

**CITY OF NORWALK
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL COMMITTEE
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
WEDNESDAY, MAY 10, 2023.
REGULAR MEETING
7:00PM.**

Members of the public can call in and listen to a meeting. They will not be able to speak or see any of the meeting participants. Each meeting will use a unique Meeting/Webinar ID. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to provide “live comments” will need to register in advance and use the Zoom meeting platform. All participants will be muted upon entering the meeting. To speak, click the “raise your hand indicator” and you will be called on by the host of the meeting during the public comment section. Please find the information using the link above.

Members of the public who wish to view the meeting, but are not participating, can view a live stream on the City of Norwalk YouTube channel. This stream is delayed by approximately 20 seconds. Please find the information using the link above. The meeting recording and minutes will be posted on the City of Norwalk website within seven (7) days after the meeting.

Members of the public who wish to provide public comment are encouraged to submit those via e-mail in advance of the meeting. For these comments to be read into the record, they should be submitted at least three hours in advance of the meeting start time. Please email Dilene Byrd at dbyrd@norwalkct.gov to provide written comment prior to the meeting.

ATTENDANCE: Darlene Young, Chair, Jenn McMurrer; Nicol Ayers

ABSENT: Lisa Shanahan; Josh Goldstein; John Kydes

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

ROLL CALL

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

Ms. Young said that they do not have a quorum but that the committee will go through each of the items and will move them to the full Common Council for approval at the next meeting.

II MINUTES OF APRIL 12, 2023

**** THE MINUTES WERE TABLED DUE TO A LACK OF QUORUM.**

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation this evening.

IV OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed this evening.

V NEW BUSINESS

The City of Norwalk reserves the right to cancel the Event for public health or safety reasons as determined by the City of Norwalk in its sole discretion. The City of Norwalk shall not be liable for damages arising from the cancellation of the Event.

- 1. APPROVE THE USE OF VETERANS PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY SIDE-BY-SIDE SCHOOL CHARTER FOR THEIR FIELD DAY EVENT TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 2023, FROM 9:45 AM TO 2:30 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 9:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 2:45 PM. RAIN DATE FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2023. APPROXIMATELY 100-200 PEOPLE.**

Mr. Stowers provided a brief overview of the event and said this is the first time the event will take place and that it is a field day and that there will be 100-200 attendees and staff approves of the event.

2. APPROVE THE USE OF SPRINGWOOD PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY JACK AND JILL OF AMERICA STAMFORD – NORWALK CHAPTER FOR THEIR BLACK FAMILY DAY PICNIC EVENT TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, JUNE 4, 2023, FROM 12:00 PM TO 4:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 10:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 4:30 PM. APPROXIMATELY 150 PEOPLE.

Ms. Smith provided a brief overview of the event and said it will be a great opportunity for children to learn about tennis and the Grass Roots organization. Mr. Stowers said that staff is in support of the event.

3. APPROVE THE USE OF RYAN PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY BASKET OF LOVE FOR THEIR FAMILY FUN DAY EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 2023, FROM 1:00 PM TO 5:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 11:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 5:00 PM. RAIN DATE: SATURDAY, JUNE 24, 2023. APPROXIMATELY 150 + PEOPLE.

Ms. Oliver provided a brief overview of the event and said it will be a family fun day and will incorporate many activities including a back give away with school supplies and the event is open to anyone with a family. Mr. Stowers said this is a new event and that staff is in support of the event.

4. APPROVE THE USE OF VETERANS PARK AND OYSTER SHELL PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY CLUB CONNECTICUT FOR THEIR O'NEILL'S 5K EVENT TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 2023, FROM 11:00 AM TO 12:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 10:00 AM WITH TEAR DOWN AT 12:30 PM. APPROXIMATELY 400 PEOPLE.

Mr. Hughes provided a brief overview of the event and said the race begins at O'Neills and goes through Oyster Shell Park and Veterans Park and ends back at O'Neills . Mr. Gerwick said this is the 10th year the event will be held and expects between 400-500 participants.

5. APPROVE THE USE OF NORWALK HIGH SCHOOL AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY EJS HEART FOR THEIR WALK FOR ELIJAH EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JULY 15, 2023, FROM 10:00 AM TO 12:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 8:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 1:00 PM. APPROXIMATELY 100 PEOPLE.

Mr. Gilmore provided a brief overview of the event and said this is the eighth year the event will be held and is in honor of their son that passed away in 2016 and with the funds they raise they offer two scholarships.

6. APPROVE THE USE OF VETERANS PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY HAITIAN AMERICAN

COLLABORATIVE, INC. FOR THEIR HAITIAN WEEK EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JULY 22, 2023, FROM 10:00 AM TO 8:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 8:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 10:00 PM. RAIN DATE SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2023. APPROXIMATELY 150 +/- PEOPLE.

Mr. Stowers said that this is a new event and that the applicants have applied for a special event permit and are working with Ms. Kovacs and that staff is in support of the event.

7. AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO APPROVE THE USE OF SOUTH/NORTH MAIN STREET, WASHINGTON STREET FROM WATER STREET TO MADISON STREET, PARK AT 50 WASHINGTON STREET AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY GORDON FINE ARTS, LLC FOR THEIR ANNUAL SONO ART FESTIVAL EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 5 AND SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2023, FROM 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM EACH DAY. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2023, AT 6:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN ON SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2023, AT 7:30 PM. APPROXIMATELY 1,000 PEOPLE.

Mr. Hughes said that the SONO Arts Festival is a great event, and the community looks forward to it each year and Ms. Gordan does a great job organizing the event.

8. APPROVE THE USE OF RYAN PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY CHRISTOPHER A. BROWN FOR THEIR KID'S FUN DAY EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2023, FROM 11:00 AM TO 6:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 8:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 9:00 PM. APPROXIMATELY 100 PEOPLE.

Mr. Stowers provided a brief overview of the event and said that it is a new event and will be held at Ryan Park and the applicants have applied for a special event permit and are working with Ms. Kovacs and that staff is in support of the event.

9. TECHNICAL CORRECTION, ADDITION OF ACCOUNTS: AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING, TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH GRINDLINE SKATE PARKS, INC. FOR THE CALF PASTURE BEACH SKATE PARK PROJECT # 4237, IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$1,411,896.92 FROM ACCOUNT #'S 134010-5796-ARP01, 021/0922/0923-6030-5777-C0365, AND 0922/0923/0924-6030-777-C0588.

Mr. Hughes said that the last three accounts listed have been added to the original authorization to be used for the concrete work at the skate park. Ms. Young asked if any of the accounts are from ARPA funding. Mr. Hughes said the original project was approved with some ARPA funding, but the additional accounts are capital funding.

10. APPROVE THE ART GOLDBLATT MEMORIAL PATIO AREA AT THE OAK HILLS TENNIS CENTER.

Ms. Brown provided a brief overview of the event and said they will be renaming the recently built outdoor patio that is located at the outdoor tennis facility and would like to name it in memorial of Art Goldblatt who was a big promoter of youth tennis. She said he started the Grass Roots program, and in 2019 started a second group called "The Friends of Oak Hills Tennis" and would like to hold a celebration by the end of the summer and have a plaque installed on the patio in his name. Mr. Stowers said staff is in full support and that it seems to align with the ordinance requirements. Ms. Young requested that the language in the authorization be clarified before it goes on the Common Council agenda for approval.

VI DISCUSSION

Ms. Ayers said that there are a lot of great events scheduled and asked if there is a central location for Recreation and Parks with the event details. Mr. Stowers said the events are on the website but agreed they could do a better job and will work towards that. Ms. Young suggested adding it to the mayor's dashboard.

Mr. Stowers said they received the draft master plan and was very well done and tomorrow staff will begin having meetings to review the recommendations and following that the Chief of Operations will review it and then have it sent to the mayor for his comments. He said they will then send all the revisions back to the consultant and once they have been incorporated a summary of the recommendations it will be available on the website for the public and there will also be a public meeting at the library for further input and the draft will then go to the Common Council for their comments which will be provided to the consultant and will work with them on the final plan which will then go to this committee and then the Common Council for full approval. Ms. McMurrer asked what the timeline will be. Mr. Stowers said the goal is to have a final adoption by July 25, 2023.

Mr. Stowers said that staff will be going to BET meeting tomorrow to have the funds approved for the community center at 98 South Main Street and to renovate the gym which was the number one recommendation in the master plan.

Mr. Stowers said that he and Mr. Hughes have been working with the consultant that was doing the organic land management plan and have sent them some soil samples of the parks and the soils were so unhealthy that they recommended that the soils be rehabilitated before they it would be effective for them to do an organic land management plan. He said that he and Mr. Hughes are also working on a tree management study which will create a tree master plan to restore and expand the tree canopies and because of that have requested a tree horticulturist position to work with them on land management and to help implement the tree management plan.

Ms. Ayers asked for clarification regarding the unhealthy soil. Mr. Stowers said the city has not had the resources or expertise to maintain the soil and that is what they are trying to do now.

Ms. Young asked when the horticulturist position will be filled. Mr. Stowers said they already have the job description written so once the funds are approved it will be advertised. She said the Recreation and Parks department is moving in the right direction and at a speed that makes sense.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MS. MCMURRER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** MS. AYERS SECONDED THE MOTION.**
**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:45PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd