

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BOARD OF PARKS COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
JULY 12, 2023**

This meeting was held via Zoom.

ATTENDANCE: Banjed Labrador, President; Lee Grisby, John Mark Hosier, Denese Taylor-Moye, Lillian Wade

OTHERS: Tatiana Urena, Parks Department; Sam Kadi, Parks Department; Craig Nadrizny, Public Works Director; Luann Conine, Recreation; Lee Nastu, Parks Department; Bret Caulfield, Tree Warden; Richard E. Baldwin, Ivette Cabrera, Norma Pfriem Breast Cancer; Lina Campbell, Sarah McDonagh, Bridgeport Rescue Mission, Cheryl Saunders

OPENING CEREMONY / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Labrador greeted everyone and called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m. He stated that Commissioner Cotto had an excused absence.

Commissioner Labrador led those present in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF:

• JUNE 13, 2023 (REGULAR MEETING)

*** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 13, 2023 REGULAR MEETING.**

**** COMMISSIONER WADE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 13, 2023 REGULAR MEETING AS SUBMITTED 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.

There was no one signed up for Public Speaking.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Ivette Cabrera, Norma Pfriem Breast Cancer, 267 Grant Street, Bridgeport, CT, requesting to change the park location for the Walk/Stroll event on Saturday, October 7, 2023 at Seaside Park near the Barnum Statue from 8:30 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for approximately 250 people. (Originally approved at the February 14, 2023 meeting at Captain's Cove to St. Mary's by the Sea and back to Captain's Cove.)

Ms. Cabrera said that they had held the event at Seaside Park for the last few years, but requested to have the walk from Captain's Cove to St. Mary's by the Sea and back to Captain's Cove. They would prefer to have the event at Seaside Park instead. She then described the route the participants would take and they would have the police department block off the streets. Ms. Urena said that Sound on Sound would have concluded the previous week and there may still be some equipment on site. However, this should not interfere with the event.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 1. IVETTE CABRERA, NORMA PFRIEM BREAST CANCER, 267 GRANT STREET, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING TO CHANGE THE PARK LOCATION FOR THE WALK/STROLL EVENT ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023 AT SEASIDE PARK NEAR THE BARNUM STATUE FROM 8:30 A.M. TO 10:00 A.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 250 PEOPLE. (ORIGINALLY APPROVED AT THE FEBRUARY 14, 2023 MEETING AT CAPTAIN'S COVE TO ST. MARY'S BY THE SEA AND BACK TO CAPTAIN'S COVE.)**

**** COMMISSIONER WADE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

2. Lina Campbell, 204 Cherry Hill Drive, Bridgeport, CT, requesting a memorial plaque at Seaside Park commemorating the life of Michael J. Frank.

Ms. Campbell said that they had donated a bench for her grandson and now they would like to place a memorial plaque for her son nearby. Mr. Frank was a Bridgeport resident and a Marine Corp veteran who passed away in 2021.

Commissioner Labrador explained if they placed a plaque, Ms. Campbell would be responsible for the cost. He then spoke about the details regarding the placement of the memorial. He recommended that they place the plaque on a bench.

Commissioner Wade asked Ms. Campbell if she had spoken with the Veteran's groups about possibly sponsoring the memorial.

Commissioner Labrador suggested that Ms. Campbell contact the Parks Department about the location and then come back to the Commission with suggestions. Mr. Nadrizny, the Public Facilities Director, said that he was also a Marine Corps veteran and would be happy to help Ms. Campbell identify a location.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 2. LINA CAMPBELL, 204 CHERRY HILL DRIVE, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING A MEMORIAL PLAQUE AT SEASIDE PARK COMMEMORATING THE LIFE OF MICHAEL J. FRANK WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE PUBLIC FACILITIES DIRECTOR OR ANYONE THAT HE DEEMS NECESSARY.**

**** COMMISSIONER GRISBY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. Tawanna Barnhill, 725 Park Avenue, Bridgeport, CT, requesting to host their annual Community Outreach event on Saturday, August 5, 2023, at Went Field Park (using the entire park) from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with a set-up time to 9:00 a.m. and clean-up to include their food truck and giveaway for the community for approximately 100 people in attendance.

Commissioner Labrador noted that they were requesting use of the entire park. Mr. Nastu said that the baseball fields would be in use. Ms. Urena said that the gazebo was booked for something else and added that last year, they were approved for a section of the park but not the gazebo area.

Ms. Sarah McDonagh greeted the Commissioners and said that she was present on behalf of Ms. Barnhill. Their request is the same as last year and they did not use the gazebo area at all. They are looking for the grassy space behind the basketball courts.

Commissioner Labrador said that they would have to issue her a paper permit to use that area because sometimes there is a group who plays soccer there. Ms. Urena said that Ms. McDonagh will have the larger permit with different departmental sign offs.

The discussion then moved to where the food trucks would be parked.

Commissioner Labrador said that he had not heard that there were any problems in the past.

**** COMMISSIONER TAYLOR-MOYE MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 3. TAWANNA BARNHILL, 725 PARK AVENUE, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST THEIR ANNUAL COMMUNITY OUTREACH EVENT ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2023, AT WENT FIELD PARK (USING THE ENTIRE PARK) FROM 11:00 A.M. TO 3:00 P.M. WITH A SET-UP TIME TO 9:00 A.M. AND CLEAN-UP TO INCLUDE THEIR FOOD TRUCK AND GIVEAWAY FOR THE COMMUNITY FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 PEOPLE IN ATTENDANCE.**

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

Commissioner Labrador requested that a note be made regarding the fact that while the permit says the entire park, they will be using a specific section. Ms. Urena said she would do so.

4. Richard E. Baldwin, 89 Cottage Street, Bridgeport, CT, requesting to host their annual Marina Village reunion on Saturday, August 19, 2023 at Seaside Park – Left of the Arches from 12:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. for approximately 100 people.

Mr. Baldwin greeted the Commissioners and said that they had held the event there before. The Jamaican Jerk Fest will be on the same day, so there may be fewer attendees. This is just for the Marina Village group.

Mr. Nadrizny said that there had not been any issues in the past. There were some concerns about the fact that the Jerk Festival will also be in the Park.

Commissioner Hosier asked about the music level. Mr. Baldwin said that he was a professional DJ and will make

**** COMMISSIONER WADE MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 4. RICHARD E. BALDWIN, 89 COTTAGE STREET, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST THEIR ANNUAL MARINA VILLAGE REUNION ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 2023 AT SEASIDE PARK – LEFT OF THE ARCHES FROM 12:00 P.M. TO 7:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 100 PEOPLE.**

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

Ms. Urena said that there had been a request to add an application from the Pequonnock Village residents.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO ADD AN APPLICATION FROM THE PEQUONNOCK VILLAGE GROUP TO THE AGENDA.**

**** COMMISSIONERS WADE AND GRISBY SECONDED.
** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Ms. Cheryl Saunders requesting to host a Pequonnock and Marina Apartment Reunion on Saturday, August 5, 2023 at Beardsley Park between the hours of 11 a.m. and 7 p.m. for approximately 150 people.

Ms. Cheryl Saunders came forward and introduced herself to the Commissioners. Ms. Urena displayed the application sheet on screen.

Commissioner Labrador asked when the application was submitted. Ms. Saunders said that it had been submitted earlier in the week. Commissioner Labrador explained that they require applicants to submit the paperwork 30 days in advance because they need to work out the details.

Ms. Saunders said that the last time they had a reunion in 2019 and the committee is very new. She said that they were learning as they go and apologized. She said they had published the date before getting the permit. Commissioner Labrador said that many people don't know how the Parks Department process works.

Ms. Saunders said that they would like to be close to the bathrooms if possible. Discussion followed about having an ice cream truck, a caterer, and a DJ.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION FROM MS. CHERYL SAUNDERS REQUESTING TO HOST A PEQUONNOCK AND MARINA APARTMENT REUNION ON SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2023 AT BEARDSLEY PARK BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 11 A.M. AND 7 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 150 PEOPLE.**

**** COMMISSIONER WADE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REPORTS

1. Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Labrador said that the issue of the last minute applications needs to be addressed. They need to be submitted 30 days in advance so that the other departments can review the applications and what will be needed. It is wrong to assume that the event will go on with or without the Park Commissioners' approval. There have been individuals who have called City officials to make sure the event is approved. This is disrespectful to the Commissioners. There is a Park Charter which has legal implications. Discussion followed.

2. Director's Report – Craig A. Nadrizny, Director of Public Facilities

Mr. Caulfield greeted the Commissioners and said that there was a lot of activity in the parks including parades and festivals. Ms. Urena displayed the Parks Report on screen. A copy was sent to the Commissioners in advance.

The Recreation Update was then presented by a staff member. 108 campers have been registered for the summer camping session which will be starting on the 17th.

Commissioner Labrador asked about the life guard staffing. Ms. Conine said that the past week-end the guards had done very well. She has also been contacted by a number of former lifeguards who wish to have a volley ball tournament after hours with the new life guards. Commissioner Labrador said that he would like to see the gate checkers have something. Ms. Conine said that they were included as well. Ms. Conine said that a UB professor who had worked as a life guard said that he misses it every day.

Commissioner Labrador thanked the Parks Department staff who were out there every day providing the residents with clean and nice parks.

Mr. Nadrizny said that there were numerous events during the past week and the staff did a great job providing service needed. There will be a picnic for the staff and invitations will be sent to the Commissioners so they can meet the staff.

Mr. Nadrizny said that he understood the Commissioners' concerns about the last minute requests and this was the first time he had heard about it. No one in his office would supersede the Parks Commission. He wished to clarify that they can only proceed without the Parks Commission's approval. Commissioner Labrador said that he knew the issue was with others downtown who disrespect the Board and this has to stop.

All the Commissioners expressed their appreciation to the Parks and Recreation staff for all their hard work.

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO ADJOURN.**
- ** COMMISSION WADE SECONDED.**
- ** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.