

TOWN of WESTON, CONNECTICUT



Incorporated 1787

Parks & Recreation Commission

DRAFT MINUTES
MONDAY JANUARY 5, 2009
7:30 P.M.

WESTON TOWN HALL
MEETING ROOM

David C. Juneau
Chairman

Committees:

Administrative,
Fields

Carlos Mello
Vice chairman

Committee:
Aquatics

Nancy Babyak
Commissioner

Committee:
Programs

Marc Butlein
Commissioner

Committee:
Programs

Carl Bernstein
Commissioner

Committees:
Fields, Parks

Patrick E. Kane
Commissioner

Committee:
Aquatics

Robert A. Uzenoff
Commissioner

Committee:
Administrative

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The Weston Parks and Recreation Commission ("WPRC") began its regular monthly meeting on Monday, January 5, 2009 in the meeting room in town hall. Commissioners present: Marc Butlein, Carl Bernstein, Nancy Babyak, Chairman David Juneau, Carlos Mello and Bob Uzenoff. Commissioners absent: Pat Kane. Staff present: David Ungar.

Official actions of the commission are indicated in these minutes by underlining.

- 1) Call to order: A quorum being present, Mr. Juneau called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
- 2) Approval of minutes: The commission approved the draft minutes of the December 8, 2008 meeting with corrections. Mr. Ungar recorded the corrections and will issue the final minutes.
- 3) Public forum: no person presented for the public forum.
- 4) New Business : meeting with representative of Weston Soccer Club, Inc. (WSC) Philip Shaner.

Mr. Juneau asked for a volunteer to record these minutes. Mr. Uzenoff volunteered.

In a previous meeting WPRC decided to invite all sports clubs in the town to meet with the commission, one group per commission meeting, about matters of mutual interest. It is the intention to increase its awareness of the programs, activities, successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvements

The exchange with the commission and Mr. Shaner consisted of an oral presentation and discussion with the commission of WSC programs

33 and finances concluding with presentation and discussion of Mr.
34 Shaner's written proposal *Bleacher/Booster Barn Committee to Explore*
35 *Revenue Development*. Mr. Shaner reported that WSC autumn 2008
36 registration was 637 including Tots. He said registration was declining
37 with time and estimated registration falling to 350 by autumn 2012.
38 Shaner cited falling birth rates and competition from other sports
39 contributing to the decline.

40 Mr. Shaner expressed concern in WSC's ability to fulfill its multi-year
41 \$3,000 per year pledge to partially offset the town's construction costs
42 for bleachers and a concession stand on the high school stadium field.
43 The same commitment was made by other by each sports club using
44 rectangular fields.

45 Mr. Shaner reported that unlike clubs in neighboring towns, WSC
46 employs professional coaches for all of its programs. WSC pays
47 coaches \$3,700 per season, representing 87% of club revenue. WSC
48 currently charges \$360 per season for fourth through eighth grade
49 travel and Westport and Wilton charge \$1,500 per year (no per-season
50 option). Third-eighth grade Rec Plus costs \$265 per season versus \$300
51 for other towns. WSC pays \$2,800 for directors' and officers'
52 insurance, the lowest possible rate. Shaner reported WSC also waives
53 fees for some players with financial need.

54 Other clubs have lower costs. Besides not paying professional coaches,
55 Shaner reported the Town of Westport and Town of Wilton provide
56 their soccer programs with field lining, goals, maintenance of all
57 equipment, balls, and medical kits, all things that WSC pays for.

58 When asked about challenges WSC faces, Mr. Shaner cited ability to
59 continue to use professional coaches. When asked if WSC would
60 consider raising its fees to that comparable of neighboring towns, Mr.
61 Shaner answered that increasing fees was not under consideration;
62 WSC would change to amateur coaches, likely parents who can be
63 licensed, if necessary. WSC also plans to increase the number of
64 players on a team to 14, although only 11 at a time can be on the field.

65 Mr. Shaner said WSC projects operating losses for the balance of the
66 year. He waived a document in the air to show all the red ink. Mr.
67 Shaner provided no written documentation of WSC financial position,
68 projections, or assets. Mr. Shaner, when asked by Mr. Uzenoff asked if
69 he would be providing them to WPRC in the future, said he would not.

70 When questioned about the commission's discovery that WSC
71 provided field time allotted by the commission for the use of WSC to
72 Beachside of Connecticut Soccer Club (BCSC), Mr. Shaner accepted
73 responsibility for the arrangement and that WSC received \$1,600 this
74 past season. The commission expressed its concern over this action.
75 Mr. Shaner said he would not do it again.

76 Mr. Shaner explained the aforementioned proposal *Bleacher/Booster*
77 *Barn Committee to Explore Revenue Development* was his response to
78 a challenge from Weston Board of Finance chair [sic] Jerry Sargent to
79 Weston High School athletic director Mark Berkowitz “ ... to identify
80 revenue producing opportunities to pay down bleacher and booster barn
81 expenditures.”

82 Mr. Shaner also requested the commission in the future to pay for the
83 following items currently paid for by WSC:

- 84 1. Lining of fields at \$25,000 for initial lining per year and \$4,000
85 for line maintenance
- 86 2. Cost of nets, gabs, maintenance

87 In addition, Shaner seeks WPRC permission to allow WSC to install
88 electrical service at Morehouse Farm Park to be used to make coffee
89 for WSC sale.

90 Mr. Shaner departed at 9:55 p.m. The discussion discussed the
91 evening’s information and determined it needed more discussion time
92 than the evening would allow. Before the next meeting the following
93 action items were identified:

- 94 1. Mr. Butlein will discuss the situation with the first selectman.
- 95 2. Mr. Bernstein will discuss with BoF chair Mike O’Brien.
- 96 3. Mr. Juneau will discuss with Jerry Sargent.

97 5) The commission adjourned at 10:30 p.m., to continue the meeting
98 January 21, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in town hall.

99 Respectfully submitted,

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102

103 Robert A. Uzenoff

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105 Attachment: *Bleacher/Booster Barn Committee to Explore Revenue*
106 *Development* handed to WPRC commissioners at the meeting.

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ACTION ITEMS

- 2008-25 Messrs. Mello and Juneau will write the Superintendent of Schools, copying the Chair of the Board of Education, expressing the Commissions' displeasure that the high school athletic director permitted the Aspetuck Wildcats to install temporary lighting on the stadium field, and that the installation did not meet the WPRC expectation and understanding that it would conform to the artificial turf manufacturer's specifications.
- 2009-01 Opened 01-05-2009 Mr. Butlein will discuss the WSC situation with the first selectman.
- 2009-02 Opened 01-05-2009 Mr. Bernstein will discuss the WSC situation with the Board of Finance chair, Mr. O'Brien.
- 2009-03 Opened 01-05-2009 Mr. Juneau will discuss the WSC situation with Board of Finance member Mr. Sargent.

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DRAFT

Bleacher/Booster Barn
Committee to Explore Revenue Development

Background

- Weston Board of Finance, chaired by Jerry Sargent, has directed A.D. Mark Berkowitz to identify revenue producing opportunities to pay-down Bleacher/Booster Barn expenditure.
- With only posts in the ground at the Stadium turf field, and with further bleacher construction pending BOE initiatives on location/positioning of Booster Barn, it would seem unlikely that the completed facility would be available for S.'09 usage.
- Exposure to yet another sports season revenue shortfall

Proposal

- Committee to be formed to explore revenue development outside the Weston sports community.
- Committee would have a five member composition representing the following non-affiliated organizations:
 - Parks and Recreation
 - Board of Education
 - High School Athletic Department
 - Weston Lacrosse Club
 - Weston Soccer Club, Inc.

Mission

- Identify/contact outside Weston community sports organizations to explore facility usage at fair market value for training, games, meets and tournaments.

Precedent

- Parks and Recreation regularly offers outside organizations fee-based use of Weston sports facilities to create a revenue stream.

Next Steps

- Immediately form committee to explore/identify outside Weston sports organizations as revenue producing vehicles on a fee-based platform to pay-down the Bleacher/Booster Barn expenditure.
- Outside sports organizations' access would not infringe on Weston community facility usage.
- Fee-based facility usage would be launched S.'09.