is very proud of all that we have to offer the residents of Newington. All of the staff helps to compile the program information and review the program guide before it is printed for publication.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Don Woods to accept the Summer Program Guide, including the fees and charges associated with each event, program, and facility. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### b. Request to Waive Multi-Purpose Room Rental Fee for NCTV

- No action required.

### c. B&M Tree Service Sponsorship Agreement

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Billy DeBlasio to accept a \$2,000.00 public/private partnership agreement with B&M Tree Service to sponsor Craft Beer Night at Mill Pond Park on Friday, July 14, 2023. Ed Marchion seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### d. Pane Enterprises Sponsorship Agreement

The Cupcake Kickoff is a new program the Department is introducing during the Life. Be in it. Extravaganza. There will be 200 cupcakes for people to decorate with a wide variety of toppings. Pictures will be taken of the decorated cupcakes and placed on a show board for people to view.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Ed Marchion to accept an \$800.00 public/private partnership agreement with Pane Enterprises to sponsor the Cupcake Kickoff on Wednesday, July 12, 2023 at Mill Pond Park. Eileen Francolino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### e. Jersey Mike's Sponsorship Agreement

Jersey Mike's is going to participate in the Newington Goes Country event on June 8, 2023 at Mill Pond Park. Since July is Recreation and Parks Month, every Thursday in July, from 4:00 – 9:00 pm, all of the profits at Jersey Mike's Newington location will go towards the Life. Be in it. Extravaganza fireworks. The sponsorship also includes 500 seven-inch grinders, to be given to each basketball player on the first Saturday of the Youth Basketball Program this winter. Their logo will also be placed on the youth basketball shirts during upcoming winter basketball season. They will also provide 8 Jersey Mike's coupons per month, for one year, to be used as giveaways on Facebook Live promotions.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Eileen Francolino to accept a public/private partnership agreement with Jersey Mike's, as presented, including the youth basketball program and the July promotion. Billy DeBlasio seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### f. Tropical Smoothie Café Sponsorship Agreement

Tropical Smoothie Café will be sponsoring all three nights of the Tiki Waterslide at the Life. Be in it. Extravaganza.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Don Woods to accept a \$1,300.00 public/private partnership agreement with Tropical Smoothie Café to sponsor the Tiki Waterslide at the Life. Be in it. Extravaganza from Wednesday, July 12 – Friday, July 14, 2023. Richard DaSilva seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### g. Bonavita Luxury Lavs Sponsorship Agreement

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Billy DeBlasio to accept a \$2,500.00 public/private partnership agreement with Bonavita Luxury Lavs, as presented, including the sponsorship of the clothespin drop competition on July 15, 2023, free ice cream and beer and wine coupons, and train rides on July 12 and 13, 2023. Richard DaSilva seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### h. Dunkin' Skatepark Sponsorship Program

Dunkin' is promoting a new drink for kids and a sign will be placed at the Newington Skate Park for advertisement.

- **Motion:** A motion was made by Ed Marchion to accept a \$400.00 advertising fee in return for Dunkin' to hang a 3 x 5 ft. sign, inside the skatepark, for eight weeks. Don Woods seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## **X. REPORTS**

### **a. Donation from Tony Palermino**

Bill DeMaio reported that he received a very generous donation, in the amount of \$10,000.00, from Tony Palermino. The donation will be used to sponsor magicians, clowns, and the petting zoo for our upcoming summer events. He is a great friend of the Newington Parks and Recreation Department and we are grateful for his support. Over the past three years, Tony Palermino has donated a total of \$35,000.00 to the Department. It is very nice.

### **b. 2023 Summer Concert Series**

Bill DeMaio reported that Roderick Smith, Recreation Supervisor, is predominately responsible for the 31 concerts. The Board members received magnets with the concert schedules at both Mill Pond Park and the Municipal Parking Lot. The Department is very proud to be hosting 31 concerts. We are happy with the talent this year. The concerts at the Municipal Parking Lot help to promote business and economic development downtown. Almost \$20,000.00 of the concert series is paid for by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) federal funding. Eight thousand dollars of the concert series is sponsored by Data-Mail. There is no tax-payers' money being used to fund the concert series.

### **c. Mill Pond Pool Update**

Bill DeMaio reported the Mill Pond Pool Building Committee has not had another meeting. Everyone in the Town's leadership has the documents provided by TLB Architecture. Recommendations have been shared with the Board, the Town Council, the Mayor, and the Mill Pond Pool Building Committee. Eileen Francolino added that there is still approximately \$1.2 million of ARPA funding remaining for the Town. Bill DeMaio added that if the Town does not come up with a plan by next year, they will lose the rest of the ARPA funding. The funding then has to be spent within two years.

### **d. Kindness Counts Program**

Bill DeMaio reported that the Kindness Counts signs can be seen all around Newington. The Department has received over three-hundred forty nominations for Kindness Counts. Hopefully, people will return their signs at the Bring Your Own Cheese (BYOC) Party at Mill Pond Park on Thursday, July 13, 2023. Residents who return their Kindness Counts signs at the BYOC Party will receive a free glass of wine.

### **e. Newington Community Fund Application**

Bill DeMaio reported the Department submitted an application for the Newington Community Fund. The application included approximately \$9,000.00 worth of ideas for fun items to be used at our upcoming special events; amusement attractions. We will hear the results of this funding application within the next few months.

### **f. Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner on Tuesday, May 23, 2023**

Bill DeMaio reported the Department nominated Tony Palermino and Mike Turgeon from Turgeon Jewelers. Tony Palermino made the very generous donation to the Department and Turgeon Jewelers donated \$7,000.00 for the scoreboard at the Newington High School lacrosse and soccer field. Bill DeMaio recently filmed a Facebook Live video with Mike Turgeon, which will be showed to the Board at the end of this meeting. Bill DeMaio and Sam Lostocco are going to represent the Department at the Chamber of Commerce Awards Dinner. The invitation was extended to the Board members, if anyone would like to attend.

### **g. Creative Playtime Preschool Program Graduation on Wednesday, May 31, 2023**

Bill DeMaio invited the Board members to this event. The preschool graduates, wearing caps and gowns, will ride the train to the Data-Mail Pavilion at Mill Pond Park. They will be singing a few songs for the families to enjoy. Bill DeMaio said that you will smile from ear-to-ear watching the preschool graduation ceremony. It is one of the highlights of the year. The ceremony will start at 6:00 pm on Wednesday, May 31, 2023.

### **h. Memorial Day Parade – Board Members Marching**

Bill DeMaio invited the Board members to march with the Department in the Memorial Day Parade on Saturday, May 27, 2023. The Department will be giving away 500 coupons for a free ice cream at the Mill Pond Park Concession Stand, after the parade. The Department will have decorated golf carts, the Veterans Memorial trailer, the train with students from the Creative Playtime Preschool Program riding in it, and a float with a Memorial Day theme and patriotic music. The Department has a strong presence in the Memorial Day Parade.

### **i. Special Events at Mill Pond Park – June 8 and 9, 2023**

Bill DeMaio invited the Board members to sign-up and volunteer for these events. Everything seems to be coming together quite nicely for Newington Goes Country and Food Truck Friday. On this Friday, at 10:45 am, Bill DeMaio will be filming a Facebook Live video at Stoddard Farm, with the horse named Farrah, with some of the event sponsors. Farrah the horse will be at the Newington Goes Country event at Mill Pond Park on June 8, 2023. There will be radio advertisements on iHeartRadio and 102.9 The Whale. Gary Bryon lives in Newington and was a former State

Representative for the Town of Newington. He is a morning personality for 102.9 The Whale and is going to promote these events. To date, we have seventeen food trucks signed up for these events. We are really happy with that number.

**j. Life. Be in it. Extravaganza**

Roderick Smith distributed tickets, for the Board members to sell, for the Craft Beer Night event on Friday, July 14, 2023. The Board members are not required to sell tickets, but it is helpful to promote the event. The Department tries to get 300-400 ticket sales. Kamal Patel, from Happy Harry's Wine and Liquor Warehouse is promoting the event and is making things happen. The Department expects to have about 30 different craft beers for the tasting. There will be approximately 12-15 different breweries represented at the event. The price of each ticket is \$25.00 in advance and \$40.00 at the door. The Flood Law Firm and B&M Tree Service are sponsoring the event. RE/MAX will be sponsoring tethered hot air balloon rides at Mill Pond Park on July 14, 2023 at 6:00 – 8:00 pm. It is spectacular to look at, but very difficult to fly because you need less than 7 miles/hour winds. The band BooYah, with Mike Bafundo, who is a very successful horn player, will be performing that night. BooYah will be a popular draw for the greater Hartford area and people who grew up in Newington. Steve Bafundo is paying for the band to perform and the Department is appreciative of that.

**k. Municipal Parking Lot Pavilion**

Bill DeMaio reported Cedar Ridge Construction dug up underneath the pavilion at the Municipal Parking Lot. The bands were having trouble with the mud and their electronic equipment. The base of the pavilion is now concrete and it came out really nice. Mark Swiatowiec Jr. is a young man who owns Cedar Ridge Construction. We are very appreciative of all the work he has done for the Department.

**l. Pickleball at Eagle Park**

Bill DeMaio reported Cedar Ridge Construction will be digging up and paving a pickleball court at Eagle Park, the first week or second week of June. Eagle Park is where the next playground will be installed in town.

**m. Reconstruction of Candlewyck Park Basketball Court**

Bill DeMaio reported Cedar Ridge Construction will be completing this project, which is long overdue. Bill DeMaio is also trying to install a handicap accessible path to the basketball court; approximately 400-ft. long.

**n. Artificial Turf at Clem Lemire**

Bill DeMaio reported the Town Council transferred the artificial turf project at Clem Lemire from the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget to the ARPA funding. This is good for the Department regarding the project timeline. The youth soccer tournament ends on Father's Day and youth football starts the first week of August. It is going to be a difficult task to complete this project in such a short period of time. Bill DeMaio talked to the salesman, the head contractor, and the architect who is an expert at field turf. We are coordinating our efforts to make this project happen. If it is not completed in time, we may have to make alternative plans for youth football, maybe at the JV field at the high school. Six to eight weeks is the estimated time to complete the project, under the best conditions.

**o. Newington Youth Soccer Tournament**

Bill DeMaio reported Jaime Trevethan, President of the Soccer Club of Newington and the Director of the Newington Senior and Disabled Center, works very well with our Department. The Soccer Club of Newington has a great number of sign-ups for this year's youth soccer tournament. There will be thirteen different soccer fields at Newington High School. The tournament is a major fundraiser for the Soccer Club of Newington and it is a great event for the Town of Newington. They will be hosting approximately 100-110 youth soccer teams for the tournament. It has a big economic impact for the town.

**p. Painting Pools**

Bill DeMaio reported Churchill Pool was painted this past Saturday. If you drive by, it is a very bright blue. Tom Lapierre will be painting the black lines in the pool. We are patching and power washing the walls of Mill Pond Pool. If everything goes well, we plan to be painting Mill Pond Pool next Saturday.

**q. Center Cemetery Monument Restoration**

Bill DeMaio reported Eileen Francolino, Chairperson of Newington's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, graciously donated \$5,000.00, from the Committee, to be used towards monument restoration at Center Cemetery. Some of the monuments date back to the 1600s. The Town also submitted a grant to the State of Connecticut and received another \$5,000.00 for monument restoration. Atlas Monument Company, out of Southington, put us on the list to get the project started. The company is very busy. Bill DeMaio and Clay Pedigo walked Center Cemetery, with a representative from Atlas Monument Company, and identified about 20-30 monuments that can be restored.

**r. Eagle Park Playground**

Bill DeMaio reported the Town Council transferred the Eagle Park Playground project from the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget to the ARPA funding. The Town Council will be voting on this project, and by the end of May, we should be able to move forward if the Town Council approves the project. The playground is designed already, but there

is an approximate ordering time of 6-7 months. If the project is approved by the Town Council, Bill DeMaio plans to wait until March to begin the playground project at Eagle Park, due to the winter temperatures.

**s. Eagle Park and Seymour Park – Basketball Court Crack Repair and Repainting**

Bill DeMaio reported basketball crack repair and repainting will be done, by a contractor, at both parks. Eagle Park and Seymour Park will both have updated basketball courts before new playgrounds are installed, over the next two years. It will be a nice facelift for both of those neighborhood parks.

**t. Facebook Live – N.H.S. Scoreboard**

Sam Lostocco presented the Facebook Live video of Bill DeMaio and Mike Turgeon. Turgeon Jewelers had sponsored the new scoreboard at the Newington High School lacrosse and soccer field.

Bill DeMaio shared with the Board that the Department took in over \$54,600.00 on the first day of summer program registration on May 10, 2023. This is a new record for the Department. This gives the Board an idea of the unbelievable number of registrations the Department is experiencing for our programs. Yesterday, we took in over \$39,800.00 in program registrations. There is an unbelievable number of people participating in the programs we are offering. It is really, really good! Billy DeBlasio added that the Department offers something for everyone; from preschool to older adults. Bill DeMaio went on to say that people like the instructors. It is a positive feeling in the Department right now. The Parks and Grounds staff are doing very well. The ball fields in this town are second-to-none. The Parks and Grounds staff are grooming the ball fields really well and mowing them on a regular basis.

**XI. COMMENTS BY THE BOARD**

Jay Bottalico asked if the youth sports groups pay for the lights at Clem Lemire Field. Bill DeMaio and Sam Lostocco confirmed that all groups pay \$30.00/hour for use of the lights.

**XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

NONE.

**XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

Jay Bottalico made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Eileen Francolino seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

*Melissa Miller*

Melissa Miller