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Cc:

Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission  
Regular Meeting – Minutes  
April 23, 2009

I. CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the Culture, Parks & Recreation Commission was called to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Main Meeting Room of the Simsbury Town Offices. The following members were present: Chairman Linda Johnson, Commission members David Bush, Karen Cortes, Kelly Kearney, Barbara Koff, John Pendergast, and Harry Ryan. Also in attendance was Gerry Toner, Director of Culture, Parks & Recreation.

Chairman Johnson stated that there will be a change in the procedure tonight. She will be stepping down as Chairman while discussing the Dog Park; Mr. Bush will act as Chairman for this part of the meeting. She stated that because Mr. Bush will be late to the meeting, she would like to start with the Eagle Scout Project.

II. Eagle Scout Project – Cortlandt Carter

Cortlandt Carter stated that the idea for this project started with his mother. She was at the Iron Horse playground and noticed that the recycling bins were not very big and were overflowing. Cortlandt stated that he started out with the idea of making 5-6 bins for the playground area. He made a design for the bins, which were made from cedar with a pine frame. He then met with Mr. Toner to discuss this project, although Mr. Toner felt that this would be too many bins for the area. Mr. Toner asked that Cortlandt spread the bins across Town.

Cortlandt stated that they have since placed recycling bins at the following locations: Flower Bridge; Route 315 and Route 10 bike path; Latimer Lane on bike path; Simsbury Farms playground; Curtis field; Iron Horse Boulevard playground; Memorial Field, upper field; and Weatogue baseball and soccer fields.

Cortlandt stated that there are Rubbermaid bins inside the frame. They also drilled holes in the bottom of the bins in order to drain any liquid that has been thrown away and also to let the rain get through.

Mr. Toner stated that these bins are being used throughout Town; Park Maintenance empties the bins. He stated that Cortlandt did a great job from beginning to end. Recycling is an initiative that Simsbury feels is important. The Town has been putting trash cans adjacent to the recycling bins, which have also been helpful. Mr. Toner stated that through Cortlandt's Scout Troop, they continue to educate people regarding recycling.

Kelly Kearney thanked Cortlandt for this project, which is aesthetically pleasing. He also commended his participation in the Scouts.

Chairman Johnson suggested putting an article in the local newspaper to let people know that the bins are in these locations and to let them know of the Scout's efforts. She thanked Cortlandt for his efforts.

Chairman Johnson stepped down as Chairman for this portion of the meeting.

### III. MINUTES – February 26, 2009

Karen Cortes made a motion to approve the February 26, 2009 minutes as written. Kelly Kearney seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

### IV. DOG PARK – Proposed location

Linda Johnson distributed a list of members' names that are on the Simsbury Dog Park Committee to the Commission members. She stated that there was discussion in the past regarding locating the dog park at Town Forest, although this was an area that the Scouts use. She stated that they have now found an area on Hedgehog Lane that is a great location for the park. Ms. Johnson showed the Commission pictures of the site. This site is not currently being used by any group. The site is a sloped area adjacent to the soccer field. She feels that this is the best location for the dog park.

Mr. Bush stated that the map shows bushes in the middle of the park. He questioned if it was the Committee's intention to remove these trees and bushes. Ken stated that they would probably leave some of the trees for shade. He stated that also, to the left of the parking area, there will be a utility gate by the road. Mr. Bush questioned what they would be using for fencing around the park. He stated that they would be using a chain link, galvanized 4'-6' fence. Mr. Bush cautioned that when soccer games are in play, the balls cannot be getting into the fenced in area.

Mr. Kearney stated his concerns regarding the soccer fields being so close to the park. He stated that they need to consider a net so that no soccer balls get into the dog park. Ken stated that smaller children use that field; he does not think that this will be a problem.

Mr. Bush questioned if any other groups use this area. Linda Johnson stated that she is not aware of any. Mr. Toner stated that the facilities that are located on this site are available to the public; they are on a first come first served basis.

Linda Johnson stated that this proposed location is close to the Simsbury Farms walking path and already has parking on the site. She stated that the only one negative she can see about this location is that there is no running water on the site to give the dogs a drink, although once people realize this, they will bring their own containers.

Phil Michaud, owner of the Pet Spot, stated that there is a need for dog parks. Dog parks allow people with dogs to be segregated from people who do not want to be around dogs. This is a place where dogs can socialize. He feels that this location is great because it is on a main road, but still out of the way.

Mr. Bush questioned if there would be a dual entrance to the park and if there was any concerns regarding dogs getting loose. Mr. Michaud stated that there would be a dual entrance and all dogs would be leashed. Mr. Kearney recommended that rules be posted. Linda Johnson stated that their Committee has already written one page of rules, although it needs to be refined.

Ms. Johnson read a letter from the Simsbury Dog Warden, which stated the following: he feels that this is an excellent location for the dog park with ample parking; he or someone from the Police Department will be there when the park first opens to check for dog licenses; he will stop by the park periodically to assist and monitor; he supports this project.

Mr. Bush questioned if all of the cost for the dog park would be raised by this organization and that the ongoing costs would also be borne by them. Linda Johnson stated that the funds will be raised by this organization as well as the ongoing maintenance costs.

Kelly Kearney made a motion that the Culture Parks and Recreation Commission endorses the dog park proposal as submitted. It is understood that the dog park will be self-funded by the Simsbury Dog Park Committee; there will be an annual review by the Culture Parks and Recreation Commission; and the park will be subject to all of the necessary permits, applications and approvals. Mr. Pendergast seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

#### V. ATHLETIC FIELD SUB-COMMITTEE

Mr. Bush stated that the Commission needs to have a vote to make the Athletic Field Subcommittee a standing Committee. Mr. Toner stated that this group will meet as they feel necessary and as issues arise. This will not be a permanent Committee; it will be an ongoing Committee.

Mr. Bush stated that although the spring issues have been solved, there

will be more issues this fall. He stated that there needs to be discussion regarding the Meadowood Triangle; they need to be ready if an opportunity arises regarding fields at this location.

Barbara Koff made a motion to create a standing Athletic Field Subcommittee. Karen Cortes seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.

Mr. Bush stated that being a member of the Subcommittee involves a number of meetings with members of some of the sports programs in Town and to discuss upcoming issues in order for them to make informed and educated decisions. Mr. Bush and Mr. Kearney both volunteered to be on the Athletic Field Subcommittee.

Mr. Toner questioned if the Commission members have gotten any feedback. Mr. Kearney stated that he did have one complaint regarding the lack of a net between the lacrosse and soccer field; this could potentially be a dangerous situation. Mr. Toner stated that he would follow up on this issue.

Mr. Bush suggested that the Subcommittee get together within the next month or so.

#### VI. GOLF COURSE RESTAURANT – Status

Mr. Toner distributed road information and a menu to the Commission members. He stated that Attilio received an approval from the Zoning Commission to go forward regarding a liquor permit. He has already applied for a liquor permit through the State. The State is expected to grant Attilio a provisional permit because there have been several people who are opposing the permit. The State will be holding a hearing in August or September to give Attilio and the public an opportunity to speak. Mr. Toner stated that the provisional permit has mostly the same rights under the State law as a full permit.

Mr. Toner stated that the next step is the road. He stated that the road was constructed last fall and he has had several meetings with the Police Department to discuss signage and lighting to make sure everything is done right. He stated that currently, all of the signs are covered until the road opens. The striping on the road still needs to be done and would like to open the road, hopefully, next Thursday, as long as the weather permits this week for the striping.

Regarding the floodlights, Mr. Toner stated that there are lights located at the corner of the rink shining onto the road and also half way down the rink toward the cart barn. There are also three lights on the cart barn. He would like all of the lights to be activated prior to opening the road.

Mr. Bush stated that there are notices posted throughout the club area regarding the opening of the road. He suggested that an anticipated date should be posted as well. He also suggested putting flyers on the windshield of each parked car. He feels that there cannot be enough reminders about the opening of the road; repetition is needed. Mr. Toner stated that they will be placing a barrier in the road so people cannot take a right hand turn. Mr. Bush suggested that a barrier be put up by the

pond; this could potentially be a dangerous situation. He also suggested that once the road is open, they should monitor the speed limit to make sure people are in compliance.

Mr. Pendergast questioned if this road would stay as a gravel road. Mr. Toner stated that they would hopefully have the funds to pave this within a year's time. He stated that the floodlights are also temporary. Mr. Kearney stated that currently, the lights on the main road are turned off manually. Mr. Pendergast suggested looking at solar powered lights. Mr. Kearney questioned if there would be a sign at the entrance to the restaurant. Mr. Toner stated that there will be a permanent sign; the size will be determined by what is allowed.

The Commission discussed the new hours of operation and new menu at the restaurant. Mr. Toner stated that this information will be posted on the website.

#### VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Regarding the pool, Mr. Toner stated that the members of the Complex Committee put a survey together regarding the pool at Simsbury Farms. He stated that overall, people are happy with what is there. Several things that people had concerns with included: the old locker rooms; wanting more shade, chairs and offers at the snack bar; wanting a longer season; and wanting the pool to be heated. Mr. Toner stated that they will be adding 12 more chairs to the deck and more lap swim times. They have also added a seasonal position to help with the cleanliness of the locker rooms as well as the whole pool area. Ms. Johnson suggested that they have a meeting to discuss the Simsbury Farms Complex only.

Regarding Schultz Park, Mr. Toner stated that there was a stage built in 1988 that was used in the past for community bands. The stage is now is disrepair and is not used anymore. He recommends that this stage be taken down. He will be talking to the Beautification Committee regarding this issue. Mr. Pendergast suggested that the Town move the Civil War Memorial from Weatogue to this location.

Regarding the skate park at Memorial Park, Mr. Toner stated that there have been several problems relating to the cemetery and vandalism at the park. He stated that looking back the Town should have set up a Parental Board to oversee the park. He stated that he would like to send out a mass e-mail letting people know of the problems at the facility and that he would like responses from parents and kids. He stated that he will have a difficult time justifying funding new apparatus when they are dealing with these kinds of problems.

Mr. Bush stated that he feels the e-mails are a good idea and necessary. People need to be notified and if nothing is done, the park could be closed. He questioned what the timetable was for this. Mr. Toner stated that, from a budget standpoint, within 8 months, they would be in the process of looking for funding for the park. He would like to get e-mail responses back from students and parent within the next 4-5 months.

Mr. Pendergast suggested that this Commission look at special interest

groups that would like to have specific things built like the skate park, but also list conditions, including making them have a Board of Directors. People need to take responsibility for things that they advocate for in Town and not just walk away once it is in place. Mr. Kearney stated that if the organization ceases to exist, then so should that particular initiative.

Mr. Ryan stated that the Triple Crown Championships were being held this weekend.

Mr. Toner stated that during vacation week, they held a fencing class that was very successful. He stated that the class was held at the Boy Scout Hall; approximately 18 children signed up.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Linda Johnson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:20 p.m. The motion was seconded and was unanimously approved.