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The meeting of the Board of Park Commissioners was held on Tuesday, July 14, 2020, at 5:00 p.m. This meeting was conducted by Zoom/Teleconference. The public had access to this meeting by calling the following conference line and then entering the conference code:

Dial in Number:

1 (929) 436-2866

1 (888) 475-4499 Toll-free

Meeting ID: 929 7457 7521

Password: 680471

Mr. Labrador stated that this meeting is being conducted with the authority issued by the Governor of the State of Connecticut and read the following:

Tonight's meeting of the Board of Park Commissioner is the regular monthly meeting for May 2020 and is being conducted by electronic means as authorized by Governor Ned Lamont executive order 7B which was issued on March 14, 2020, and which the Public has electronic access to witness this meeting.

The recording and transcription of this meeting will be posted on the City Clerk's website within 7 days.

Mr. Labrador asked that everyone abide by the Governor's request and directives contained in his various executive orders: 7 through 7J, with additional orders to be forthcoming.

OPENING CEREMONY

ROLL CALL

Present: President Labrador, Vice President Brideau, Commissioners: Wade, Cotto and Hosier, Clerk Ellen M. Gerrity. Also, in attendance were, Craig A. Nadrizny, Acting Public Facilities Director, Luann Conine, Recreation Superintendent Stephen Hladun, Special Projects Coordinator, Luis Burgos, Manager of Roadway and Parks Services, with Angel DePara, Database Administrator, presiding as host of the meeting.

After determining there was a quorum, Mr. Labrador called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JUNE 9, 2020, PARKS BOARD MEETING

On a motion made by Mr. Brideau, seconded by Mr. Cotto, it was unanimously voted to approve the minutes of the Tuesday, June 9, 2020, meeting as presented.

PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM:

Due to the public health emergency, public speaking will be by written testimony only**

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All written testimony should have been submitted to Ellen.Gerrity@bridgeportct.gov by 4:30p.m.on Tuesday, July 14th.***

PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM

1. Councilwoman Michele Lyons, 134th District, spoke on the following three items:

Sacred Heart University Cell Tower - She is not in favor of putting the cell tower in the golf course area because the city would have to lift the restrictions of development, and it would open the door for future development of the land and other issues and concerns.

She said that she is not sure if the neighbors from the surrounding areas of Bridgeport and Fairfield have been contacted about the potential cell tower, but she has been approached by constituents in her district with concerns.

She said that the golf course is a beautiful piece of land and she thinks that the golfers and others would have concerns about a cell tower looming over them

She said she does not think it would be financially beneficial to put a cell tower on this beautiful piece of land.

She also said that she does not know why they did not put the tower on the old GE Building or Jewish home in that area.

Caribe signs – She said that usually teams place signs at the games to help promote their teams and others. She wonders if by removing the banners it would affect the teams financial gain.

Christopher Columbus Statue – She said that the power to remove the statue should only be the sole authority of the Board of Park Commissioners and the Common Council.

She said that she would like to see a solution worked out with the Italian community since they paid to put the statue up and was not funded by the City of Bridgeport.

She would like to see a solution worked out where everyone is happy.

2. Neil A. Kavey, Board Chair, Bridgeport Field of Dreams Foundation, and former Director of Athletics for the Bridgeport Public Schools BCYL, submitted a statement of support for the Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders.

Mr. Kavey spoke in favor of the Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders to use signage at their fields.

As a former high school and college baseball player and a ten-year high school baseball coach, he sees no safety issues with fence signs. No sight lines are obstructed. Signs

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attached to the back stop will discourage people from congregating behind home plate making the umpire's job that much easier.

Taking away signage that promotes an organization supporting the game of baseball, among other sports, would prove detrimental in BCYL's efforts to attract future participation, which in turn would hurt participation on an interscholastic level.

3. Jeannette Estrella, 59 Williamsburg Drive, Bridgeport, CT.

I have lived in Bridgeport Connecticut for 35 years. When I first moved here the Seaside Park beach area was beautiful, however, the fields around them were unattractive and barely nurtured. Moving forward, the city allowed the BCYL organization the right to use these fields. With help from the City of Bridgeport and the Dept. of Recreation– the fields were updated, maintained properly, and are now in use during our season and beyond. We have held 15 successful seasons and tournaments in these fields.

The banners that were put in place by BCYL at the field were from the result of issues we were having with controlling our parents' interaction with the working coaching staff and for safety reasons. However, the banners served much more than they were intended to. They gave our team a sense of togetherness and community spirit. They have proudly been in place for years during our baseball season & it is great for all who visit our parks to know that we have successful programs for our children. Even while no games are being played, many have seen our banners and have given the city credit in building this area to the current status. This is a showcase!

We feel as though having to remove and put the banners back up would cause unnecessary stress in our organization, which is facing far greater challenges now as you know due to COVID 19. We have created steps in keeping our members safe and have our hands full preparing our organization for the 'new normal'. That is our top priority. Please, do not add another burden.

I ask the board to please re-consider this action and allow the banner to remain in full view in the Seaside fields during our season. We should all be proud of the condition of these fields and be able to show our spirit and engagement to our city as a whole.

4. Maximino Medina, Jr., Zeldes, Needle & Cooper, P.C., 1000 Lafayette Blvd., Bridgeport, CT

For approximately 10 years now I have been very proud to be a member of the board of directors of BCYL f/k/a Caribe Baseball League. Every year, BCYL enriches the lives of hundreds of children (and their family members) in many different ways (such as raising and disbursing scholarships for our kids) including through our athletic programs (for girls and boys) which remain a central part of our mission. For years we have had the privilege of playing many games at Seaside and we have been very responsible. Our athletes and their families respect the park.

With respect to your agenda tonight and specifically items nos. 2 and 7, I respectfully submit that BCYL has no monopoly and is very happy to share the park's resources with all others,

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including any other sports leagues. We are not aware of any other baseball league being denied access because of BCYL's usage. I would also recommend that your Board not take any action in response to input from an advocate without getting a full report and hearing from both sides. That gets me to item no. 7. Your Board took action on May 12 without ever asking BCYL to respond to the points raised by Councilman Cruz. I think that is regrettable and not the best way of proceeding. I fully respect Councilman Cruz's opinion and his desire to do what's best for Seaside. I am also very confident that the way BCYL serves our community at Seaside is in everyone's best interests.

5. AmyMarie Vizzo-Paniccia, Councilwoman, 134th District

Questions, comments and concerns: "FOR THE RECORD"

***I oppose the lifting of any development restrictions as this will just open Pandora's box and be abused.

***We have plenty of tennis courts, much to maintain \$ every year and not needed or should be inside our main Parks.

What is a pickle board?

Maybe consider non-residential pocket parks?

*** If there re permit processes in place, how is that one entity (as being questioned) use more than others?

Who else is looking to use? Are there added problems? Is City and Parks getting paid for fees etc?

***Scooters of any type should not be allowed in our parks. Noise increases as does nose, exhaust fumes and the Parks re for enjoyments and not scooters etc.

***A parade of cars during the summer, when parks open, folks enjoying quiet and family time? Another health and safety hazard and should not be allowed.

6. Brittany Rodriguez

"My name is Brittany Rodriguez, I am a 22-year-old Boston College graduate, a lifelong resident of Bridgeport, and I've been a member of Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders for about 14 years. I have been a teammate (for basketball, softball), a player, a scholar, and even a coach. Caribe has served as a foundation for my growth from a very young age. Through the league, I not only became competent in a sport, but I've learned valuable lessons regarding teamwork, commitment, patience, and integrity.

When I think of this league, I think of what they have done for me on a personal level. The lessons I've learned, the mentorship to guide my next steps, the friends I've made, and the networking that has advanced my career goals. But BCYL is so much more than that. BCYL provides children from the city of Bridgeport with a platform to follow their dreams and pursue greatness (in whatever form that may be). This league reinforces this idea that being from Bridgeport should not be a limitation but the foundation of our growth. John Torres, the donors, the organizations we partner with, the volunteers and the board of directors all

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believe in our city and the great things that can come out of it through each and every member.

Everyday BCYL is bridging the gap between inner-cities and suburbs. Where our city may lack in comparison to the suburbs, Caribe finds a way to level the playing field. When they noticed that there were disparities in our community in access to healthy foods what did they do? They tackled this by developing the Youth Health Explorers (which I was a part of). Through this initiative, we planted a garden in Bridgeport to provide vegetables at below market prices, while educating our community on healthy eating. When Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders noticed that students standardized testing could use some improvement, they introduced tutoring courses and the SAT prep program.

This organization is consistently seeking out new and different ways to bridge the gap and provide members with the resources they need to be successful in whatever they may be passionate about. BCYL and everyone who supports their mission (either through monetary support or time) is actively saying I see where there may be a lack, where there may be a shortage, and I want to fix that. I want to bridge that gap. Our children, our city belongs here, and they deserve this.

I am honored to be a member of an organization that advocates for and supports marginalized groups by being a voice and giving us a voice."

7. Maximino Medina, Jr., Zeldes, Needle & Cooper, P.C., 1000 Lafayette Blvd., Bridgeport, CT

Please consider this correspondence my respectful suggestion of one way our community can address the controversy surrounding the public displays, such as a statue or a school, dedicated to Christopher Columbus.

In today's America, many people of good faith ask each other to disclose or note the personal perspective from which they address important issues in order to identify, I suppose, any possible origins of implicit bias. Without necessarily agreeing with that approach, I freely tell you that I am a proud Puerto Rican, raised in Bridgeport's South End who knows Black Lives Matter.

Christopher Columbus, the human being, is not worth honoring. There are many great Italians and Italian Americans more worthy than Columbus. However, Columbus, the name, has become a short-hand reference or symbol meant to invoke respect for, and appreciation of, Italian culture and contributions to our community. That tradition is worth honoring.

We have watched as the process of addressing historical wrongs ripped open new wounds in cities throughout our country, including cities in Connecticut. Why can't we in Bridgeport do it in a different, healthier, better way? In a way which teaches our children about respect and

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reconciliation. A way which is not blind to either the real past or the pride of our Italian community.

The Columbus statue in Seaside was erected in 1965 and a small marker was placed next to it which remains today and with the exception of one missing word reads:

A MEMORIAL TO CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS DEDICATED ON THIS SITE OCT. 10, 1965 BY THE CITIZENS OF BRIDGEPORT

Those of us who were alive then and still live here know 2020 Bridgeport is a very different place than 1965 Bridgeport. It remains however, the kind of place where a newcomer to this country can still start her life and with hard work and sacrifice, make her way in this tough world. It should also remain the kind of place where she learns of how this same journey was made by those who came before her.

In 1965 I was a kid at Roosevelt School. Today, if a class of Roosevelt kids were to take a tour of the monuments and statues in Seaside Park the empty place where the Columbus statue stood would teach them nothing. Worse yet, they would be taught a lesson in retribution not reconciliation. Is that what we want?

I propose we put the statue back and add next to it, in a size and style compatible with the one already there, a second marker which could read:

DEDICATED BY A DIVERSE BRIDGEPORT MORE NOBLE THAN COLUMBUS TO HONOR OUR ITALIAN HISTORY AND CULTURE OCT. 12, 2020

My vision is that on that day of rededication and reconciliation our community will come together, proudly waving Italian, Puerto Rican, American flags (among others) and re-affirm to each other our commitment to mutual respect and honesty. I also submit that such a day of celebration would be the perfect day to announce the new name for Columbus School. A school is more than a statue. Schools should be named after role models its students can emulate. When I served on Bridgeport's Board of Education, I was very proud we named new schools after people like Cesar Batalla, Jettie Tisdale and Geraldine Johnson. It's time, in my view, for the kids at Columbus School to be given a role model they can follow.

Please excuse the length of this message. I guess my one sentence suggestion is:

RESTORE THE STATUE; RENAME THE SCHOOL

8. Lorraine Gibbons, Executive Director, Cardinal Shehan Center & McGivney Community Center

It is my pleasure to submit this written testimony on behalf of Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders (BCYL) a non-profit youth organization that has been transforming the lives of Bridgeport's youth.

For the past 16 years, BCYL or CARIBE as it is affectionately called has had a strong partnership with the McGivney Community Center exposing children to each other's

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programs-thereby enabling them to experience activities and opportunities. This is a partnership that is quite rare these days.

CARIBE under the Executive Director-John Torres' leadership, has been a consistent solid "foundation of opportunity and learning" for the children of the Greater Bridgeport Area. The impact that has been made to the thousands of children who lives have been touched by the program is quite commendable.

John and his team serve our youth with passion and believes in their full potential and growth. The mission of CARIBE is to provide youth with sports, educational and civic direction helping them build the character and self-esteem they need to reach their full potential and value in society. The work that they do is clearly needed to help provide students, our future leaders, with a better foundation to become successful.

9. Gwendolyn Brantley

On behalf of ACCESS Educational Services, Inc., this letter is in support of The Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders Organization and their ongoing commitment to provide high quality, safe, and affordable Educational and Sport Programs to hundreds of families for many, many years. Additionally, Caribe has successfully built and maintains positive healthy relationship with these families in which lends itself.

My name is Gwendolyn Brantley, and I am the Founder and Executive Director of ACCESS Educational Services and the Lead of the Greater Bridgeport STEM Ecosystem (GBSLE), an initiative of The Fairfield County United Way. In both roles, I have had the privilege and honor to work directly with Caribe's Staff and John Torres over the past several years. ACCESS and Caribe shares remarkably similar values and goals to ensure that all the students we serve have access to high quality and affordable youth programs.

We collaborated in our recruiting efforts, making sure that our families are aware of the opportunities that both organizations offer in terms of academic enrichment and leadership development, share information about other youth programs and social services that our families may need. John Torres serves on the Advisory Team for the GBSLE, a global initiative that allows us to partner with over 80 different Ecosystems across the United States and 35 local non-profits, faith-based organizations, corporations, Bridgeport School District and other youth serving entities were we have learned how to work together to create more meaning STEM education and innovative opportunities to Bridgeport. We have already created several great initiatives, but most recently and what we are most excited about it the Greater Bridgeport Esports Teams through the North America Scholastic Esports Federation, this opportunity will provide our students across the City an new way to acquire critical communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills needed to thrive in work and in life.

It is important that Caribe continues to receive the support and resources needed to sustain, maintain, and grow the offerings and opportunities to Bridgeport students and Families.

10. Alberto Moya-Castillo, Production Control Executive, 66 Erna Avenue, Milford, CT 06461

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From 2009 when my mother, a single parent, moved me and my older brother from the Bronx to the City of Bridgeport, CT, one thing has remained common in my life, Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders. I played for the baseball division of this organization for roughly 7 years, but my involvement didn't end there. I went on to participate in the SAT prep program, become a baseball coach, become an on-site coordinator and now I'm honored to sit on the Board of Directors. I'm one of the many lucky recipients of the Caribe College Scholarship, which allowed me to attend the University of Bridgeport and obtain my bachelor's degree. Coming from a low-income home, with only one parent, college was a dream, and thank you to Caribe that dream was achieved. I am currently back at the University of Bridgeport obtaining my master's degree, because one thing John Torres, the Executive Director of BCYL, has always stressed is the power and importance of education.

Caribe is one the main reasons I am the man I am today. The motto of BCYL is "Building Today's Youth...Tomorrow's Leaders," well that was certainly accomplished with me. I'm now a professional in the Aerospace Industry, who manages and oversea and production team of over 20 employees and I'm certain that without the guidance, knowledge and support I received from those at Caribe, I wouldn't be where I am today.

This organization must continue to serve the community the same way it has for last 17 years. Giving children in the Greater Bridgeport area and place to excel not only on the diamond but also in the classroom. I'm a product of what Caribe has done, is doing, and will continue to do. I believe the City of Bridgeport should be honored to be the home to such successful and community-oriented organization like BCYL. As a community we need to continue to support Caribe in any way possible because its more than just a baseball league, it can be the key to unlocking someone's dreams, like it did for me.

11. Frank Borres, Volunteer Chairman, CARIBE

Mr. Borres endorsed the use of BCYL using fences around the fields for banners.

He said they went to the Police Department and found that there is no proof of crime or problems due to the banners that are hung. He said that was an empty claim against them.

He said that he is proud of the thousands of children and their families they have been able to help over the years.

He said they are able to raise money to pay for at least seventy percent of all costs needed so these kids can play ball.

He also said that BCYL is not a monopoly and any claim stating so is unfounded and mean spirited.

12. Amy J. Marshall, 51 Arcadia Ave, Bridgeport

I am submitting this written testimony in support of the Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders.

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I first became acquainted with John Torres and Willie Cora close to 15 years ago when I was The principal at Beardsley School. One of my students was a member of BCYL and diagnosed with leukemia. This student needed a bone marrow transplant and no one in his family was a match a bone marrow drive was organized to take place at Beardsley School on a Saturday in hopes of finding a match within the Bridgeport community. John and Willie came to Beardsley to inform me that BCYL wanted to partner with Beardsley School on the bone marrow drive to support the student and his family. The day of the drive, there was a line out the door of the school of parents wanting to be tested to see if they were a match for the student.

Unfortunately, the student's health rapidly declined, and he did not survive. Nevertheless, this was my introduction to Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders, a non-profit organization that supports Youth and their families in moments of crisis as well as with daily activities.

Once I learned that many of the Beardsley students played basketball, baseball or softball with BCYL, I was often at their games. My relationship with John Torres grew over the years and I often saw him at various community events. He frequently included me in BCYL student recognition ceremonies. It became obvious to me that John and BCYL provided Bridgeport youth and their families with programming and activities to ensure that the members were responsible young adults who became leaders in the community.

The partnership between BCYL and the Bridgeport Public Schools has grown to include the annual Minds in Motion family workshop. It was John Torres who brought this workshop to Bridgeport In May of 2019, after retiring from a 30-year career as an educator in Bridgeport Public Schools, 17 of those years as Elementary level administrator, I joined the staff at BCYL in a part time position. I wanted to be part of an organization that was dedicated to Bridgeport youth and their families. John and the BCYL staff provide programming that engages the heart, the mind and the body. The dedication to doing the right thing for youth and their families that I witnessed prior to joining the BCYL team I now see every day and it is admirable.

BCYL provides positive activities that engage youth from the age of 5 to 18 and now even into young adulthood with the SUCCESS program and the BCYL Alumni Association. During the "Stay at Home" order due to the Coronavirus, we made wellness calls to over 400 families and provided technology resources where needed for members to complete their school assignments as well as to participate in our virtual Tutoring program. We provided resources to families on SNAP benefits, utility bills, unemployment, health insurance, food banks, on-line learning tools and other essential services through various communication methods.

In order to prepare for baseball and softball season, training videos featuring a BCYL coach and players were posted for players to access. Knowing the number and types of constructive programs and activities Bridgeport Caribe Youth Leaders has to offer youth and their families, I must ask myself why the Parks Commission will not allow the BCYL banners to be placed on the baseball diamonds at Seaside Park. These banners are a means of providing information to youth and parents about BCYL, which by the way does not turn away a family if they do not have the financial resources to register a child.

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I have participated in many meetings as a Bridgeport Administrator and as BCYL staff and heard the statement “There is nothing in Bridgeport for the youth to do”. As we all know, it is the middle of July and there have already been too many shootings. Therefore, it seems all that more important to share information on BCYL in any way possible with as many people as in order to engage youth to stop the violence and save lives.

I humbly ask you, the Members of the Parks Commission, to reconsider your decision regarding the posting of BCYL banners on the Seaside Park fields.

13. Angel Serrano, Barnum Avenue, Bridgeport

Mr. Serrano said that in 2001, when his child was eight years old, he was sitting in a dugout when hit in the head by a baseball and knocked unconscious.

He had a serious concussion and was not allowed to play baseball for the rest of the year.

His son later needed therapy.

Months later CARIBE installed banners at the dugouts to keep other children safe and prevent them from getting hurt.

Mr. Serrano hopes that the Park Board will reconsider their May 14th, motion and allow banners to be hung on the baseball dugouts and fences.

Mr. Labrador thanked everyone for speaking to the Board.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Kenneth C. Baldwin, Robinson & Cole LLP, 280 Trumbull Street, Hartford, CT, requesting to speak to the Board regarding a proposal to use an undeveloped portion of the SHU campus acquired by SHU from the City of Bridgeport and have the City lift the development restriction in the deed to allow for the construction of a tower site and access driveway only, to be developed by Verizon Wireless.

Mr. Baldwin thanked the Board for letting him speak to the Board and continue his discussion with the Commissioners in having the City lift the development restriction in the deed to allow for the construction of a tower site and access driveway only, to be developed by Verizon Wireless.

Mr. Baldwin wanted to assure the Commissioners that the parcel they are speaking about is not on the golf course, but adjacent to the golf course and belongs to the Diocese of Bridgeport in 2016.

He said that it was deeded with a development restriction in the deed that he is here tonight to ask the Commissioners that it be lifted.

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Mr. Baldwin said neighbors completely surrounding Sacred Heart University including neighbors to the east in the City of Bridgeport were notified of Verizon's plans to move forward with a new tower site somewhere on the Sacred Heart main campus.

He said that they did review several locations at the old G E property on the west campus of Sacred Heart, unfortunately that portion of the town is too far to the east to satisfy Verizon's coverage objectives.

He said their ability to continue to use the old Jewish home building which is now a dormitory on Sacred Heart has expired. Their license agreement with the Rooftop Manager has expired and they are there on hold over provisions and by the beginning of 2022, the Rooftop Manager's license agreement with Sacred Heart will also expire.

He said that all of the carriers on the rooftop of that building will have to be relocated to another facility.

Mr. Baldwin said he has spoken with numerous neighbors, especially to the north off Jefferson Road that were in favor of the proposal because it is a solution that satisfies the carrier's needs but puts the tower site in a wooded area away from neighbors.

He said that it is adjacent to the DFW Golf Course, but the tower is a short tower only 130 feet and the surrounding trees will remain.

He said that the driveway was relocated and would now come off a small cul-de-sac and with the new option it significantly reduces the amount of area to a one-half acre of the six-acre parcel would be impacted by this proposal to install a cell tower at this location.

Mr. Baldwin said that the cell tower would be a tree tower and would be disguised as a pine tree with the base painted brown; in that way the visual impact would be minimal at most and submitted pictures where the surrounding trees would camouflage the cell tower and, in the summer, it would not be seen at all.

Mr. Baldwin said that Verizon knows that they are asking for a lot, but they want the Commissioners to know that they would view this as a partnership.

He said that Verizon is looking for ways to partnership with the City of Bridgeport and Parks Board to try and come up with a solution that allows them to make some type of like kind contribution for the impacts they are proposing on the property related to the development restrictions.

He said Verizon understands that the Parks Commission deals with requests for improvements to city parks on a daily basis and would like to engage in a conversation with the Board and as a way to thank them for their consideration of this proposal to perhaps partner with the Board and deal with park improvements that Verizon could participate in; consistent with the impact that the tower site might propose on the 6 acre parcel.

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He said some options would be rehabilitate parks, plant new trees on parkland or possible help with projects at the Golf Course.

Mr. Baldwin said Verizon is asking for the Board of Park Commissioners to recommend to the City Council the removal the deed restrictions, subject to an agreement that they would arrange for additional benefits that Parks Board would have where Verizon and the Parks Board could work together.

Mr. Hosier asked if Mr. Baldwin knew how much money Verizon would make on the usage of the cell tower.

Mr. Baldwin does not know if you can identify the amount of money that is made on a cell tower.

He said that there is a value being that Sacred Heart University, people driving by on the Merritt Parkway and along area roads.

He said he does not know how you would monetize that by how many people use the cell tower.

Mr. Hosier asked if there was a limit on the amount of money that Verizon would spend on upgrading a park; would it be \$130,000.00, \$1,000,000 or \$2,000,000?

Mr. Baldwin said that he believes there probably is a limit on what Verizon is willing to pay but he is not certain, and Verizon was hoping to engage with the Parks Commissioners to see what the expectations might be.

He said that if they are talking about \$1,000,000.00 it's probably not something that would be deemed commiserate with the impact they are proposing on this parcel.

Mr. Hosier said that the actual impact that it will impose is in fact they will be superseding a deed that has extreme deed restrictions and if they open that Pandora's Box, we are also allowing the deed restrictions to Seaside, Beardsley and other parks to be looked in to.

He said that he does not see a reason to open that Pandora's Box based on the conditions of conveyance that were put across for this deed.

Mr. Brideau said the Board has already denied the request and that it should stay that way.

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Mr. Brideau, it was unanimously voted not to approve the lifting of the deed restrictions as per the Conditions of Conveyance in the original deed as follows:

CONDITIONS OF CONVEYANCE

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This deed is made and executed and is subject to certain express conditions, agreements and covenants. Said conditions, agreements and covenants are a part of the consideration for the property hereby conveyed; and the continued existence of the estate hereby granted shall depend upon the continued observance of said conditions, agreements and covenants; and the Grantee hereby binds its successors, heirs, assigns, grantees, and/or lessees forever to these covenants agreements and conditions, all of which to run with the land, in perpetuity, and as follows:

The Grantee and its successors and assigns covenant that the land conveyed hereby, consisting predominantly of a forested buffer between the Grantee's property and the Grantor's Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course, shall remain forever in the manner it is at the signing of these presence, it shall not be enclosed or developed, cleared, fenced or manipulated in any way, except as to such reasonable maintenance as may be required to sustain the ecological health of the forested land situated thereon.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Aidee Nieves, Council President, 137th District and Marcus A. Brown, 132nd District, requesting that the Parks approve putting tennis courts and pickle boards in parks.

Ms. Nieves said that Pickelball is the fastest growing sport in the United States right now, it is a game that mimics table tennis and is a paddleball sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and table tennis where two or four players use solid paddles made of wood or composite materials to hit a perforated polymer ball,

She said that she and Councilman Brown met at a community meeting in the north end where they discussed why Bridgeport does not have Pickelball courts in the city.

She said that there are approximately 20 to 30 Pickelball players in the North End and Black Rock area and they currently go to Fairfield and pay a fee to play.

She said that this is a low impact sport and is known to lower blood pressure.

She said that Pickleball court is the size of one half of a tennis court where one side can be converted into two Pickelball courts and is nonintrusive because you play sideways.

They would also need a mobile netting and the lines are a different color.

She said they are looking at Puglio Park and Ellsworth Park to convert one half of a tennis court.

Councilman Brown said that he and Councilwoman Nieves said that they spoke to several seniors in the North End and Black Rock and there are not a lot of available sports for seniors to play and this would be a great way for them to get out of the their house and get exercise.

Mr. Labrador said that he thinks it would be a good idea and would like to go out to the courts to visualize the court.

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Councilwoman Nieves said that she knows the Common Council allocated Capital funds for park improvement where some of the money could be used for these courts.

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Mr. Brideau it was unanimously voted to approve the Pickelball to and to revisit it next month.

2. Jorge Cruz, Council Member, 131st District, requesting to speak to the Board regarding the Caribe League monopolizing the parks.

Mr. Cruz said that he thought that all the letters that were read were great letters, but the issue he has with the Caribe League is that the banners cover the whole fence area and stays there all summer long.

Mr. Cruz said when he played ball each team had a 3' x 4' banner which was put on each side and not behind the umpire and were taken down at the end of each game.

He said that the Caribe League is monopolizing the parks because their banners are up all summer and they are not the only league in the City

He said he is concerned for the safety of constituents in his district; by leaving the banners up all summer long, it leaves the park vulnerable to nefarious behavior.

Mr. Cruz said that he has had this concern for many years now.

He is okay with them putting up small signs where they can take them down at the end of the game.

Mr. Labrador said that he is not concerned about putting up the banners, but he wants them taken down after each game.

Mr. Labrador said that he hopes for a happy medium.

Mr. Brideau said that this was voted on at the May meeting and the vote should stand.

3. Maria Pereira, Council Member, 138th District, requesting to speak to the Board regarding the Christopher Columbus statue.

Councilwoman Pereira said that when she initially signed up to speak it was to urge the Parks Board to vote to remove the Christopher Columbus statue but she also said to her colleagues on the Council that you cannot make that decision in a vacuum and out of respect for the Italian Community you must meet with the leaders of the Italian Community to have a dialogue and exchange.

She said that after meeting with John Vazzano, Former Mayor Leonard Paoletto, and Christopher Caruso and former Councilwoman Barbara Rogo, she changed her position.

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She said that it took the middle class and poor Italians of Bridgeport 40 years to raise the money to commission the statue.

She said that not one dollar of taxpayer's money was used to commission the statue, pedestal and installation and the only agreement reached with the City of Bridgeport is that they would maintain it in perpetuity.

She said that Mayor Ganim and others in the City were aware that she and other Common Council members were meeting with the leadership of the Italian community and they had all decided to back off removing it because they thought they had other ideas.

She said that she was so impressed with Max Medina's letter because he really spoke to what she is addressing to now, how they could unite the community instead of further dividing it.

She said it is easy to follow everyone else in Connecticut and others who are taking down statues nationally' it takes a little bit of courage to stand alone and do something different.

She wants the Parks Board to know that 14 City Councilmembers signed on to a resolution yesterday which is a super majority of the City Council to direct Mayor Ganim to put the statue back at Seaside Park immediately while they continue their conversation with the Italian community to try to reach something that they can all find attainable and that Mayor Ganim require the Bridgeport Police Department to protect the statue from any vandalism until a final resolution is reached.

She said that a lot of people signed the resolution not because they love Christopher Columbus, but because they feel that the City Charter was completely violated and that the City Charter is our City constitution ratified by voters, it's the law.

She also said Chapter 12, Public Facilities, Section 10, the Commissioners have over three pages as the Board of Park Commissioners in the City Charter, and what's absolutely clear in the City Charter is that the Board has sole authority over every park in the City; not the Mayor or the City Council. She said that in Section 22 it defines what the Parks Board is responsible for, and that includes every seat, benches, fountains, boats, floats, walks, drives, roads, trees, plants, herbage, flowers.

She said that ultimately whether the Christopher Columbus statue remains in Seaside Park is the decision of the Board of Park Commissioners.

She said that she sent the resolution and the 13 signatures requiring the Mayor to call a Special Meeting immediately to require him to put the statue back.

Mr. Labrador said that the Board of Park Commissioners and Parks Department were not informed that the statue was removed.

He said that he only found out that the statue was removed because a friend called him to let me know that it was removed.

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He said that he does not know who directed it and where it is being held.

Ms. Wade commented that she is glad the statue is down.

Mr. Hosier and Brideau said that they would like to see a compromise happen.

Mr. Anastasi said that the ultimate jurisdiction over the location of the statue rests with the Parks Commission, rather, he exercised his charter authority under chapter 3, section 1b.

He said he used that charter authority to take timely, temporary emergency action to preserve the physical condition of the Columbus statue and the public peace, safety and welfare in view of the ongoing George Floyd protest and the COVID-19 pandemic.

He said a longer-term plan to address the matter can now be developed in a deliberative fashion by the Parks Commission under this charter revision.

He said the Mayor's authority says that the mayor shall take care that the laws are executed and enforced within the city; shall be the conservator of the peace with the city; shall have and may exercise, within the limits of the city, all the powers given the sheriffs or other officers as provided by law; and shall exercise ultimate operational control of all departments and agencies of the city.

He said that the Mayor's action was temporary and of an emergency nature.

Mr. Anastasi said that if the Board is so inclined, he would recommend that Mr. Labrador add the item to the agenda with a two-thirds vote and then take a vote to ratify that temporary action by the Mayor so there is no question regarding its authority.

Ms. Pereira asked Mr. Anastasi if it was lawful why would the City Attorney had the Board to ratify what the Mayor did.

Mr. Anastasi said that because you have two charter sections that could be read in conjunction with one another.

He said that the question becomes one of how long does the Mayor's temporary action apply.

In his best reading of that is only until the Commission can address the issue.

Mr. Labrador said that the Board of Park Commissioners lives by the Charter, but what they don't live by is the disrespect that this City gave this Board by removing the statue and not notifying the Board.

Mr. Labrador said that the Park Board members we were in the process of talking to Chris Caruso, Councilman Cruz, and Leonard Paoletto for the best way to remove the statue the right way and the City's action disrespected all involved.

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Mr. Anastasi said that no one is saying that things were held ideally.

He said that it was a very fluid situation with protests going on, with people camped out in front of the Police Department at the time.

Mr. Anastasi said that there was no intentional disrespect from the people intended that made that made that decision.

Mr. Labrador said that if there was no disrespect why were you sent to the Parks Commission if they didn't feel that something was done wrong.

Mr. Anastasi said he is not defending the failure to communicate with the Parks Commission because there should have been a joint communique with a discussion.

He said then the Parks Commission could have said we agree with the Mayor to take temporary emergency action to bide time for the Commission to do its job.

Mr. Anastasi said that the administration wanted him to explain to the Board that the Mayor exercised what he believed to be his authority in a very fluid fast-moving situation.

He said that the Mayor wanted it clear that in no way did he want to usurp the Boards authority or be in any way disrespectful to this Commission.

He said that this administration and prior administrations recognize the value of the Parks Commission and the hard work and volunteer effort they do.

Mr. Labrador said that he thinks he is just trying to pacify the Board.

Mr. Anastasi said with everything going on in the City, the Mayor has his hands full and did not mean any ill will.

Mr. Anastasi said that the purpose of his involvement is to let the Commissioners know that no disrespect was intended and to invite and encourage the Board to ratify that action so there is no concern.

Mr. Labrador said that if anyone has concerns over where the Christopher Columbus statue is or whether it will be put up again to please take those concerns to Mayor's Office.

4. Jacob Robison, Planner, City of Bridgeport, Office of Planning and Economic Development, requesting to have an informational presentation about electric scooters in the parks.

Mr. Robison stated that the City Council voted and amended the ordinance to allow electric scooters in the parks.

Mr. Robison submitted the following information regarding the Lynx City electric scooter program.

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Bridgeport Shared Scooter Program

Lynx City is excited to offer its micro-mobility option to Bridgeport.

Here is some information that we would like to share with you.

Lynx City Electric Scooters Are Available to Rent

Through Our Mobile App. Users May Search and Unlock

A Lynx City Scooter For \$1 To Start Their Ride. Simply

Scan the Code On The Scooter To Roll With Lynx.

End Your Ride Within Bridgeport's Service Area. Simply Click "End My Ride" On The

Lynx City Mobile App. GPS Monitored Scooters Must Always Remain Outdoors.

* Never Block Pedestrian Walkways

* Never Block Crosswalks or Bus Stops

* Never Block Driveways or Access Ramps

* Always Park Your Lynx Scooter Upright

* Never Park on Private Property

Users must be 18 or older and wear a helmet. Most Importantly, Be Safe & Have Fun!

If you find a scooter that is incorrectly parked, you may contact us at 833-HEY-LYNX or by

email at support@lynx.city. A local team member will respond to the relocation request

within 2 hours. Requests made outside our service hours will be addressed at 8:00 AM the

next morning.

Lynx City Daily Operations

Lynx City local operators will service, charge, and relocate scooters daily.

Scooters will be available for rent 24 hours a day.

Bridgeport Scooter Program

Update and Quick Facts as of 7/8/2020

- Scooters are giving Bridgeporters another option to quickly travel through the City, whether it be to work, shop, or just for fun.
 - Scooters are reducing car trips, playing a part in reducing traffic congestion and air Pollution.
 - First shared scooter pilot program in state, giving Bridgeport an amenity not available in any other Connecticut city.
 - Scooters are averaging 4-5K rides per week for the first two weeks of the program.
 - Lynx has more than doubled their Bridgeport staff since launch, with 4 staff from Bridgeport and more being hired as the program grows.
 - Bridgeport scooter participation is so high, Lynx is increasing their fleet by 100 scooters Activity in Bridgeport Parks.
 - Scooters are especially popular with visitors to Seaside Park, Beardsley Park, and St. Mary's by the Sea, but scooters have been used at all Bridgeport Parks.
 - Newfield Park and Went Field have proven to be a successful staging points for scooters.
 - Scooters were so popular at Seaside Park over Independence Day weekend that lines of renters formed at Lynx's scooter delivery truck.
 - A portion of the profits from every ride is donated to Beardsley Zoo.
- Available scooters shown on the Lynx mobile app.

Mr. Labrador said that the only concern was with the liability of some riding the scooter in the park and getting hurt or hurting someone else.

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Mr. Hosier asked how long does the charge last on the scooter.

Mr. Robison said that the charge can last up to 30 miles on a full battery.

He said that LYNX has a maintenance team that goes out constantly switch batteries.

Mr. Robinson said that they must be 18 years of age and wear a helmet.

He also said that LYNX is a private company and is completely insured.

Ms. Conine said that she has seen people riding the electric scooters in the parks with no helmet and leaving the scooter on the sidewalk blocking pedestrians from walking.

The Commissioners thanked Mr. Robison for his presentation.

5. Tim Cooper, requesting to hold March for Education at the Seaside Park with a vehicle parade driving from West Beach to the Band Shell, on Friday, August 21, 2020, beginning at 11:00 a.m. and ending when the park closes. The people will stay in their vehicles while food, prizes and care packages are delivered to cars, he is also requesting that all park fees be waived.

On a motion made by Mr. Brideau, seconded by Mr. Hosier, it was unanimously voted to table the request due to lack of representation.

6. Don Wilson, Bridgeport Youth Lacrosse, requesting to use Seaside Park to hold a one-day summer sports camp on Saturday, August 15, 2020, from 8:00 AM until 12:00 PM.

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier, seconded by Ms Wade, it was unanimously voted to approve the event with COVID guidelines adhered to.

7. John Torres, requesting to discuss the decision made during the May 12, 2020 Parks Board meeting regarding the removal of banners on ball field fences.

Mr. Torres asked the Board to reconsider to have the backstop banner when they have consecutive day ballgames and remove the dugout banner each day.

Ms. Wade said that she thinks the banners should be taken down after each game.

Mr. Labrador said there should not be a discussion and that he supports the backstop banner as long as the side ones are taken down.

Mr. Torres said that the dugout banners will be removed every day.

On a motion made by Mr. Hosier seconded by Mr. Brideau, it was voted to remove the large fence banners and to allow the back-stop banners to remain up; if there is no activity, they would remove them.

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Mr. Cotto voted No.

REPORTS

CRAIG A. NADRIZNY, ACTING PUBLIC FACILITIES DIRECTOR

Requests for a Motion:

- St. Mary's by the Sea Memorial Bench Request from Lisa Thornton: Bench to be placed near walkway/beach overlook, plaque to read "In fond remembrance of our dear St. Mary's friend, Peter Tsimbidaros, who always had a smile for everyone."

On a motion made by Mr. Brideau, seconded by Mr. Hosier, it was unanimously voted to approve the request

- Memorial Bench and Tree Planting Request from Chandra Maxwell for Knowlton and/or Newfield Park: Bench with plaque to be placed and tree to be planted near basketball courts in memoriam of Angel Santiago, a well-loved Harding High School student and member of the community.

Mr. Labrador said that the Parks and Recreation Department would like to help the family of Angel Santiago and encourages future conversation with them.

On a motion made by Mr. Brideau, seconded by Ms. Wade, it was unanimously voted to approve the request.

Mr. Labrador stated that a lot of things have gone on in the City with usage of the parks and without permission from the Board of Park Commissioners and he is appalled with how City Officials, Police Department and some Park Department staff that have forgotten that the Park Board is the only one that should be making decisions about park events.

He said that the Board of Park Commissions is a volunteer board that give up their time on a monthly basis and make the best decisions they can for the residents of the City of Bridgeport.

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Mr. Brideau, seconded by Mr. Hosier, it was unanimously voted to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen M. Gerrity

Ellen M. Gerrity
Clerk