



Parks & Recreation Committee - Board of Representatives

Dennis Mahoney, Chair

Raven Matherne, Vice Chair

Committee Report

Date: Tuesday, February 16, 2021
Time: 7:00 pm
Place: This meeting was held remotely

The Parks & Recreation Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Mahoney, Vice Chair Matherne and Committee Member Reps. Aquila, Giordano, Policar, Saftic, and Wallace. Excused was Rep. de la Cruz. Absent was Rep. Pratt. Also present were Reps. Sherwood and Watkins; Mark McGrath, Director of Operations; Kevin Murray, Parks & Facilities Operations Manager; Jennifer Williams, Parks, Recreation & Facilities Bureau Chief; Kathryn Emmett, Law Dept.; Julie Giglio, Mayor's Office; Ken Smith, TCR Manager; Frank Petise, Traffic Engineer; and one member of the public.

Chair Mahoney called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
11. PR30.062	REVIEW; Discussion of Summer Beach Access Strategy and Planning. 02/03/21 – Submitted by Rep. Mahoney	Report Made

Mr. Murray, Ms. Emmett, and Mr. McGrath gave an update on this item and there was discussion.

- The Operations Dept. is having weekly meetings to prepare for the upcoming season using strategies that were implemented last year.
- It is difficult to say what exactly will happen this season because it is not yet known what State guidelines will be.
- Stamford parks were kept open last year as it is important to have outdoor spaces for residents to be able to visit. The parks and beaches were very busy. Playgrounds will continue to be closed for high touch point areas.
- There will be multiple banners in English and Spanish with guidelines for social distancing, etc., and these will be updated throughout the season as needed.
- Park Attendants were at Cove, Cummings, Scalzi, and Leone parks Friday thru Sunday for 10 weeks last year. They gave out facemasks and informed visitors of park guidelines and regulations. If there were any issues, they would inform the police or park police. Daily reports were given to the Operations Dept. There is a request in the 2021-2022 budget to keep this program.

¹ Video Time Stamp: 00:00:40

- The LAZ parking program is used. A receipt is given when purchasing a permit and the license plate is documented into the system. Beach stickers will not be used. The receipt gets a vehicle into the parking lot, and hand held devices monitor the license plates of cars parked in the lots.
- There is no current solution to control visitors being dropped off and walking into the parks or coming in with bicycles.
- Food trucks will have a designated place to park at Cummings, and there will mandatory outlets for the food truck owners to plug into, so the trucks will not be running all day. A closer look will be taken this year as to the placement of the trucks.
- The situation with illegally parked cars on streets near the beaches improved with increased parking enforcement last year. Two streets applied for the residential parking permit program. Many residents feel the program causes too many problems for the residents.
- The overflow parking lot at Czescik Marina will not require a permit.
- The entrance gate at Soundview Avenue was closed during the mornings only while there was a COVID test site, which is no longer there. Normally this gate is required to be closed at 9pm, Friday thru Sunday. Only police or park police should clear the lot and close the gate for safety reasons.
- Mayor Martin is committed to taking whatever steps necessary to protect residents and visitors to Stamford's parks and facilities.
- Ms. Emmett stated it would not be appropriate to discuss a response to a situation since it is not yet known exactly what the situation will be as far as State guidelines for beaches and parks in May.
- Mr. McGrath stated that any and all options for running the parks and beaches as efficiently as possible should be explored, and he is opened to having discussions about it.
-

²
[PR30.063](#)

REVIEW: Status of FY 2020-21 Budget and
Potential Impacts for 2021-22 Budget
02/03/21 –Submitted by Rep. Di Costanzo

Report Made

Mr. Murray reviewed the five budget increases being requested for FY 2021-2022.

- Scofieldtown Park soil testing, \$145K. This is a State regulation and was previously held in the Capital budget. This will be first year it is in the Operations budget. The Administration is working with the State to reduce the number of testing from four times per year to two times per year.
- Park Attendants program, \$130K. This was a very successful program last year, having attendants at the beaches and parks. The attendants are the eyes and ears for the park regulations. The Parks Dept. is asking for up to 10 positions for 26 weeks. Last year this was paid for with State COVID funding but not this year.
- Opening of Veterans Memorial Park, \$35K. The park has been enhanced, and there will be increased utility and maintenance costs, for an approximate total of \$124K. This will be a 50/50 cost sharing budget partnership between the City and a combination of the DSSD and the Veterans Committee.

² Video Time Stamp: 00:55:10

- Test product of “Geese Away” at Cummings, \$10K. This is a solar lighting product that has been successful in Norwalk. It is unnoticeable to humans but disturbs geese from sleeping so they do not want to stay.
- Organic Turf program, \$5K. This was started last year at Cove Island, and the Parks Dept. would like to implement at Cummings Field #1 or #2.

Ms. Williams briefly discussed the Recreation side of the budget. The Stillmeadow program will not be running this summer due to reasons other than COVID. Besides that, which summer programs are running will depend on where the State will be in a few months as far as restrictions. As of now she is not aware of anything that will negatively impact the Recreation budget.

Chair Mahoney adjourned the meeting at 8:16 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Dennis Mahoney, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#)