



CITY OF NORWALK
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL COMMITTEE
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024.
REGULAR MEETING
7:00 PM.



Members of the public may call in to participate. Callers will not be able to see the meeting participants. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, dial *9 on the phone and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. All speakers must state their name and address. Comments must be on a topic on the agenda and are limited to three minutes. Anyone disrupting the orderly conduct of the meeting, including by using threatening, hateful, or sexually explicit language, will be removed. Please find the information using the link above.



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Members of the public who wish to provide public comments are encouraged to submit those via email in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they must be submitted by 12:00 p.m. the day of the meeting. Please email Dilene Byrd at dbyrd@norwalkct.gov with the subject line “Public Comment” to provide written public comments prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Darlene Young, Lisa Shanahan; Douglas Sutton; Nicole’ Eaddy; Johan Lopez

ABSENT: Nicol Ayers; Heather Dunn

STAFF: Robert Stowers, Director, Recreation and Parks; Ken Hughes, Superintendent, Recreation and Parks

OTHERS: Joseph Madaffari; Kathryn Snedaker; Nancy Nelson

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Young called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

At roll call, there were five (5) committee members present. A quorum was present.

II. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 9, 2024

On page 3, change “move” to “movie”

**** MS. EADDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AMENDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation this evening.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed.

V. NEW BUSINESS

1. APPROVE THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, 74-13 CURFEW AS PRESENTED.

Mr. Stowers said a public hearing on this item was held before this meeting, and a local regional survey was done on park hours. He said this request came in as a need for more specific hours for parks based on the security of our residents and the ability to enforce the hours. Currently, the parks are open from dawn to dusk so the police have no enforcement power to move people out of the parks, and there is also a need

for general operating hours for the parks for various reasons which will also keep the labor costs down when there are regulated hours. He said he is recommending the specific hours that are noted in the legislation.

Mr. Lopez asked if closing Veterans Park at 8:00 PM. is a result of the survey. Mr. Stowers said once the survey was conducted it was discussed with the Chief of Police as well as the neighborhood and they felt these were the hours that could comfortably satisfy the neighborhood as well as provide enforcement.

**** MS. EADDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE CODE OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, 74-13 CURFEW AS PRESENTED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. APPROVE THE USE OF CALF PASTURE BEACH AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE CITY OF NORWALK DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS FOR THEIR 4TH ANNUAL JINGLE BELL RUN TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH, 2024 FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 10:30 A.M. SET UP TIME BY 8:30 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 11:30 A.M. APPROXIMATELY 275 PEOPLE.

Mr. Stowers said this is a Parks Department event and is an annual fun and festive event, and almost 200 people are currently registered to participate.

****MR. SUTTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE USE OF CALF PASTURE BEACH AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE CITY OF NORWALK DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS FOR THEIR 4TH ANNUAL JINGLE BELL RUN TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH, 2024 FROM 9:00 A.M. TO 10:30 A.M. SET UP TIME BY 8:30 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 11:30 A.M.**

THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

3. APPROVE THE USE OF VETERAN'S PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY NORWALK PUBLIC RIVER FUN RUN TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 2024 FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M. SET-UP TIME BY 9:00 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 11:30 A.M. APPROXIMATELY 700 PEOPLE.

Mr. Madaffari provided a brief overview of the event, saying this is the 33rd year it will be held, and all the schools are involved, and it is a great event.

****SUTTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE USE OF VETERAN'S PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY NORWALK PUBLIC RIVER FUN RUN TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 2024 FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M. SET-UP TIME BY 9:00 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 11:30 A.M. APPROXIMATELY 700 PEOPLE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. APPROVE THE USE OF WASHINGTON STREET PLAZA AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE CITY OF NORWALK BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM FOR THEIR HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 2024, FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M. SET-UP TIME BY 9:00 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 10:00 P.M. APPROXIMATELY 3,000 PEOPLE.

Mr. Stowers provided a brief overview of the event and said that it started a few years ago and has been successful and there are an estimated 3,000 attendees.

****MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE USE OF WASHINGTON STREET PLAZA AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE CITY OF NORWALK BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM FOR THEIR HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7TH, 2024, FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M. SET-UP TIME BY 9:00 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 10:00 P.M. APPROXIMATELY 3,000 PEOPLE.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. APPROVE THE USE OF TAYLOR FARM AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY FRIENDS OF NORWALK DOGS FOR THEIR HOLIDAY SOCIAL TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH, 2024, FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M. SET-UP TIME BY 10:30 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 2:00 P.M. APPROXIMATELY 75 PEOPLE.

Ms. Snedaker said they had a wonderful Halloween event and over 100 people attended along with 150 dogs. She apologized for not having the signs in both English and Spanish but for this event the signs will be in both English and Spanish. Ms. Young asked how people register for the event. Ms. Snedaker said there is a QR code where people can register and there is a suggested \$20 per dog donation and there is a table at the event where people can donate although it is not required and last year raised approximately \$1,600.

Mr. Stowers said this organization came to him a little over a year ago and wanted to provide some advocacy and support for policies concerning dogs and they have helped with taking on the responsibility of providing dog waste bags at Taylor Farm and are a great support organization for dog owners.

**** MR. SUTTON MOVED TO APPROVE THE USE OF TAYLOR FARM AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY FRIENDS OF NORWALK DOGS FOR THEIR HOLIDAY SOCIAL TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14TH, 2024, FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 1:00 P.M. SET-UP TIME BY 10:30 A.M. SATURDAY WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 2:00 P.M.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. APPROVE THE USE OF TAYLOR FARM AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY GREENWICH KENNEL CLUB AND LONGSHORE-SOUTHPORT KENNEL CLUB FOR THEIR AMC DOG SHOW TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 5TH 2025, FRIDAY, JUNE 6TH 2025, SATURDAY, JUNE 7TH 2025, AND SUNDAY, JUNE 8TH, 2025 FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 10:00 P.M. SET-UP TIME BY 9:00 A.M. TUESDAY, JUNE 3RD WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 12:00 P.M. MONDAY, JUNE 9TH. APPROXIMATELY 450 PEOPLE.

Ms. Nelson provided a brief overview of the event and said this will be the 20th year using Taylor Farm Park for this event and last year had approximately 700 people along with 950 dogs. She said this is the only AKC-sanctioned event in Fairfield County and on average just for a weekend event raises approximately \$2.5 million for the local economy so she feels this is beneficial for the city.

Mr. Stowers said this is an annual event and is a staple event in the city and would like it to continue. He said they have recently had some collaboration with the Friends of Norwalk Dogs for continuing to have dog owners use the park at the same time and have had great cooperation with them as well as Greenwich Kennel Club.

**** MS. EADDY MOVED TO APPROVE THE USE OF TAYLOR FARM AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY GREENWICH KENNEL CLUB AND LONGSHORE-SOUTHPORT KENNEL CLUB FOR THEIR AMC DOG SHOW TO BE HELD ON THURSDAY, JUNE 5TH 2025, FRIDAY, JUNE 6TH 2025, SATURDAY, JUNE 7TH 2025, AND SUNDAY, JUNE 8TH, 2025 FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 10:00 P.M. SET-UP TIME BY 9:00 A.M. TUESDAY, JUNE 3RD WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 12:00 P.M. MONDAY, JUNE 9TH.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

VI. DISCUSSION

There was no discussion this evening.

ADJOURNMENT

****MS. SHANAHAN MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd

CITY OF NORWALK
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL COMMITTEE
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13, 2024.
PUBLIC HEARING
6:45 PM.



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ATTENDANCE: Darlene Young, Chair, Nicole’ Eaddy; Johan Lopez; Lisa Shanahan; Douglas Sutton (arrived at 6:52 PM.)

STAFF: Robert Stowers, Director, Recreation and Parks; Ken Hughes, Superintendent, Recreation and Parks

I. ROLL CALL

Ms. Young opened the public hearing at 6:45 PM.

At roll call, there were four (4) committee members present. A quorum was present.

II. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Young read the following into the record:

1. CODE OF THE CITY OF NORWALK, 74-13 CURFEW

Hours for use of the City parks by the public shall be established and may be amended from time to time by the Director of Parks and Recreation, subject to the approval of the Common Council. The Director shall submit the proposed schedule of hours to the Parks and Recreation Committee. The Committee shall hold a public hearing thereon, which hearing shall conform to the requirements of § 1-191.1. Following the public hearing, the Committee shall forward the proposed schedule of hours to the Common Council for approval.

Norwalk CT. Recreation and Parks Director's Recommended Park Hours

City Charter Chapter 74-13 Gives the Recreation and Parks Director the Authority to Set Park Hours with the approval of the Common Council after a public hearing in the Recreation and Parks Committee.

Mr. Stowers read the following into the record:

Therefore, it is my recommendation that Norwalk Park Hours are set as follows:

Neighborhood and Pocket Parks

1. September (Labor Day) to May (Memorial Day)-Proposed Hours 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM
2. May (Memorial Day) to September (Labor Day)- Proposed Hours 7:00 AM to 10:00 PM

Regional Parks

1. September (Labor Day) to May (Memorial Day -Proposed Hours - 7:00 AM to 9:30 PM
Except Veterans Park -Proposed hours 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM
2. May (Memorial Day) to September (Labor Day)-Proposed Hours 7:00 AM to 10:30 PM
Oyster Shell Park; Calf Pasture Beach; Taylor Farm, and Cranbury Park Except Veterans Park -
Proposed Hours - 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM

III. PUBLIC HEARING

Ms. Lauricella asked if there has been a study done on the labor costs to extend the hours that late and that she is surprised that the request is to have the parks open until 10:00 PM. and if they would have the labor to provide safety and enforce the rules of the park. She said if for whatever reason a labor study was not done, she requested that this be paused. She asked if any of the Common Council members asked their constituents about these times because it is certainly a safety issue, especially at Oyster Shell Park, and leaving it open until 10:30 PM seems like a true potential for problems. She also asked if there will be capital costs and if so, what they are as she feels there would be a need to better secure the gates, and what security measures will be in place to close the parks.

Mr. Sutton joined the meeting at 6:52 PM.

Mr. Stowers said that most of the parks are not gated but the gated parks can be secured at those times and it is the responsibility of the police department to enforce some of the rules and regulations and this will give them the ability to enforce during those hours because currently there are no hours that are posted, so there are issues with folks hanging out in the parks until much later than 10:30 PM. He said these hours are also consistent with parks departments across the country and they did surveys with the local regional parks and are comfortable putting these hours forth to the public which will provide more safety to the residents.

Ms. Young closed the public hearing at 6:55 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd