

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS
REGULAR MEETING
OCTOBER 10, 2023**

This meeting was held via Zoom.

ATTENDANCE: Banjed Labrador, President; Cruz Cotto, Vice President; Lee Grisby, John Mark Hosier, Lillian Wade

OTHERS: Tatiana Urena, Parks Department; Luann Conine, Recreation Department, Brett Caulfield, Superintendent of Parks; Chadwick Schroeder, Sustainability Manager, Luis Burgos, Parks Department; Craig Nadrizny, Public Works Director; Lee Nastu, Parks;

Atty. Ronald Pacacha, City of Bridgeport Associate City Attorney, Michael Jones, DISH; Pascale Butcher, Triathlon Swim/Bike/Run; Edward Greene, Sacred Heart University, Bryan Harrell, University of Bridgeport. Dawn Spearman, You Are Not Alone (Y.A.N.A.), May

OPENING CEREMONY / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Commissioner Labrador greeted everyone and called the meeting to order at 5:20 p.m.

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

ROLL CALL

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

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.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF:

• SEPTEMBER 19, 2023 (SPECIAL MEETING)

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 19, 2023 MEETING.**

**** COMMISSIONER WADE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS

1. Ronald Pacacha, Associate City Attorney, City of Bridgeport, requests approval for DISH Wireless, LLC to install antennas and supporting equipment at Kennedy Stadium.

Atty. Pacacha greeted the Commissioners and said that he had presented the item to the Commission at the last meeting. There is already a similar tower on the site. The proposal from DISH provides the City with all kinds of protections. There is a sample of the type of equipment that would be used on the tower and a map showing the 10'x15' fenced in area. The agreement has an insurance bond and indemnification provisions and a removal bond. The City will receive \$4,500 a month for a total of \$54,000 a year. The rate will increase every year by three percent on a compounded basis. DISH will pay all electricity and utility costs incurred by placement. They will be contacting Mr. Caulfield about access to the site in order to do the engineering study.

Commissioner Labrador asked if the funds would be allocated to the Parks Department or to the General Fund. Atty. Pacacha said that typically, the funds would go to the General Fund. He added that they may request that some of the money be returned to the Parks in order to improve the parks. Atty. Pacacha pointed out that the Parks Department just authorized work at the Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course and some money was being allocated to replace lost revenue at the Course during the week. He suggested that they speak with either Mr. Flatto or Mr. Nkwo about allocating some of the funding from DISH to replace lost revenue.

Commissioner Hosier asked Mr. Jones, the DISH representative, about the terms of the contract such as coverage and location of the tower. Mr. Jones said that there was a lattice tower by I-95.

Commissioner Hosier asked about the proximity of the towers to the general public. Mr. Jones explained that there were many rooftop antennas that were closer and the T-Mobile tower was much closer to the stands than the DISH tower will be. When Commissioner Hosier expressed concerns about the distance between the tower and the bleachers, Mr. Jones explained that the standard separation was 9 feet from the bottom of the antenna for rooftop installation. This tower is more than 50 feet away. The distance is governed by the FCC.

Commissioner Hosier asked about the emissions from the antennas. Mr. Jones said that it was equivalent to the WiFi routers in houses. Commissioner Hosier asked for some of the locations where the other DISH antennas that are 40 feet from the general public are located.

Ms. Urena said that the Zoom call was going to end in three and a half minute. She encouraged everyone to dial back in when the call is disconnected.

**** COMMISSIONER WADE MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM OB-1. RONALD PACACHA, ASSOCIATE CITY ATTORNEY, CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, REQUESTS**

APPROVAL FOR DISH WIRELESS, LLC TO INSTALL ANTENNAS AND SUPPORTING EQUIPMENT AT KENNEDY STADIUM.

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED WITH THREE (3) IN FAVOR (COTTO, GRISBY, AND WADE) AND ONE (1) OPPOSED (HOSIER).**

2. Chadwick Schroeder, Sustainability Manager, City of Bridgeport, providing an update on CANVUS products, and an update on site location within Seaside Park.

Mr. Schroeder greeted the Commissioners and said he had been looking into site locations for some benches made out of old wind turbines. He said that Seaside Park looked to be the best location and displayed a map showing possible locations. He was requesting approval to place the benches in the park.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM OB-2. CHADWICK SCHROEDER, SUSTAINABILITY MANAGER, CITY OF BRIDGEPORT, PROVIDING AN UPDATE ON CANVUS PRODUCTS, AND AN UPDATE ON SITE LOCATION WITHIN SEASIDE PARK.**

The call was disconnected at this point and when the Commissioners called back in, attendance was taken a second time to confirm that there was a quorum. Commission Hosier confirmed his motion to approve.

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. Peter Spain, providing an update to turning off the lights at St. Mary's by the Sea Park during the bird-mitigation season (August 15th through November 15th).

Mr. Spain greeted the Commissioners. He said that they were speaking about 113 lights at St. Mary's by the Sea. McBride Electrical set a licensed electrician at no cost to the City to inspect the boxes and there are two controls for the electric flow. According to the electrician, turning off the lights would only take five minutes and cost no more than a cup of coffee. He suggested that they test this out. Mr. Nadrizny suggested that a petition be done and there are currently 70 signatures from local residents. This petition was included in the documents submitted to the Commissioners. Police Chief Porter suggested that they test it out for a seven day period.

Commissioner Labrador asked about the details of the amount of lights and who would be responsible for turning the lights off. Mr. Spain gave the details and said that the lights would only be turned off once and then turned back on once during the time period. Mr. Spain said that he had asked McBride Electric what it would cost to install a timer and was told it would cost approximately \$800 for the one time installation and the City employees would know how to set

them. Having the lights turned off at 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. could save \$3,000 for one park. He reminded everyone that he was only asking for the lights to be turned off for only one week.

Commissioner Hosier said that they had not received any thing from Police Chief Porter at all about the safety. None of the other Commissioners had received anything from the Police Chief Porter.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM OB-3 PETER SPAIN, PROVIDING AN UPDATE TO TURNING OFF THE LIGHTS AT ST. MARY'S BY THE SEA PARK DURING THE BIRD-MITIGATION SEASON (AUGUST 15TH THROUGH NOVEMBER 15TH).**

Commissioner Cotto said that since they had not heard from Chief Porter, they should wait until they hear because of the safety concerns.

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

Commissioner Labrador said he was concerned that they had not heard from Chief Porter and that they need to make a decision. Mr. Spain has done everything they have asked him to do. He asked the others to reach out to the Chief to see if they can get a written communication from the Chief one way or the other.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Pascale Butcher, 96 Old Saugatuck Road, Norwalk, CT, requesting to host the Triathlon Swim/Bike/Run event at Seaside Park – Casino Bath/West Beach on Sunday, June 6, 2024 from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. with a set-up time of 5:00 a.m. and clean-up at 10:00 a.m. for approximately 200 people.

Ms. Butcher said that they had held this triathlon in the past. Commissioner Labrador asked if there had been any problems in the past. Mr. Burgos said that the group was well organized and there had not been any problems.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 1. PASCALE BUTCHER, 96 OLD SAUGATUCK ROAD, NORWALK, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST THE TRIATHLON SWIM/BIKE/RUN EVENT AT SEASIDE PARK – CASINO BATH/WEST BEACH ON SUNDAY, JUNE 6, 2024 FROM 7:00 A.M. TO 10:00 A.M. WITH A SET-UP TIME OF 5:00 A.M. AND CLEAN-UP AT 10:00 A.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 200 PEOPLE.**

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

2. Edward Greene, Sacred Heart University, Fairfield, CT, requesting the use of the overflow parking lot of Fairchild Wheeler Golf Course a hockey game event on Tuesday, October 31, 2023 from 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. for approximately 200 people.

Mr. Greene said that this was the same proposal as last year and only the date is different. Most of the men's events are scheduled for the week-end to allow for more parking on site, but this is mid-week. The game is about two and a half hours and the Sacred Heart staff would be at the overflow parking lot. The lot would be cleared by about 10 p.m. and they will shuttle attendees from the fields to the parking lot.

Commissioner Labrador asked if they had checked with Mr. Kadi about the golf course. Mr. Greene said that they had checked with the restaurant to confirm they did not have an event scheduled since it was Halloween. Commissioner Labrador said that the parking lot primarily serves golfers. Mr. Nadrizny said that the course closes at dusk, so the golfers would be leaving. Commissioner Labrador said that it would be important to make sure Mr. Kadi was aware of this. Mr. Nadrizny said that they would make sure Mr. Kadi knows.

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 2. EDWARD GREENE, SACRED HEART UNIVERSITY, FAIRFIELD, CT, REQUESTING THE USE OF THE OVERFLOW PARKING LOT OF FAIRCHILD WHEELER GOLF COURSE A HOCKEY GAME EVENT ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2023 FROM 5:00 P.M. TO 10:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 200 PEOPLE.**

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

3. Lisa Bifolk, University of Bridgeport, Bridgeport, CT, providing an update on maintenance projects performed by the University of Bridgeport at Seaside Park.

Mr. Bryant Harrell introduced himself to the Commissioners and said that he had been presenting the request to the Commissioners. Ms. Bifolk is his administrative assistant. Mr. Harrold said that Mr. Mark McGovern, the Director of Planning and Development, and John Carserino, the UB Vice President of Facilities were also in Mr. Harrell's office. The last time they spoke with the Commissioners about the sports fields and reviewed the various issues such as the bathrooms. He said that they wished to speak about the batting cages and the parking when the fields are in use during times when there are other events in the park.

Ms. Urena said that the Commissioners had received a PowerPoint presentation in their information packet.

Mr. Harrell then narrated items in the presentation and mentioned the double batting cage. This was previously approved but not established behind home plate. They are still working on raising funds for the stands. Back in 2017, there were some issues with parking and a firm was hired to evaluate the parking situation. People who park along Waldemere get parking tickets.

He spoke about a proposed UB garage location and the two lots behind Dana Hall and HSC for parking. Those two lots belongs to the City, but the university takes care of the two areas. These could be used for 144 parking spaces. This would require the Commission's approval along with the City and the State. The four level parking garage would bring another 409 parking spaces and will be on UB property. Discussion followed about the details.

Mr. Nadrizny said that this was the first he was hearing about the two parcels belonging to the City. Mr. Harrell said that he was looking for approval for the batting cages and would like to move forward to meet with Mr. Nadrizny and the City attorneys about the two parcels.

Ms. Urena said that the Zoom call would be ending in a minute. She apologized for the inconvenience.

Commissioner Labrador asked Mr. Burgos about the location of the batting cages. Mr. Burgos said that he would need to review the location. Commissioner Labrador asked if they could meet on site at the park before the week was out.

The recording ended and the attendees signed back in. The roll was called again. A quorum was present.

Commissioner Labrador repeated his request to meet on site at the park before the week was out. He wished to make sure that the batting cages would fit in. Mr. Harrell said that this item had been approved two years ago and would be happy to submit the drawings again. Commissioner Labrador said that he was in favor of batting cages, but was also for the beauty of parks. Mr. Carserino said that he was on site every day so Commissioner Labrador could come at his convenience. Discussion followed.

Mr. Harrell displayed a diagram showing where the original plan had the batting cages and where they were proposing the new location. Commissioner Labrador asked if there would be fencing and expressed his hope that it would be green. He was told that the University would install fencing and maintain it. The Commissioners discussed when they could meet at the Park.

Mr. Harrell said that if he receives a preliminary approval tonight, he would go to the architects and start planning. However, he would be okay with tabling the project.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO TABLE AGENDA ITEM 3. LISA BIFOLK, UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT, BRIDGEPORT, CT, PROVIDING AN UPDATE ON MAINTENANCE PROJECTS PERFORMED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF BRIDGEPORT AT SEASIDE PARK REGARDING THE BATTING CAGES.**

**** COMMISSIONER GRISBY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

Mr. Harrell asked if there was any information on the parking issue. Commissioner Labrador said that they will have to look into the issue. Commissioner Hosier thanked Mr. Harrell and the staff for their good work in maintaining the area. Mr. Nadrizny said that they had installed No Parking signs in the area.

4. Rosa Torres, 879 Elm Street, New Haven, CT, requesting to host a car show and music competition to raise funds for Mental Health Awareness on Saturday, May 11, 2024 at Seaside Park Casino Bath House parking lot from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a set-up at 7:00 a.m. and clean-up at 6:00 p.m. for approximately 75 to 100 people.

5. Rosa Torres, 879 Elm Street, New Haven, CT, requesting to host a car show and music competition to raise funds for Cancer Awareness on Saturday, October 12, 2024 at Seaside Park Casino Bath House parking lot from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. with a set-up at 8:00 a.m. and clean up at 6:00 p.m. for approximately 75 to 100 people.

Ms. Urena said that Ms. Torres had Agenda Items 4 and 5 but had a schedule conflict. Ms. Torres requested to have her items tabled to November.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO TABLE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:**

4. ROSA TORRES, 879 ELM STREET, NEW HAVEN, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST A CAR SHOW AND MUSIC COMPETITION TO RAISE FUNDS FOR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS ON SATURDAY, MAY 11, 2024 AT SEASIDE PARK CASINO BATH HOUSE PARKING LOT FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M. WITH A SET-UP AT 7:00 A.M. AND CLEAN-UP AT 6:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 75 TO 100 PEOPLE.

5. ROSA TORRES, 879 ELM STREET, NEW HAVEN, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST A CAR SHOW AND MUSIC COMPETITION TO RAISE FUNDS FOR CANCER AWARENESS ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2024 AT SEASIDE PARK CASINO BATH HOUSE PARKING LOT FROM 10:00 A.M. TO 5:00 P.M. WITH A SET-UP AT 8:00 A.M. AND CLEAN UP AT 6:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 75 TO 100 PEOPLE.

**** COMMISSIONER GRISBY SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

6. Dawn Spearman, You Are Not Alone (Y.A.N.A.), 607 Wilmot Avenue #3, Bridgeport, CT, requesting to host a Trick or Trunk event at McLevy Green and the closure of Bank Street with barriers on Tuesday, October 31, 2023 at McLevy Green from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with a set-up time of 4:00 p.m. and clean-up time at 9:00 p.m. for approximately 50 people or less.

Ms. Spearman said that she had been doing this Trunk or Treat for the last seven years in order to allow the youth to have some fun. Usually they are done by 7:30 p.m. Commissioner Labrador said that they are obligated to warn applicants that there are residents nearby.

Commissioner Labrador said that the Parks Department does not have the authority to close Bank Street. It was noted that this event had been held for the past few years and the emergency vehicles usually don't use that street. Commissioner Cotto said that the Police were the only ones that can authorize the street closure. Ms. Spearman said that in the past former Chief Perez and former Chief Garcia worked with the group. The Police and the Parks Department put up and took down the barriers. Commissioner Labrador said that the Commission was not approving the closure of the street.

Mr. Nadrizny said that in the past, the applicant had submitted a request to the Police Department to close the street.

**** COMMISSIONER HOSIER MOVED TO APPROVE AGENDA ITEM 6. DAWN SPEARMAN, YOU ARE NOT ALONE (Y.A.N.A.), 607 WILMOT AVENUE #3, BRIDGEPORT, CT, REQUESTING TO HOST A TRICK OR TRUNK EVENT AT MCLEVY GREEN AND THE CLOSURE OF BANK STREET WITH BARRIERS ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2023 AT MCLEVY GREEN FROM 4:00 P.M. TO 8:00 P.M. WITH A SET-UP TIME OF 4:00 P.M. AND CLEAN-UP TIME AT 9:00 P.M. FOR APPROXIMATELY 50 PEOPLE OR LESS.**

**** COMMISSIONER WADE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REPORTS

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

Mr. Caulfield then greeted the Commissioners and presented his report. He said that there were three items to be updated.

The Went Field Park Improvement has begun. The old equipment has been removed and preparation for the new equipment has been started.

The Ellsworth Park project has basically been completed in terms of drainage and there are some issues with the dugouts. Mr. Caulfield said that they hope to have everything completed by the end of November. A ribbon cutting will be scheduled afterward.

The restoration of the Perry Memorial Arch at Seaside Park project is moving forward with grant funding. Central Grants will be working on bid packages for January 2024.

The parks, splash pads and bathrooms are being readied for winter closures.

A staff member said that the practices for Middle School Basketball League session was scheduled. Registration will begin soon.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Labrador said that he would be down at Seaside Park to inspect the Sound on Sound site.

The work that was done in the parks during the summer was very good. He alerted the Commissioners to the fact that someone is dumping garbage and furniture at Went Field Park. Commissioner Labrador thanked the staff member who collects and carts the debris away by himself. Even when the equipment breaks down, the staff works to make sure the fields and the parks are ready for the residents.

Mr. Nadrizny said that they have plans in the work for Bostwick Park. He said that they were looking to add more tables and possibly a splash pad. He thanked the Commissioners and noted that both he and Mr. Burgos worked their way up from seasonal employees to their current positions.

Mr. Burgos thanked the Commissioners for their time.

ADJOURNMENT

**** COMMISSIONER COTTO MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSION WADE SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes

Telesco Secretarial Services.