



Parks & Recreation Committee - Board of Representatives

Jim Caterbone, Co-Chair Marion McGarry, Co-Chair

Committee Report

Date: Thursday, May 21, 2015

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Republican Caucus Room, 4th Floor, Government Center,
888 Washington Boulevard

The Parks & Recreation Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Co-Chair Caterbone, Co-Chair McGarry and Committee Member Reps. Ryan, Heaphy, Pratt, Briscoe and Giordano. Absent or excused were Committee Member Reps. DePina and Mahoney. Also present were President Skigen; Reps. Di Costanzo, Fedeli, Figueroa, Silver, Watkins and Zelinsky; Laurie Albano, Superintendent of Recreation; Al Barbarota; James Grunberger; Fred Wexler, Stamford Youth Soccer; Jamil Zraikat, Amateur Soccer League of Connecticut; Dana Thibedeau, Girls 14 & U Softball; Peter Hansen, Stamford Lacrosse Association; Rich LoRusso, Stamford Babe Ruth League; Bob Pepi, Stamford Youth Soccer; Charles Pia, Stamford Babe Ruth Softball and several other members of the public.

Co-Chair Caterbone called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

| Item No. | Description | Committee Action |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 11. PR29.025 | RESOLUTION; Approving Fee Increases For Terry Conners Ice Rink. 02/05/15 – Submitted by Jim Hricay 02/26/15 – No action taken 03/26/15 – Public Hearing held & Held in Committee 04/30/15 – Held in Committee <i>Secondary Committee: Cost Savings & Revenue Enhancement</i> | Held in Committee 5-0-0 |

A motion to hold this item was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote (Reps. Caterbone, McGarry, Pratt, Briscoe and Giordano in favor.)

¹ Video Time Stamp 00:00:16

- ². [PR29.027](#) RESOLUTION; Establishing Fees For Summer Camp Programs. **Approved 5-0-0**
02/05/15 – Submitted by Jim Hricay
02/26/15 – No action taken
03/26/15 – Public Hearing held & Held in Committee
04/30/15 – Held in Committee

Secondary Committee: Cost Savings & Revenue Enhancement

A motion to approve this resolution was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote (Reps. Caterbone, McGarry, Pratt, Briscoe and Giordano in favor.)

- ³. [PR29.028](#) RESOLUTION; Concerning Recreation Program Fees. **Approved 6-0-0**
02/05/15 – Submitted by Jim Hricay
02/26/15 – No action taken
03/26/15 – Public Hearing held & Held in Committee
04/30/15 – Held in Committee

Secondary Committee: Cost Savings & Revenue Enhancement

A motion to approve this resolution was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote (Reps. Caterbone, McGarry, Pratt, Briscoe, Giordano and Heaphy in favor).

- ⁴. [PR29.031](#) RESOLUTION; Naming the Park at 83 Lockwood Avenue after Assistant Chief of Police Francis Cronin. **Approved, as Amended, 7-0-0**
04/17/15 – Submitted by President Skigen

President Skigen stated that he submitted this item on behalf of the East Side Partnership and DOMUS. Mr. Grunberger explained that the East Side Partnership had renovated the field which was left in terrible shape after Rogers left. There is now a small little league field which is used by DOMS and CLC. Frank Cronin created community policing, and they thought the field should be named after him, with a ceremony to take place in conjunction with the health fair in October. Representative Heaphy noted that the community on the East Side has changed over time and that Officer Cronin played a significant role in that change. The Committee discussed the name of the Field, and a motion to amend the resolution to name the field the “Assistant Chief of Police Francis Cronin Field” was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote (Reps. Caterbone, McGarry, Pratt, Briscoe, Giordano, Heaphy and Ryan in favor). A motion to approve the resolution, as amended, was made, seconded and approved by unanimous vote (Reps. Caterbone, McGarry, Pratt, Briscoe, Giordano, Heaphy and Ryan in favor).

- ⁵. [PR29.029](#) REVIEW; Use of Athletic Fields at Stamford Public School locations. **Report made**
03/27/15 – Submitted by Reps. Skigen, Fedeli, DeLuca, Day, Franzetti, Mitchell, Silver and Zelinsky
04/30/15 – Held in Committee

² Video Time Stamp 00:01:08

³ Video Time Stamp 00:02:10

⁴ Video Time Stamp 00:03:20

6. PR29.030 REVIEW; Use of City Soccer Fields and problems of profits versus non-profits and use of field at 200 Strawberry Hill Avenue by for-profit organizations. **Report made**
04/08/15 – Submitted by Rep. Zelinsky
04/30/15 – Held in Committee

Co-Chair Caterbone stated that the Committee would consider Item Nos. 5 and 6 together. He noted that the Committee has received an opinion for Deputy Corporation Counsel Vikki Cooper that the Board of Representatives has no control over Board of Education fields.

Mr. Barbarotta explained that:

- the Board of Education has always had programs run on its fields and in buildings
- There is a priority for assignment of BOE fields and facilities, in descending order as follows: BOE programs; Parks & Recreation Department; Youth Programs; and for-profits (There are 10 categories of priority)
- There is not a lot of spare time available on the fields
- The issues that have come up this year are due to Chelsea Piers wanting to use the fields. They were allowed to use a field only if it was available
- He made the decision to award a field to Chelsea Piers in accordance with Board of Education policy and the decision regarding what to charge was in accordance with this policy, which is currently \$100/day. Youth programs are not charged anything other than custodian overtime. They are using the Scofield field on Saturday mornings because Stamford Youth said it was not being used.
- The policies are from 2008 and are currently being reviewed by the BOE Policy Committee
- He is not responsible for the field at 200 Strawberry Hill
- Groups wanting to use the fields or school facilities have to go through an approval process
- There is no moratorium on BOE fields
- There are no park police available to check that groups using the fields have permits

The following individuals expressed concerns regarding the use of the fields: Fred Wexler, Stamford Youth Soccer; Jamil Zraikat, Amateur Soccer League of Connecticut; Dana Thibedeau, Girls 14 & U Softball; Peter Hansen, Stamford Lacrosse Association; Rich LoRusso, Stamford Babe Ruth League; and Bob Pepi, Stamford Youth Soccer.

Concerns expressed included:

- use of fields by commercial groups not based in Stamford
- the need for the BOR to control the fields
- fields becoming overused by outside groups
- the need for flexibility in scheduling field use within leagues
- the current limits on the use of City fields to established leagues
- the need for additional space
- the need to charge commercial entities at a higher rate
- not permitting for-profit organizations to get permits for fields when they compete with City programs
- aligning the BOE policy with the City policy of not renting fields to commercial

⁵ Video Time Stamp 00:12:41

entities

Ms. Albano stated that

- the Parks & Recreation Commission sets the policy for field allocation
- currently for-profit and independent teams are not allowed
- a league must be sanctioned by the Commission in order to get a permit
- field space is tight during prime time use
- there is no longer a moratorium and new adult programs have been allowed
- the City does not have a lacrosse field
- the City is leasing the field at 200 Strawberry Hill to Chelsea Piers – that field is neither a City park nor a school and they are being charged as a contracted vendor

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Barbarotta stated that:

- the fields are allocated based upon rosters and schedules
- the information regarding which field is in use and when is available but is not online
- the fees charged by the BOE are placed in a building and field use account and then reinvested in facilities as determined by the BOE

Co-Chair McGarry expressed concern about a point raised by one of the speakers that the fees are collected by the BOE yet for the Babe Ruth Leagues the city is responsible to maintain the field even if it is overtime, noting that it is inequitable for the BOE to receive fees for services paid for by taxpayers.

Co-Chair Caterbone asked Mr. Barbarotta to get the following information for the Committee:

- how much of the BOE budget is allocated to field use and maintenance other than Boyle Stadium
- How much money was raised last year from the fees charged and how it was allocated

Co-Chair Caterbone adjourned the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Jim Caterbone, Co-Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).