

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Banjed Labrador, President; Cruz M. Cotto, Vice Chair; John Mark Hosier, Denese Taylor-Moye, Lillian Wade

OTHERS: Tatiana Urena, Parks Department; Luis Burgos, Parks Department; Luann Conine, Recreation; Sam, Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course; John Brannely, Greater Bridgeport St. Patrick's Day Celebration Committee; Ann Marie Curtin, Greater Bridgeport St. Patrick's Day Celebration Committee; Caroline Vermont, Oliva, Atty. Erroll Skyers, Claudette Beaman, West Caribbean Indian Jerk Festival; Donald Wilson, Bridgeport Youth Lacrosse, Inc., Tamara Gonzalez, Making A Difference, A.C. (M.A.D. A.C.); Rosa Torres, Making A Difference, A.C. (M.A.D. A.C.); Howard Saffan, Harbor Yard Amphitheater LCC Managing Member; Ernest Brown, Team Focus Enterprise LLC; Lindsay Griffin, Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation; Donald Wilson, Bridgeport Youth Lacrosse, Inc., Craig Nadrizny, Public Works Director; Steve Hladun, Public Works; Ellen Gerrity

OPENING CEREMONY / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Labrador greeted everyone called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. He led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Urena called the roll. A quorum was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF:

- **December 13, 2022 (Regular Meeting)**

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 13, 2022 REGULAR MEETING**

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

PUBLIC SPEAKING FORUM:

The public may call the office of Parks and Recreation at 203-576-7234 and speak with Tatiana Urena or email her at tatiana.urena@bridgeportct.gov to sign-up for Public Speaking.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Claudette Beaman, West Caribbean Indian Jerk Festival, 15 Heather Road, Hamden, CT, providing an update on the layout of Seaside Park Bandshell for the Caribbean Jerk Festival for Saturday, August 13, 2023.

Ms. Beaman said that the agenda date was incorrect and they were asking for Saturday, August 19, 2023. Ms. Urena confirmed that the event was scheduled for August 19th. There will be fencing around the Bandshell and they will need electricity. There will be one main entrance and the food vendors will be located across from the Bandshell. Port-a-potties and garbage bins will also be available. The group has contacted the Police Department and will be paying for the presence of the officers. The site will be cleaned before the end of the night.

Commissioner Labrador said that they need a starting time and ending time. Ms. Beaman said that they would start setting up at 8:00 a.m. and break down by 8:00 p.m. Music will end between 7:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Ms. Vermont said that the event was over 20 years old and this will be their second time holding it at Seaside Park.

Commissioner Labrador said that the track area was very expensive to install and that he did not want to see vehicles driving across the track. He said that he would leave it in the coordinators to insure that the food trucks only cross the track on the designated areas.

There was an additional area that had been blocked off with yellow fencing. Commissioner Labrador indicated where he would like the vehicles to be parked in the area due to the presence of water in that area. He added that they should have some type of security available to check parking passes. This will be important in the event of an emergency since the ambulance and other vehicles may have to use that entrance.

Commissioner Cotto said that they did not want any traffic on the track. Ms. Beaman said that they had not had any incidence and that they work with both the City and the Police Department to make sure it goes smoothly.

**** COMMISSIONER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED AGENDA ITEM OB-1 CLAUDETTE BEAMAN, WEST CARIBBEAN INDIAN JERK FESTIVAL, 15 HEATHER ROAD, HAMDEN, CT, PROVIDING AN UPDATE ON THE LAYOUT OF SEASIDE PARK BANDSHELL FOR THE CARIBBEAN JERK FESTIVAL FOR SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 2023.**

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Vermont asked about the grassy area in the circle for parking. Commissioner Labrador suggested she speak with Mr. Burgos about that.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Howard Saffan, Managing Member, Harbor Yard Amphitheater LCC, Bridgeport, CT, providing an update on the diagram layout for the Sound on Sound Festival at Seaside Park on Saturday, September 30, 2023 and Sunday, October 1, 2023.

Mr. Saffan greeted the Commissioners and thanked them along with Mr. Burgos and Mr. Nadrizny for the recent event at the Park. He said that he was looking forward to holding the event again in the coming years.

For 2023, they will be presenting a top level entertainer at the event. Due to this, the group will need a bigger stage for a wider stage width. They are considering using the ballfield instead of the grove area and will decrease the parking. Sound on Sound has contacted GBTA about having bus service. They will also be protecting the infields with Duradeck to insure there is no damage. They will also be working on providing upgraded drainage to some of the fields that have been experiencing issues as a thank you.

Commissioner Labrador said that he was confident that Sound on Sound would repair any damage that happened. The stage is positioned with the music towards the beach and water area. He said that he had reviewed the area with Mr. Burgos.

Commissioner Hosier said that the previous event had been very successful. However, he noted that the previous event had a two week set up period and a two week take down period. He asked if this next event will require the same assembly and disassembly time.

Mr. Saffan said that the upcoming event will take less time to set up and take down due to the fact that the site will be more accessible. The baseball fields will be accessible during set up and the public will have greater access to the park.

Mr. Burgos said that last year, the event was successful and that they had planned for the site carefully. Mr. Nadrizny said that Mr. Saffan had addressed any concerns he had. Commissioner Labrador said that he felt the set up was more family friendly.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED AGENDA ITEM 1. HOWARD SAFFAN, MANAGING MEMBER, HARBOR YARD AMPHITHEATER LCC, BRIDGEPORT, CT, PROVIDING AN UPDATE ON THE DIAGRAM LAYOUT FOR THE SOUND ON SOUND FESTIVAL AT SEASIDE PARK ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023 AND SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2023.**

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Commissioner Labrador thanked Mr. Saffan for bringing these types of events to Bridgeport.

2. John Brannely, Greater Bridgeport St. Patrick's Day Celebration Committee, P.O. Box 9211, Bridgeport, CT, requesting to host the annual St. Patrick's Day Parade on Friday, March 17, 2023 at Ellsworth Park from 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. for approximately 500 people.

Mr. Brannely said that the Greater Bridgeport St. Patrick's Day Parade has been held in downtown Bridgeport since 1983, but they did not hold the parade for the past three years. The parade used the Holiday Inn site as their headquarters with a breakfast and following the parade, they held a brunch. With the closure of the Holiday Inn, they are considering the Black Rock area of the City due to the availability of Irish themed restaurants in the area. The group has spoken with the Black Rock Day organizers and one of the organizers has joined the Parade group to help with logistics.

The parade group would like to use Ellsworth Field as a staging area, with the parade starting at the corner of Ellsworth and Fairfield Avenue. The parade would process down to Castle Black Rock and turn at Courtland for dispersal. The parade committee is still working on the details regarding parking and other issues. They would like to use Ellsworth Park for set up starting at 9:00 a.m. for organization.

Mr. Brannely noted that Ms. DeFaio, the Chairperson; along with Ms. Curtain, who lives with her husband on Brewster Street, were present on the call also.

Commissioner Labrador asked what type of vehicles would be in the parade. Mr. Brannely said that in the past, most of the parochial schools had bands that marched in the parade. The Parade committee provides free buses to the schools for their marching units. He encouraged everyone to participate. There will not be any vehicles on the field.

**** COMMISSIONER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED AGENDA ITEM 2. JOHN BRANNELY, GREATER BRIDGEPORT ST. PATRICK'S DAY CELEBRATION COMMITTEE, P.O. BOX 9211, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST THE ANNUAL ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE ON FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 2023 AT ELLSWORTH PARK FROM 12:00 P.M. TO 1:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 500 PEOPLE.**

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. Ernest Brown, Team Focus Enterprise LLC, 77 Huntington Turnpike, Bridgeport, CT,

requesting to host a Team Focus – Free Summer Groove Concert at Seaside Park on Saturday, August 13, 2023 from 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. with a set-up time of 9:00 a.m. and clean-up at 11:00 p.m. for approximately 2,500 people.

Mr. Brown greeted the Commissioners.

Commissioner Labrador noted that there were no lights in that area. Mr. Brown said that they have lights.

Commissioner Hosier asked about the closing time. Mr. Brown said that the clean up will be going on during the concert and said that they would be finished by 11:30 p.m.

Commissioner Cotto reiterated that the Parks Department does not provide lighting. Mr. Brown said that they have a lighting system.

Mr. Burgos said that they had not had any issues last year.

Commissioner Labrador said that last year, they had an issue with the drop off area. People were parking there rather than dropping off. Commissioner Labrador said that he had spoken with one of the security staff and the individual was not helpful. Discussion followed.

Commissioner Cotto said that he did not want any vehicular traffic on the track. Commissioner Labrador reiterated the details about where the vehicles should park.

**** COMMISSIONER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED AGENDA ITEM 3. ERNEST BROWN, TEAM FOCUS ENTERPRISE LLC, 77 HUNTINGTON TURNPIKE, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST A TEAM FOCUS – FREE SUMMER GROOVE CONCERT AT SEASIDE PARK ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 2023 FROM 12:00 P.M. TO 10:00 P.M. WITH A SET-UP TIME OF 9:00 A.M. AND CLEAN-UP AT 11:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 2,500 PEOPLE.**

**** COMMISSIONER WADE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

4. Tamara Gonzalez, Making A Difference, A.C. (M.A.D. A.C.), 585 Norman Street, Bridgeport, CT, requesting to host their 2nd annual Car Show and Music Comp Fundraiser at Seaside Park behind the Casino Bath House on Saturday, May 20, 2023 from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. for approximately 150 people.

Ms. Gonzalez greeted the Commissioners. She said that Ms. Rosa Torres was also present her on the call.

Commissioner Labrador asked Mr. Burgos if there were problems with the event last year. Discussion followed about the previous year's event location, which went well. This year will be focused on ovarian cancer.

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO MOVED AGENDA ITEM 4. TAMARA GONZALEZ, MAKING A DIFFERENCE, A.C. (M.A.D. A.C.), 585 NORMAN STREET, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST THEIR 2ND ANNUAL CAR SHOW AND MUSIC COMP FUNDRAISER AT SEASIDE PARK BEHIND THE CASINO BATH HOUSE ON SATURDAY, MAY 20, 2023 FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 6:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 150 PEOPLE.**

**** COMMISSIONER TAYLOR-MOYE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

5. Lindsay Griffin, Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation c/o Event 360 Inc., 55 E. Jackson Blvd. St. 1030, Chicago, IL, requesting to host a Run/Walk event for the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation at Seaside Park Band Shell on Saturday, June 3, 2023 from 7:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and requesting to set-up on Friday, June 2, 2023 from 8:00 a.m.

Commissioner Labrador asked if this was the group's first time at Seaside Park. She said that her group sponsors walk events. This particular cause is a type of cancer. Their previous events were based in Norwalk, but they would like to move it to Bridgeport.

Commissioner Labrador asked for more details. He suggested that the group come back with a detailed map to show where the walk would take place. Ms. Urena displayed the park map. Discussion followed.

**** COMMISSIONER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED AGENDA ITEM 5. LINDSAY GRIFFIN, MULTIPLE MYELOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION C/O EVENT 360 INC., 55 E. JACKSON BLVD. ST. 1030, CHICAGO, IL, REQUESTING TO HOST A RUN/WALK EVENT FOR THE MULTIPLE MYELOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION AT SEASIDE PARK BAND SHELL ON SATURDAY, JUNE 3, 2023 FROM 7:30 A.M. TO 11:00 A.M. AND REQUESTING TO SET-UP ON FRIDAY, JUNE 2, 2023 FROM 8:00 A.M. WITH THE STIPULATION THAT MULTIPLE MYELOMA RESEARCH FOUNDATION PROVIDE THE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REQUESTED BY THE COMMISSIONERS.**

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. Donald Wilson, Bridgeport Youth Lacrosse, Inc., 56 Fairview Avenue, Bridgeport, CT, requesting the use of the Concessions Stand Pilot Program at Veteran Park.

Mr. Wilson greeted the Commissioners. He said that he had attempted to launch this project last year, but there were some issues with the Health Department, such as providing a hand washing sink in the facility.

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO MOVED AGENDA ITEM 6. DONALD WILSON, BRIDGEPORT YOUTH LACROSSE, INC., 56 FAIRVIEW AVE, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING THE USE OF THE CONCESSIONS STAND PILOT PROGRAM AT VETERAN PARK PROVIDED ALL OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT REQUIREMENTS ARE MET.**

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

7. Donald Wilson, Bridgeport Youth Lacrosse, Inc., 56 Fairview Avenue, Bridgeport, CT, requesting a storage container at Veteran Park.

Mr. Wilson said that there were two fields at Veteran's Park. They would like to place a storage container by the upper field in a recessed area that has been cleared out and viewed by Mr. Hladun. Bridgeport Youth Lacrosse will be responsible for any maintenance, graffiti, damage or blight.

Commissioner Labrador said that while the Parks Department will allow groups to have a container in the park, this is not establishing a permanent installation. If it becomes an eyesore, the Department will either have it removed or remove it themselves.

Commissioner Hosier asked what kind of container this was. Mr. Wilson replied that it was a weather coated steel container that measures 12' x 40'. Mr. Wilson said that he would be willing to paint it in the future if it needs it.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED AGENDA ITEM 7. DONALD WILSON, BRIDGEPORT YOUTH LACROSSE, INC., 56 FAIRVIEW AVENUE, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING A STORAGE CONTAINER AT VETERAN PARK, WITH THE CONDITION THAT THE OVERALL MAINTENANCE BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF BRIDGEPORT YOUTH LACROSSE, INC. TO PREVENT IT FROM BECOMING AN EYESORE.**

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REPORTS

• Commissioner's Report

There was no Commissioner's Report at this time.

• **Director's Report**

– Craig A. Nadrizny, Acting Public Facilities Director

Mr. Hladun greeted the Commissioners and presented his report, which was included in the Commissioners' packets.

Mr. Hladun said that there was a bid for the sand bunker construction that is scheduled to arrive next week. This is part of the capital improvement plan for the course. The Red Course has already experienced several improvements. The Black Course should be ready by the official opening of the golf season on Memorial Day.

Mr. Hladun then reviewed the upcoming equipment purchases with the Commissioners and the status of contracts that are currently being executed, including the work on the Seaside Arch. Assessment of the playground equipment is underway. Stump grinding and tree trimming continues. A state grant application for the Perry Memorial Arch has been submitted to the Council for approval. The beach bath house building permit has been issued and work has started due to the mild weather.

Mr. Hladun spoke about the Seaside Beach playground project and noted that they had received rendering from three playground equipment manufacturing. The Department is trying to provide a safe playground that is ADA compliant and safe for all.

Mr. Hladun announced that he has taken a new position in another municipality, so that this would be his last report to the Commission.

Commissioner Labrador said that Mr. Hladun had done wonderful work and this a major loss for the City.

Commissioner Taylor-Moye said that Mr. Hladun had done excellent work and Commissioner Taylor-Moye was very sad to hear he was leaving. She wished him the best for him and his family.

Commissioner Wade said that she remembered when her car died and Mr. Hladun came to pick her up. They will miss Mr. Hladun but Mr. Hladun will prosper.

Mr. Hladun said that the City would continue to do well.

Ms. Ellen Gerrity said that she remembers when Mr. Hladun first started in the Recreation Department. He has been a wonderful support for the City.

Ms. Conine thanked Mr. Hladun for all his work.

Atty. Skyers said that while he had not worked a long time with Mr. Hladun like the others, he has noticed that Mr. Hladun goes the distance and was an unsung hero in the City. Atty. Skyers said that this was a great loss.

Mr. Nadrizny said that he had heard from Mr. Hladun a few weeks ago about his new job. Mr. Nadrizny said that Mr. Hladun has a bright future before him.

Mr. Burgos said that he would be seeing Mr. Hladun the next morning.

Commissioner Cotto said that he has known Mr. Hladun since he was a child. This is a great loss for the City. This is the right move for Mr. Hladun and his family.

Ms. Caroline Vermont thanked Mr. Hladun for all his work for the Mayor's Office. She said he was a wonderful person.

Commissioner Hosier then read a proclamation declaring January 10, 2023 as "Steve Hladun Day".

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO ADJOURN AT 7:15 P.M.**

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO ADJOURN PASSED WITH SADNESS.**

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services