



Parks & Recreation Committee - Board of Representatives

Dennis Mahoney, Chair

Raven Matherne, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Tuesday, June 16, 2020

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Held Remotely

The Parks & Recreation Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Mahoney, Vice Chair Matherne and Committee Member Reps. Aquila, de la Cruz, Giordano, Policar, Saftic and Wallace. Excused was Rep. Pratt. Also present were Reps. Di Costanzo, McMullen, Morson, Sherwood and Stella; Mark McGrath, Director of Operations; Dana Lee, Law Dept.; Jennifer Williams, Bureau Chief of Parks & Recreation; Laurie Albano, Superintendent of Recreation; Ken Smith, Terry Connors Rink; David Villalva, Risk Manager; and Robert Tyska, Golf Commission;

Chair Mahoney called the meeting to order at 7:08 pm.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
11. PR30.045	ORDINANCE for publication: Amending Chapter 84 of The Code of Ordinances, "Boats" to Require a Permit Prior to Using City-owned Boat Slips. 04/28/20 – Submitted by Law Department	Approved as Amended 8-0-0

Mr. Lee explained that this ordinance came about as a result of two long term infractions which occurred last year. A mechanism is needed to address the issue.

There was discussion on this item:

- Boats cannot easily be towed because it involves maritime law.
- The City wants to avoid going to litigation with these types of cases. Having a citation and fine hopefully will stop this from happening.
- Notices would be sent to the last know DMV registration address.
- Signs regarding the ordinance should be put in place.
- Boat owners should have the ability to pay fines by phone.
- It is the general consensus that most boaters are congenial and law-abiding, so these citations most likely would not happen very often.
- The Dock Master knows which boats belong in each dock.
- A citation can be appealed through the regular City appeals process.
- Mr. McGrath will put signage at the docks and will return to the Committee to report on where the signs are placed.

¹ Video Time Stamp: 00:00:52

A motion was made and seconded to allow for the fines to be subject to the approval of the Harbor Master. A friendly amendment was made to lower the proposed fine from \$250 to \$25. It was discussed that the Harbor Master should not have the ability to determine a citation. The friendly amendment was not accepted. The original motion was withdrawn.

A motion to amend the proposed fine from \$250 to \$100 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Reps. Mahoney, Matherne, Aquila, de la Cruz, Giordano, Policar, Saftic and Wallace in favor).

A motion to approve this item as amended was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Reps. Mahoney, Matherne, Aquila, de la Cruz, Giordano, Policar, Saftic and Wallace in favor).

- ²2. [PR30.048](#) APPROVAL: Amended and Restated Ethel Kveskin Theater Operation Agreement. **Held 8-0-0**
05/18/20 – Submitted by Mayor's Office
06/09/20 – Held by Planning Board
06/11/20 – Held by Board of Finance

Due to this item being held by the Planning Board and Board of Finance, a motion to hold this item was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Reps. Mahoney, Matherne, Aquila, de la Cruz, Giordano, Policar, Saftic and Wallace in favor).

- ³3. [PR30.051](#) REVIEW; of Terry Connors Fee Increases 2017 to present; Revenue and Expenses 2017 to present; and Comparison to Competitive Rinks Fee Schedules. **Held 8-0-0**
06/03/20 – Submitted by Reps. Mahoney and Matherne.

Rep. Mahoney explained that the Terry Connors Rink (TCR) budget has been cut by \$170,000. The Mayor has put together a task force to look at a potential public-private partnership. Rep. Mahoney represents the BOR on this task force.

There was discussion on this item:

- Since 2017 fees have been increasing per the Mayor's request.
- Over the last several years TCR was at a break-even point but the Mayor's Budget presentation this season stated TCR is now running at a \$500,000 deficit.
- TCR has been designated to a special revenue fund, and is now being expected to cover all of its own expenses.
- The budget has allocated \$77,534 in central services costs to TCR.
- The fees need to offset relevant expenses.
- Mr. Villalva explained the reason for the high general liability costs in this budget. There was a large workers' compensation payout from a case settled in 2015, and there is an open workers' compensation claim that is expected to be settled soon. Ideally funds should have been reserved for these claims and incorporated into the TCR budget over the past few years.

² Video Time Stamp: 01:24:20

³ Video Time Stamp: 01:25:21

- The nature of an ice rink gives it a high risk rating.
- TCR has been in Stamford for 48 years and is an asset to the City. Its value to the City needs to be considered.
- Approximately 1,000 students learn to skate at TCR each year. There are summer camps, high school hockey teams, synchronized skating teams, school events, scouting events and other events.
- The rink has always given free practice and play time to the high school teams in Stamford. In return, TCR gets the admission fees from the games, however that does not cover the costs for the rink time.
- If TCR has to incur central services expenses, then it is only fair that the BOE pays for high school team rink time.
- The BOE invoices the Recreation Department for its expenses
- All the surrounding towns pay for high school team time.
- City high school programs should not be put at risk in this budget.
- The supplies budget increased due to batteries needed for the ice resurfacers.
- The capital needs must be determined. Ms. Albano will get that information to the Committee.
- Ms. Berta in OPM will get the retirement budget numbers to the Committee.
- The Other Salary has increased due to the minimum wage increase.
- TCR fees are lower than surrounding areas. Historically, the increases have matched the expense increases, and the goal was not to make money. Since the budget structure has changed, this needs to change to eliminate the deficit.
- Lack of a balanced budget should not be a reason for privatization.
- Ms. Albano will get to the Committee how the central services costs are broken down.

A motion to hold this item pending more information was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 8-0-0 (Reps. Mahoney, Matherne, Aquila, de la Cruz, Giordano, Policar, Saftic and Wallace in favor).

4. [PR30.049](#) RESOLUTION and approval of public hearing; **Approved as amended 7-1-0**
 Establishing Fees for the Terry Connors Ice Rink.
 01/08/20 – Submitted by Mayor Martin

Given the lateness of this information coming to the Board Office, a motion was made and seconded to hold this item. After brief discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

There was further discussion:

- The City needs to clarify the budget, and the Committee should not rush to increase any fees until it is clear what the totality of the issue is. The correct fee structure could alleviate the deficit.
- Fees should be raised now to help TCR when it re-opens.
- Three of the biggest groups who use the rink have agreed to a rate of \$410 for Ice Rental – Resident & Off-Season (Stamford Youth Hockey, Southern CT Synchronized Skating Team and Skating Club of Southern CT).
- There are many smaller groups who use the rink but the Committee has not heard feedback from them.
- Mr. Smith stated that if the \$410 rate is approved, this should be addressed in the future to try to come up to a higher figure as this would benefit TCR.

⁴ Video Time Stamp: 02:51:13

- The Committee does not have the best information right now. The goal is not to rush through fee increases now, but to look at all of the fees to offset the right expenses, reserve for the future and add to the capital fund.

A motion to amend the proposed rate for Ice Rental – Resident & Off-Season from \$435 to \$410 was made, seconded and approved by a vote of 7-1-0 (Rep. Matherne, Aquila, de la Cruz, Giordano, Policar, Saftic and Wallace; Rep. Mahoney opposed).

A motion to approve this item as amended was made, seconded approved by a vote of 7-1-0 (Reps. Matherne, Aquila, de la Cruz, Giordano, Policar, Saftic and Wallace in favor; Rep. Mahoney opposed).

- ⁵5. [PR30.050](#) RESOLUTION and Approval of Public Hearing; **No Action Taken**
Establishing Fees for E. Gaynor Brennan Golf
Course 2020-2021
06/02/20 – Submitted by Mayor’s Office

Mr. Tyska explained that the Commission has received no information from the Mayor’s Office about the fees. Rates were increased earlier this season. The Commission hopes to vote next month on the fees. Rounds are up significantly this year and are back to levels not seen since 2007.

No action was taken on this item.

Chair Mahoney adjourned the meeting at 10:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis Mahoney, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).

⁵ Video Time Stamp: 03:26:05