

**CITY OF NORWALK
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL COMMITTEE
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 2023.
PUBLIC HEARING
6:30PM.**

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; Josh Goldstein (arrived at 6:35PM)

ABSENT: Jenn McMurrer; Lisa Shanahan; Nicol Ayers; John Kydes

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

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. PUBLIC HEARING, RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT PROPOSED FEES AND CHARGES.

Ms. Young opened the public hearing at 6:30PM.

Mr. Stowers presented the proposed fees and charges and said the fees have not been increased in the past four years and are only being increased to an inflationary amount.

Ms. Lauricella said she is a big proponent of asking for reasonable fees for residents on items that are costly to maintain, but the residents also deserve to make sure the non-residents pay as much as we can have them do. She said that many citizens from Wilton use Cranbury Park and enter through the exit driveway and utilize all of Cranbury Park including the dog park and there is no mechanism to charge them, and she does not find that fair to the residents of Norwalk and she does not see a proposed fee increase for Cranbury Park. She said in the past there was an employee at the main entrance driveway to collect the fee from non-residents. She also said the food composting bin is there and there is a fee to dispose of that and the residents of Norwalk are paying for that. She said there needs to be a mechanism in place to enforce or at least collect a reasonable fee for nonresidents that utilize Cranbury Park like was done in the past.

Ms. Young closed the public hearing at 6:35PM.

Ms. Young asked about nonresidents entering the park through other means. Mr. Hughes said prior to the new parking system there was a gate house at the main entrance that was staffed by part time staff who was in charge of collecting the fees to enter the park, and at that time they did have people entering through the exit which as part of the catalyst to have the new parking program. He said once the paid parking was implemented the exit was made an entrance and an exit because the parking is paid through license plate recognition and the fees are addressed on the proposed increase of fees and changes. Mr. Stowers said they are also working with a consultant on a fees and charges study and will be responsible for recommending a new fee structure to develop fees for both residents and nonresidents. Mr. Goldstein asked why the parking fines were static. Mr. Stowers said that he confirmed with TMP Director, and he did not want to raise the fines at this time and will be extending the parking with LAZ and there will be changes in structure in the future. Ms. Young asked how Norwalk compares to what the surrounding towns are charging for their fees. Mr. Stowers said they have done various analyses and it varies.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd

CITY OF NORWALK
RECREATION, PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COUNCIL COMMITTEE
BY VIDEO CONFERENCE AND TELECONFERENCE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 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, Josh Goldstein; John Kydes

ABSENT: Jenn McMurrer; Lisa Shanahan; Nicol Ayers

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 MARCH 8, 2023

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

III PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Lauricella said that she had spoken at the recent public hearing regarding the fees and said that Norwalk has terrific parks and staff and the efforts are all appreciated however, she spoke about Cranbury Park on what she feels is a loophole for out of towners using the park and she has been there for more than two hours and not seen LAZ parking, and while she appreciates that there is a mechanism in place but she is not sure if it is as efficient or effective as staff presented at the public hearing.

Ms. Lauricella said that she requests the item regarding the purchase of a cargo van be tabled until this cargo van is electric or hybrid. She said that each department either has a reason or excuse as to why they cannot go electric, and the Common Council has the means and intent to put their foot down.

The following comment was provided by Diane Lauricella

Chair Young

Please review the following examples of sources for electric and hybrid cargo vans.

This will be one of a handful of recent individual requests made by staff from various departments for fossil-fueled vehicles. Why won't the City create a policy? Please consider placing an across-the-board mandate to purchase electric and hybrid vehicles for most of our municipal needs.

I ask that this email be part of the record and that this item be tabled until the staff and purchasing department find an electric or hybrid option. It appears that this is also being purchased through a State purchasing mechanism, but I know that the state has a program called Lead by Example to encourage the purchase and use of the electric fleet and other vehicles.

Ms. Laurcella said that LAZ is a group that has been contracted by the city and requested that item not be included on the agenda at the last minute because a lot of the public has something to say about LAZ Parking and they deserve the right to weigh in on it, and she finds them to be vicious.

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 CRANBURY PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE TINY MIRACLES FOUNDATION FOR THEIR FAMILY FUN DAY TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, MAY 7, 2023, FROM 11:00 AM TO 2:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 9:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN 2:15 PM. APPROXIMATELY 200-250 PEOPLE

Mr. Stowers provided an overview of the event and said this is a private event and has gone through the special events process.

2. APPROVE THE USE OF ROADWAY WITHIN CALF PASTURE BEACH PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY NORWALK BIKE/WALK COMMISSION FOR THEIR CALF PASTURE BEACH OPEN STREET TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, MAY 13, 2023, FROM 9:00 AM TO 1:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 7:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN BY 2:00 PM. APPROXIMATELY 250 PEOPLE.

Mr. Thompson provided an overview of the event and said this is and even the Bike Walk Commission has been planning in conjunction with Recreation and Parks, TMP, and the Friends of the NRV and the purpose of the event is to give a dedicated temporary space to walk, bike, and all other forms of micro mobility and provide a safer way for them to get to the beach. He said part of the roadway within the beach would be part of the temporary greenway during the event. Mr. Stowers said the Recreation and Parks Department is cosponsoring the event and the intent is to begin biking and walking events. Mr. Goldstein said he thinks this is a great event and improving walkability and bikeability on Calf Pasture Beach Road is important. Ms. Young thanked Mr. Thompson for all that he is doing to increase walkability and bikeability in the city.

3. APPROVE THE USE OF CALF PASTURE BEACH AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE CLUB CONNECTICUT FOR THEIR MOTHER'S DAY 10K TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, MAY 14, 2023, FROM 8:00 AM TO 10:00 AM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 7:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 10:30 AM. APPROXIMATELY 150 PEOPLE.

This item has been withdrawn.

4. APPROVE THE USE OF VETERANS PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE MILITARY AND VETERANS' LIAISON COMMITTEE FOR THEIR VETERANS MEMORIAL CEREMONY EVENT TO BE HELD ON SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2023, FROM 12:30 PM TO 2:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 7:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 2:30 PM. APPROXIMATELY 100 PEOPLE.

Mr. Barros provided an overview of the event and said it normally takes place at use Calf Pasture Beach but due to the paving this year are requesting to move the event to Veterans Park. Mr. Stowers said it is an annual event and the staff has no issues.

5. APPROVE THE USE OF VETERANS PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY THE MILITARY AND VETERANS' LIAISON COMMITTEE FOR THEIR VETERANS MEMORIAL CEREMONY EVENT TO BE HELD ON MONDAY, MAY 29, 2023, FROM 10:00 AM TO 11:30 AM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 6:30 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 12:00 PM. APPROXIMATELY 500 PEOPLE.

Mr. Barros introduced himself and said that Mr. DeWitt has resigned, and he has taken his position of the Chairman of the Military Liaison Committee.

6. TECHNICAL CORRECTION: APPROVE THE USE OF OYSTER SHELL PARK AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY NICE, INC. FOR THEIR SEVENTH ANNUAL NICE FESTIVAL EVENT TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY, JULY 8, 2023, FROM 11:00 AM TO 10:00 PM. SET-UP TO BEGIN ON FRIDAY, JULY 7, 2023, AT 6:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN ON MONDAY, JULY 10, 2023, BY 10:00 PM. APPROXIMATELY 500+ PEOPLE.

Mr. Hughes said the technical correction was due to the change in the set-up time on Friday, July 7, 2023.

7. APPROVE THE USE OF CALF PASTURE BEACH AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY TED THOMAS DANCE FOUNDATION FOR THEIR FAIRFIELD COUNTY DANCE FESTIVAL TO BE HELD ON WEDNESDAY, JULY 12, 2023, FROM 6:30 PM TO 8:30 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 8:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 9:00 PM. RAIN DATE: WEDNESDAY, JULY 26, 2023. APPROXIMATELY 200 PEOPLE.

Mr. Thomas provided an overview of the event and said it is a dance concert that has been held around Fairfield County and was held last year in Norwalk at Matthew's Park and was a great success.

8. APPROVE THE USE OF CALF PASTURE BEACH, SHADY BEACH, MARVIN SCHOOL SITES, TAYLOR FARM AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY NATIONAL MARINE MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION FOR THEIR 2023 NORWALK BOAT SHOW TO BE HELD FROM THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 TO SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2023, FROM 10:00 AM TO 7:00 PM, FRIDAY TO SATURDAY, AND 10:00 AM TO 5:00 PM ON SUNDAY. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN ON THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 5:30 PM ON SUNDAY. APPROXIMATELY 15,000+ PEOPLE.

Mr. Pritko provided an overview of the event and said the main goal is to streamline and expedite the traffic flow while minimizing the impact on local residents and he thinks that has improved year after year. Mr. Hughes said although this is not a city event, they do work hand in hand with the boat show and they have been very cooperative. Ms. Young asked how many years the boat show has been held. Mr. Pritko said this will be the 44th year.

9. APPROVE THE USE OF CALF PASTURE BEACH AND IMMEDIATE SURROUNDING GROUNDS BY MOUNTAIN WORKSHOP FOR THEIR TEAM BUILDING POSITIVE SCHOOL CLIMATE PROGRAMS TO BE HELD ON FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2023, FROM 8:00 AM TO 3:00 PM. SET-UP TIME TO BEGIN AT 7:00 AM WITH TEAR-DOWN AT 4:00 PM. APPROXIMATELY 180 PEOPLE.

Mr. Hughes said that one of the dates has been added since it was on the agenda last month.

10. AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER FOR THE SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE OF A 2023 FORD TRANSIT CARGO VAN FOR A PRICE NOT TO EXCEED \$59,274.50. OFF STATE CONTRACT # 19PSX0161, FROM ACCOUNTS # 0921-6030/0923-6030-5777-C0486.

Mr. Hughes shared an email that he received from the city's fleet manager that he received from Ford Motor Company stating that they can provide a 2023 Lightning budget price quote however, the 2023 order bank closed last fall and it would probably be 2 years before they would see the truck and the order would not be price protected. He said they are looking at ways to go electric but are not able to get the

vehicles, and are currently renting vehicles because there is not enough at a cost of \$3,000 and cannot do that for another two years while they wait for the electric vehicle to come in. He also said that they were sent some literature on vehicles that were found online but they don't always have the specifications that the fleet manager looks for in a city owned vehicle, so he provides Ford with a specification sheet on what is needed, and they let him know what is available. Mr. Goldstein said a plan for the city needs to be developed to implement this, knowing it may be a couple of years before they begin to receive the vehicles, but he disagrees with the notion of holding off on this purchase to purchase a one off electric vehicle and that it would be the wrong short term move, however, they need to figure out a way to adhere to the long term goal that has been expressed to the public and he thinks they can do better. Mr. Kydes said he believes both the members of the Common Council and city staff would like to be greener and have electric vehicles but yet they keep having the conversation because the technology is not there, and the cost of the vehicles is not allowing the purchase of electric vehicles and that it should be revisited when the cost comes down and the technology is there. Mr. Goldstein said that he thinks they still need to be actively thinking about this but does agree that there are practical issues that must be dealt with and will need to come up with a solution for the broader goal which is to make the vehicle fleet green. Mr. Hughes said one of the things that will need to be addressed is the infrastructure to include the electric charging stations and the cost associated with that. Mr. Stowers suggested there be a master plan created that will include a financial goal to go green on the city fleet. Ms. Young agrees that the city as a whole needs to have a plan.

10.A AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE A CHANGE ORDER ON PURCHASE ORDER FOR A TOTAL NOT TO EXCEED TEN PERCENT (10%) FROM ORIGINAL PRICE, FROM ACCOUNT # 0923-6030-5777-C0486.

There was no discussion.

11. AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASING AGENT TO ISSUE A PURCHASE ORDER FOR THE SOLE SOURCE PURCHASE OF THE INSTALLATION OF ADDITIONAL PLAY EQUIPMENT AT LUDLOW PARK BY M. E. O'BRIEN & SONS FOR A PRICE NOT TO EXCEED \$254,045.75 FROM ACCOUNT # 0923-6030-5796-C0832.

Mr. Hughes said this is part of the DEEP grant of \$4.5 million dollars and part of the grant was for improvements at Ludlow Park which included an extension of the existing playground.

12. APPROVE THE USE OF VETERANS PARK VISITORS DOCK BY THE US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE TO DOCK ITS RESEARCH VESSEL DURING THE SUMMER OF 2023.

Mr. Hughes said the US Fish and Wildlife Service docks a research vessel at Veterans Park for a month and half and serves the city well for several reasons and because the Recreation and Parks department

doesn't have a boat, they use the opportunity to have them go out to the islands and do a cleanup and report back on the status of the islands.

**13. APPROVE THE DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION AND PARKS FEES
AND CHARGES SCHEDULE AS PRESENTED.**

There was no discussion.

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

The item was tabled until a representative from Oak Hills

**15. AUTHORIZE THE MAYOR, HARRY W. RILLING TO EXTEND THE
CONTRACT WITH LAZ PARKING LTD FOR PARKING ENFORCEMENT
SERVICES AT CALF PASTURE BEACH, SHADY BEACH, TAYLOR FARM,
VETERAN'S PARK AND CRANBURY PARK FOR THROUGH OCTOBER 15,
2024 FOR AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$210,575.00 Account No. 014153 5298**

There was no discussion.

VI DISCUSSION

1. Open Street event on Calf Pasture Beach Road, potentially on May 13th. It would be a joint event by the Bike/Walk Commission, Rec & Parks, and TMP.

Mr. Stowers said the joint event has been well planned and will now need to go to the Traffic Authority for approval. Ms. Young asked a full presentation will be given where the street closures will be outlined. Mr. Stowers said "yes" and that will be presented to the Traffic Authority.

Mr. Hughes addressed a comment regarding parking and said that a resident does not know if a car has paid for parking and the beauty of Laz Parking is that it keeps people honest because there is not a set schedule on when the park is patrolled and that is done intentionally and based on the numbers the system is working, and they have seen on consistent increase in not only the passes that are purchased by nonresidents, but also by paid daily parkers who have the ability to pay at the kiosks or through the Park Mobile app. Mr. Stowers said staff will ask the consultants that are working on the fees and fines schedule to look at this to make improvements and come up with a structure that is more appropriate.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dilene Byrd