CITY OF NORWALK
OAK HILLS PARK AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 17, 2025

BY ZOOM VIRTUAL MEETING

ATTENDANCE: Alan Dutton, Chair; Richard Dellinger, Vice Chair; Denise Brown, Treasurer; Richard Dellinger, Gary Leeds, Jennifer McAllister, Geoff Sweitzer, T.J. Trimboli

STAFF: Paul Alexander, Golf Professional; Mark Gartner, Controller; Jim Hollyday, General Manager; Jim Schell, Superintendent

OTHERS: Jerry Crowley, Supporters of Oak Hills Park

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Dutton called the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Mr. Dutton called the roll. A quorum was present. He noted that Ms. Verel was not present due to a conflict in her schedule.

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

A. Regular Meeting: March 20, 2025

**** MR. LEEDS MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 20, 2025 MEETING.**
**** MR. DELLINGER SECONDED**.

The following corrections were noted:

Page 1, under **ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**, please change the vote from:

**** THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED PASSED WITH FOUR IN FAVOR AND ONE ABSTENTION (MR. DELLINGER)**

TO **** THE MINUTES AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

Page 2, under Restaurant: John Lloyd, paragraph 2, line 1: please change the following from: "Mr. Lloyed" to "Mr. Lloyd"

Page 3, paragraph 2, line 2: please change "the Bot Scouts" to "Boy Scouts".

Page 4, under Controller: paragraph 2, line 1: please change “NR. Dutton” to “Mr. Dutton”.

Page, 5, under Executive Session, paragraph 2, line 1: Please change “Duttion” to “Dutton”.

** **THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 20, 2025 MINUTES AS CORRECTED PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no one who wished to address the Authority Members at this time.

REPORTS

A. Chair

Mr. Dutton said that there was not a lot to report and that the 2025/2026 Operating Budget will be presented at the next meeting and it will be voted on during the June meeting.

He added that there would be an Executive Session regarding the tennis contract that will end in September and this will be held later in the meeting.

B. Restaurant: John Lloyd – Mr. Lloyd was not present.

C. Nature Advisory: Mary Verel.

Mr. Dellinger said that Ms. Verel had sent him a report.

- There have been two very successful trail clean ups that have cut back some invasives.
- Two groups of Scouts are coming on May 4th from 11 to 3 for more trail clean ups.
- On April 22nd, there will be a Mugwort Harvest to remove the invasive plant from the Great Lawn
- Bluebird boxes have been installed on the Great Lawn and by the Tennis Courts.
- The alternate lawn by the Fountain Garden is not growing as planned and the contractor will be notified.
- Some Norwalk gardeners will be coming to do more planting in the Fountain Garden.
- On April 26th Earth Day will be on the Norwalk Green. Everyone is invited to sign up for an hour or two between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m.
- Early concepts for the long term nature are and Nature Center are being considered

including guided trail walks, lunch and learn and bird watching events.

- Ms. Verel toured the Tennis Center in order to plan for some plantings around the Courts to develop the lawn areas and wooded areas as functioning ecosystems for wildlife.

D. Tennis: Denise Brown

Ms. Brown aid that the courts are being worked on and 7& 8 are almost completed. Courts 1 through 6 will be next. 18 Arbor Vita trees will be planted along the back side of the fence by the golf court. Some other city trees will be planted to discourage golfers from hitting dog leg left. The grant funding from the USTA has been received and will be used to upgrade courts 1 -6. Mr. Hollyday thanked Ms. Brown for applying for the USTA grants.

E. Supporters of Oak Hills Park: Jerry Crowley

Mr. Crowley said he had no report this evening.

F. Long Term Planning: Gary Leeds

Mr. Leeds said that he had not interfaced with the long term plans but knew that things were moving forward.

G. Golf Professional: Paul Alexander

Mr. Alexander said that the golf season has started but it has been cold and windy. He gave the details for the times for Tee Times, and the Golf Shop, along with noting that 49 annual passes have been sold already. 708 annual Golf Memberships have been sold since January 1st. Now that the weather is getting warmer, he expects the number to move towards the 1,250 total memberships. There are 24 outings scheduled and only one open date due to a cancellation.

Mr. Alexander then reported the Men's Association, Women's Association and Nine Holer held their spring meetings which were all well attended.

The Foreup POS and T-sheets are all doing well. The staff is becoming more familiar with the new software and the store has been stocked with 2025 merchandise.

Mr. Alexander said that he had attended the Met PGA spring meeting, which was very good. He also attended the Callaway 2025 new product launch seminar and also completed a training program to become certified through the PGA Hope program for teaching golf to U.S. veterans with disabilities. He'll be holding some meetings for the veterans in the coming month and hope to have a day for this at Oak Hills. Golf numbers across the nation look good.

Mr. Leeds asked how the new restaurant policy was working out. Mr. Alexander said that the biggest issue involved the

Mr. Dellinger asked if the new PGA Superstore opening up on Richards Avenue would have an effect. Mr. Alexander said that it was a large store and for a small store like his, it may be difficult.

Ms. Brown asked about the PGA Help program. Mr. Alexander said it was a new program for the disabled veterans. He said that various pros will be doing a six week program to work with vets and it is free for the veterans.

H. Superintendent: Jim Schell

Mr. Schell said that he found it unbelievable that they are being considered "dry" despite water seeping out of the hillsides. There is a lot of work to do on the course. The Parking Lot drainage seems to be doing okay. He said that more details were in his written report.

Mr. Leeds said that the course plays wonderfully well. He felt the new traps were great.

Mr. Dellinger asked if they were fully staffed. Mr. Schell said that he is 3 short, but 2 will be starting, so he'll only be 1 short.

I. Controller: Mark Gartner

Mr. Gartner said that they opened up in the middle of the month and the membership sales are doing well. They have not booked any quarterly revenue for the restaurant. There will be a reduction in the utilities since they have sent out the bills. The budget process has started and is moving forward.

Mr. Dutton said that Odeen's numbers had arrived and said that there was revenue. There were comedy nights and entertainment events.

J. General Manager: Jim Hollyday

Mr. Hollyday said that the budget has been reviewed and almost complete. This past month, he spent time on the Tennis area regarding irrigation and freshening up of the buildings. They have decided to sponsor a Norwalk Youth Baseball team with Norwalk Tennis, Odeen's and Oak Hills. It was a productive month.

Mr. Leeds about the insurance visit. Mr. Hollyday said that Oak Hills has 13 buildings and some of the data is quite inaccurate. That data is being updated. He said that the insurance companies are insisting on having roofs replaced.

Mr. Dellinger asked aobut the First Aid training for the staff. Mr. Hollyday said that one of the staff is certified, but needs to be re-certified in Connecticut. Once that happens, the session will be scheduled. Mr. Dellinger asked if it would include AED training. Mr. Hollyday said that it would.

Ms. Brown asked about the irrigation system, which Mr. Hollyday reviewed with her. He said that they expect it to be a retrofit rather than a re-installation.

Mr. Dellinger asked for a update on the nets winders on Court 5. Mr. Hollyday said that he would check into that. Ms. Brown said that she had seen Davis at the court and they had discussed the net winders had to be replaced.

OLD BUSINESS

Mr. Leeds asked how the pace of play recording was being done. Mr. Alexander said that there had been no complaints and there have not been any delays. Mr. Leeds asked if they were receiving the reports they expected. Mr. Alexander said that now they have iPads to log the information in.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Alexander said that he had been asked if they would be offering discounts to clergy or veterans. Mr. Dutton asked if Mr. Hollyday to check in with other venues to see what they are doing.

Mr. Dutton said that Oak Hills has an Executive Committee, which puts together a small nominating committee for recommendations. He will be reaching out to various Board members about this.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Authority Members moved into Executive Session at 7:39 p.m. to discuss the Tennis contract. Upon returning from Executive Session, Mr. Dutton stated that there was no need to take any votes on the discussion.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting is scheduled for May15, 2025.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. DELLINGER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
**** MS. MCALLISTER SECONDED.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**.

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.