

Minutes
Wilton Parks & Recreation Commission
December 13, 2017
Comstock Community Center
7:30 PM

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BY: **LK**

Present: Commissioners Pam Brown, Peter Connolly, William Lalor, John Macken, Jennifer Kendra,
Parks and Recreation Director Steve Pierce, BOS representative David Clune

I. Call to order - 7:31pm

II. Approval of Minutes of September 12, 2017 and November 8, 2017 meetings

- A motion to approve minutes of September 12, 2017 meeting was made by Commissioner Macken, seconded by Commissioner Lalor. Vote passed 4-0-1.
- Commissioner Connolly discussed 3 edits to November 8, 2017 meeting as follows: a) during background section on the pickle ball proposal, item 1 should read that request for painted lines or phantom lines were presented; the word "over" should be removed; b) under Item 3 in same section – It should read that a Wilton resident requested the pickleball courts, it as not Kim Becker as reflected in draft of minutes; c) clarification of the fact that CIAC and FCIAC sent emails, not letters. A motion to approve the November 8, 2017 minutes after making the 3 edits was made by Commissioner Kendra, seconded by Commissioner Macken. Vote passed 5-0-0.

III. WHS Track update – subsurface issues/funding raising – B. Hermann/K. Foley

- Bev Herman and Kevin Foley discussed background of the current state of the WHS track, results of a third party engineering study and recommended actions to fix/replace the track. Provided Commission with a powerpoint presentation called "Wilton Back the Track"
- Key Conclusions from third party engineer evaluation: existing sub-base of asphalt is past its useful life will not support a new track unless it is replaced.
- Third party track consultant (Don Paige) provided two options to repair the existing track as follows: 1. simply tear up the existing surface, repair cracks in asphalt and replace existing surface with a non-porous surface. This would cost \$335k and last only one to two years. 2. Remove the existing surface, mill and replace 1 inch of asphalt and resurface with a non-porous surface. This would cost \$475k, but also not a quality option. The existing asphalt subsurface could still easily buckle given its past its useful life.
- Five options were presented to fully replace the track, each of which involves replacing the existing asphalt subsurface at a cost of ~\$418,000. By adding a porous or non-porous surface on top of the sub-surface the track, the total cost of a new track ranged from an initial cost of ~\$850,000 to ~\$1.5 million. Neither the \$850,000 option nor the \$1.5 million rubberized surface option were recommended by Kevin and Bev. Instead, a Full pour (non-porous surface) option was recommended at an initial cost of ~\$1.15 million. This option was selected given it can have the longest useful life (25-30 years) given that it can be resurfaced 2-4 times before a full

replacement would be necessary. It would also result in the lowest cost per year to get it to its useful life.

- It was discussed that a significant amount of the cost would need to be funded with privately raised money with the possibility of the town paying for the sub-surface. Steve Foley and Bev Hermann indicated that they plan to start the fund raising campaign ASAP. The Commission recommended they discuss the fund raise with the Wilton Youth sports organizations and the HS athletics Booster organizations in order to gain support and seek contributions. Steve and Bev indicated that they will keep the Commission informed on progress of fund raising efforts and will coordinate timing with the Commission. No decision on track replacement will be made until fund raise gets further along, although it was noted that it should be a priority given the track's current state of disrepair.

IV. Discussion of Potential Turf Field locations and process

- Commissioner Connolly provided group with a summary of the Field Usage and Field Location sub-committee recommendations from earlier this year – the sub-committees recommended adding two turf fields (with privately raised money), one at North Field next to Lilly field and the other at either Allens 5 or 6.
- Steve Pierce and Commissioner Connolly met with Mike Conklin and John Hall at North Field and discussed 3 potential scenarios to add turf there, noting that scenarios have not been approved within other town committees (i.e., Wetlands).
- Commissioner Connolly indicated that the Commission has done all that it can to this point and now it is up to the Wilton Youth athletics organizations or others to commence fund raising if the desire for the field(s) still exists. A group that previously expressed interest in assisting with the fund raising has decided not to take the lead. Accordingly, a group now needs to take the lead on fund raising, first ~\$30k for engineering study as a start.
- Representatives present included: Field hockey: Gillian Kaeyer, Field Location Sub-Committee representative: Mark Ketly, Soccer: Gabe Tully.
- Commissioner Connolly and Steve Pierce will follow up with Youth organizations to set up a meeting to help move this forward.

V. 2018 Park and Recreation Calendar – discussion and/or action

- Commissioner Connolly proposed calendar dates for 2018 meetings with all meetings on the second Wednesday of each month, except for April (selected the 18th which is the 3rd Wednesday due to spring recess) and there is no August meeting. The Commission discussed moving February's meeting from the 14th to the 21st due to Valentine's Day. A motion to approve the 2018 Parks and Recreation calendar as presented with the exception of February 14th meeting moved to 21st, motion by Commissioner Kendra, seconded by Commissioner Lalor. Vote passed 4-0-0 (Commissioner Brown had to leave the meeting prior to vote).

VI. Staff Reports

- Parks & Grounds Report

- All equipment has been taken for general repairs as usual.
 - Successful hayride with Santa last week.
 - Parks and Recreation Budget will be due Friday January 5th, will be submitted to P&R Commission for review prior to our January meeting for discussion and review.
- Recreation Report
 - Basketball started two weeks ago, snowed out last week.
 - Computer training for new software system was completed in November - waiting to go live on system with finance department. Software will allow online signups for fields, meeting rooms, etc.
 - Tennis Court Resurfacing Project
 - Couple of items to finish in the spring, courts 7 & 8 are up and running, two additional coats of paint in the spring.
 - Entry gates to courts 1-3 need to be moved.
 - WHS received notification last week that the HS will be hosting the boys CIAC tournament this year.

VII. Correspondence

- Received 4 emails in support of pickle ball courts at Comstock Basketball courts.
- Parking lot at Gilbert & Bennett raised as an option for pickle ball courts, Steve Pierce believes Mill work would need to be done Gilbert & Bennet community culture building (used to be Landmark), would be able to be utilized during school hours, but not likely to be available on Saturdays, due to parking during soccer season. Steve Pierce to follow up to get estimate of cost to make the parking lot useable for pickleball.

VIII. New Business

- Track proposal – discussion and/or action
 - See discussion above
- Update on “Carry in, Carry out” pilot program – discussion and/or action
 - State didn’t clarify what the size the fines would be
 - Signs will be utilized to request garbage not be placed in the port-a-potties
- Pickleball proposal – discussion and/or action
 - 6 people supporting pickleball in attendance
 - Commissioner Connolly gave a summary of the most recent BoS meeting whereby the BoS recommended we revote on the pickleball proposal as it was presented.
 - Public comment: Resident Kim Becker reiterated her request for pickleball courts to be added to the Comstock basketball courts and acknowledged that she had sent a revised proposal with email from Cider Mill principal confirming kids do not go to Comstock Basketball court area, which is 50 feet from Cider

Mill playground; Mrs. Becker made point that if someone can use the courts for basketball during school hours then pickleball players should be able to do the same; Mrs. Becker believes the grade of Gilbert & Bennett would need work to be feasible for pickle ball. Mrs. Becker points out cost of \$1,500 for Comstock basketball courts. Others making public comment in favor of adding pickleball courts to Comstock basketball court by adding painted phantom or different color lines included: Eileen Moriarty, Michelle Fechter, Susan Savoie, and Bill Abrahams.

- Public comment ended at 8:49pm after everyone in attendance was given a chance to provide their views.
- Commission commenced discussion on pickleball request - Commissioner Connolly indicated that there is a Security Task Force that is looking at safety risks at all schools. Commissioner Connolly and Steve Pierce reviewed the distance from the Comstock basketball courts to the Cider Mill playground, which is 50 feet, also noting that there is a parking lot nearby.
- Commission discussed that Basketball court was redone as part of Comstock renovation in the spirit of increasing usage for basketball. Commissioners debated if it was appropriate to add a pilot program for multi-use by adding pickleball to Comstock basketball court; it was confirmed permanent lines would need to put in place for this to happen. Some concerns were expressed that adding pickleball could create conflict between adults and kids. A concern was also raised that people from anywhere could use the facilities, thereby making it difficult to manage the potential conflict. Discussion that conflict may be managed by only permitting pickleball usage during school hours of 8:30am to 2pm. A point was made to add signage regarding pickleball hour usage and basketball usage by matching it to the school calendar. Discussion of how this could be voted on, given the potential safety issue.
- A Motion was made by Commissioner Kendra to add pickleball lines to the Comstock basketball court for exclusive pickleball usage on school days only (tied to the school calendar) during P&R operating hours until 2pm only and after 2pm on school days and weekends being for basketball usage only, Subject to the security task force not considering this to be a security issue. Vote was 2-2, so does not pass. Discussed that the vote needs to be retaken either at the next P&R meeting or until Security Task Force provides vote on safety issue, due to the tie vote.
- Commissioner Macken made Motion to turn down adding Pickleball lines to the route 7 tennis courts and to confirm the Commission's agreement with the Press Release from Lynne Vanderslice and Commissioner Connolly on November 29th, 2017 regarding the use of the Route 7 tennis courts, seconded by Commissioner Kendra. Vote passed 4-0-0.
- Commissioner Macken made a Motion to seek approval From BOS and BOE to add painted lines for Pickleball at the Middlebrook upper left asphalt lot pending finding funds for payment of costs. Vote passed 4-0-0.
- Commissioner Macken made a Motion to raise for consideration to the BOS of an alternative site on town land for pickleball that will include a post tension

concrete court with lights at an approximate cost of \$75,000 subject to raising private funds to cover costs. Vote passed 4-0-0.

- Safety concerns with Comstock Basketball court usage during school hours – discussion and/or action
 - Security issue of proximity to basketball courts discussed (only 50 feet from Cider Mill playground). Commissioner Connolly and Director Pierce calculated the distance while Cider Mill recess was going on; noted they are concerned with closeness of basketball court to the playground.
 - Motion by Commissioner Lalor to identify usage of all outdoor basketball courts at Comstock and fields on Cider Mill property as a significant safety issue during school hours, and Commission recommendation is that no use of the above mentioned facilities should be permitted during school hours, seconded by Commissioner Kendra. Vote passed 4-0-0.

IX. Old Business

- Update on Schenck's Island Merwin Meadows Committee – no update
- Wilton Athletic and Recreation Foundation update - no update

X. Public Comment – none

XI. Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn meeting at 9:44pm made by Commissioner Kendra, seconded by Commissioner Lalor. Vote passed 4-0-0.