

DRAFT

**MINUTES
MONTHLY MEETING
SIXTH TAXING DISTRICT, City of Norwalk**

**Rowayton Community Center
8:00 p.m.**

In calling the meeting to order at 8:20 p.m., Commissioner Tammy Langalis explained that the Commissioners had just concluded an audit report from the Sixth District auditors. Mrs. Langalis introduced the Commission to all those present. A motion to approve the minutes of the December 9, 2009 meeting was made by Commissioner John Igneri and seconded by Commissioner Mike Barbis. **The minutes of the December 9, 2009 meeting were approved as submitted.**

Mrs. Langalis introduced Mary Osborne, Managing Director for Shakespeare on the Sound, who was in attendance to present a synopsis of the plans of SOS for the 2010 season. A detailed plan was previously distributed to the Commission. Ms. Osborne announced that Shakespeare on the Sound would produce "Othello" this year, which will run from June 15 - 27, 2010. She acknowledged that the installation of the fence caused a lot of negative feedback last year. She said that of the letters received by SOS last year, the writers of those letters were all convinced of the efficacy of the fence after having experienced it as attendees at the performances. She felt the tide of opinion against the fence had turned after the painting of the fence and after the presentation of the play, "A Midsummer's Night Dream". She stated that SOS felt that the fence was not only integral to the performance but provided for greater security in not allowing children, in particular, to exit the park over the stone wall and possibly into traffic. She noted that the fence provided a nicer experience for the audience. SOS intends to leave the fence up for a shorter period of time this year - only 16 days. Ms. Osborne also noted that they would be hoping to communicate to Brendan McGee the possibility of moving his concession to a different spot in the park. She also said that SOS would provide parking monitors so as not to exceed permit levels, particularly in the Old School Field. Mr. Barbis noted that the fence would not be a factor in the performance this year as that, as he understood it, the stage would be set nearer the water and the audience would be facing away from Rowayton Avenue. He also mentioned that

MINUTES - January 10, 2010

Page Two

the Commissioners had received a great deal of negative feedback regarding the fence last year. They haven't, as yet, heard from anyone regarding the use of the fence this year. He noted that the Commissioners still need to review SOS's intention of using the fence and will let them know of their decision regarding its approval. A meeting attendee suggested making sure that information regarding the production and the fence be communicated to the general public via articles in "Clamdigging", information on the RCA website, etc.

Mr. Barbis noted that another issue regarding Shakespeare on the Sound was the installation of a source of power. He was hoping to somehow install a power source that would remain as a permanent fixture and could be used for other events at Pinkney Park. However, the expense of this option has turned out to be more than was expected. The alternatives given to the Commissioners were not acceptable, either. The Commissioners are still working on options. However, it has become clear that whatever is done will not be ready for the production this year. Ms. Langalis noted that when, and if, they come up with another option, the Commission will work with SOS regarding logistics and expense. It was noted that SOS needs to give the Commission a revised list of what the needs are.

Mrs. Langalis did note that the Commissioners are generally in favor of putting up the fence for a shorter period of time. It was suggested that there be a sign attached to the fence to explain why it is there. Megan St. John asked if the fence could be moved any toward the interior of the park as the sidewalk is already very narrow and the fence makes it seem even narrower. Bob Pettus noted that he is not in favor of Shakespeare on the Sound using Pinkney Park at all. He feels that the event has outgrown Pinkney Park and SOS needs to look for another location. He noted that Pinkney Park property was purchased by the District in order to create a park as a pleasant place to relax.

Mr. Barbis noted that the Farmer's Market will, probably, begin their season the first Friday in June. Ms. Osborne noted that the coexistence of SOS and the Farmer's Market worked better than they all thought it would. The only conflict comes when there is a long technical rehearsal day. Mike Barbis noted that the organizers of the Farmer's Market are open to its possible relocation if an appropriate space could be found. They will be very cooperative and will work with SOS in the event that the Market remains in Pinkney Park.

Mrs. Langalis recognized Jim Frayer who made a presentation on behalf of the Rowayton Library in support of their funding request made to the Commission. Mr. Frayer noted that the library has been around for 106 years as a meeting place of the mind. In the past year, circulation has exploded. The Library has 18,282 books for adults, 12,295 books for kids and 2,057 books for teens. There are also 2,574 DVDs for adult and families and 643 DVDs for kids. The Library was open 2000 hours last year. Using that figure and the circulation figures, we find that 30 books/CD's/DVDs were checked out every

MINUTES - January 10, 2010

Page Three

hour, statistically. They have had 1.1 million hits on their web site this last year. The Library is asking the District for \$169,500, which represents 54% of their budget and would be an increase of 5% from the District. They hope to raise \$117,000, representing 38% of their budget. They are hoping to receive a grant from the RCA of \$8,000 (3%) They project their earned revenue to be \$7,000, or 2% of the budget. The breakdown of their expenses is \$171,500 for personnel. The Library has 15 people on staff with Cynthia Johnson being the only full time staff member. The remainder of the staff works 35 hours or less per week. This figure includes all benefits. The current circulation is stretching their resources. They expect to pay \$52,500 for new materials, i.e. books, etc. Their technology expense is expected to be \$13,000. Personnel expenses will go up about 5% this year. They increased by 7% this last year. The accounting fees for the Library have gone down since their biggest expense last year was a required full audit. Their accountants have given them high marks re: their accounting. Program costs go up as more is done all the time. As more people are borrowing, the costs for materials continues to go up so that they can keep the selection of books fresh.

The Library continues to try to solicit money from business. They like to promote "program scholarships". However, there is a modest fee for some of the programs.

Mrs. Langalis asked what percentage of Library card holders contribute. The answer was 10%. There are often many cards per family so that skews the statistics a bit. A Library Board member noted that they are targeting people who don't necessarily contribute to the Annual Fund with other fund raisers, i.e. the car raffle and the Father-Daughter Ball. Of course, some of these fund raisers also incur considerable expenses. They noted that as generous as the District has been in the past, those funds don't cover all the expenses. Mrs. Langalis asked Mr. Barbis if he knew what percentage of residents contribute to the RCA and he replied that he thought it was around 30%.

It was also noted that the \$169,500 requested from the District would go solely for personnel costs.

Mr. Frayer thanked the Commissioners and said that the Library looks forward to the consideration of the District.

Mrs. Langalis noted that it is a frustration to her that the library isn't open for more hours on the weekends. She feels that extended hours on the weekend, including Sundays, would allow more of the community to use the library. She suggested looking at shorter hours on one week day, or closing for one week day, in order to be open longer on weekends. Mr. Frayer assured her that the subject is one for ongoing discussion and work by the Library Board. Mrs. Langalis commended Cynthia for her hard work, especially in finding sponsors for many of the programs and for creative fund raising.

MINUTES - January 13, 2010

Page Four

Mrs. Langalis thanked Mr. Frayer for the Library presentation. She then announced that the presentation part of the meeting was over.

NEW BUSINESS

A discussion ensued regarding recent events at the dog park. There was one instance of a person from Darien being injured by a Boxer. It is suspected that she is filing a law suit against the owner of the dog. Mike Barbis noted that no one had complained directly to the Commissioners about anything to do with the dog park. The possibility of installing a sign on the fence noting that dog owners are responsible for their dogs was discussed. Tammy said that she had called Mr. Zullo and understands that we may have some legal exposure. The language for any sign to be posted needs to be decided. Mike suggested that we may need a list of rules posted outside the park. Ms. Langalis said that she would again talk with Mr. Zullo for a clarification.

It was noted that Robert Frasier had identified where the new fence will go in the dog park. The fence will be put up in the spring since inclement weather prohibited its installation this winter. The dog park will then be only slightly smaller but will still have plenty of room.

Cynthia Johnson said that she had an update on the U. S. flag that is with a Rowaytonite in Iraq. It has now been carried on a mission and will be on several others. When the flag is received back in Rowayton, it will be the one that is flown from the flagpole at the Community Center. She showed us all a picture that was sent back from Iraq.

Robert Pettus asked to speak and encouraged a change of venue for the Farmer's Market. He doesn't feel that Pinkney Park is an appropriate place for the market. He again brought up his prior request that a new "Welcome to Rowayton" sign should include the following: "Birthplace of the Business Computer". The Commissioners said that they would be discussing his suggestion in their budget meetings and would let him know their decision.

Another topic on Mr. Pettus' agenda was the proposed demolition of the old stone bridge at White Bridge by the City of Norwalk. He wanted to go on record as being opposed to its demolition. He noted that when the bridge was closed to traffic, it was determined that the cost of repair would be about the same as the cost of demolition. The city now contends that it would cost much more to repair the bridge than to demolish it. He wanted to encourage the Commissioners to pursue the repair of the old bridge. Mr. Barbis stated that he has been active in trying to get approval to repair the bridge. However, the city seems determined to take it down. Mr. Barbis wanted to be clear that he and Mr. Pettus are in agreement regarding the proposed demolition of the old stone bridge. Mr. Barbis stated that the mayor won't come to look at the bridge because his decision has already been made. Mr. Barbis

MINUTES - January 13, 2010
Page Five

suggested working with Darien to see if there is any way we can dissuade the city in their efforts. The engineers that he has consulted are of the opinion that the bridge can be easily repaired. Rep. Terrie Wood has been approached to see if she might broker an agreement regarding the bridge. The Commissioners are doing as much as they can do to facilitate this.

Mr. Pettus also again brought up the subject of the letter that the clerk sent him. There seems to have been a misunderstanding regarding the letter. The Clerk had sent him a letter in response to his letter to the Commissioners regarding the Beach Permit processing. Mr. Pettus was under the impression that the letter in question would be a copy of a thank you letter to the people who handled the beach permitting process in the past. That letter is addressed to Lynne Pratt and is ready for the Commissioners' signature.

REPORTS

COMMISSIONER John Igneri reported that he had spoken with Maggie Trujillo about the possibility of moving the Farmers' Market to another location. They are open to any suggestions. When asked what alternatives are possible for the Farmers' Market, it was said that the Ambler Parking Lot and the Old School Field are the prime alternatives. The dog park was also mentioned. Mr. Barbis noted that it was originally planned to have the Farmers' Market in the Ambler Lot but that the organizers of the Market felt that there wasn't enough space there. Mr. Barbis noted that the Pinkney Park venue was established as a one-year experiment. He personally had a lot of positive feedback regarding the location.

Mr. Igneri has started a review of the insurance coverage for the community. He will be adjusting several things and the premiums should come down somewhat. This review and adjustment should be done by June.

COMMISSIONER Mike Barbis reported that there is some contention now regarding the boundary lines of Rowayton, most especially on the west side of town. He said that the border bounces all over the place. Several years ago the Commissioners made a policy that if any of a person's property falls within the boundaries of Rowayton, then that resident would be treated as any other Rowayton resident in regard to being eligible for a Bayley Beach permit. Recently a couple of people, one of whom was the Tax Assessor, arbitrarily decided that certain properties would be considered to be in the 5th TD rather than in the 6th. A Common Council member called the employees responsible for the action and told them that such a policy would have to go through the proper channels before being enacted. The Tax Assessor agreed to rescind the letters that had gone out to residents informing them of the change. (The change would negatively affect a resident's mil rate and property values). So far, no one

MINUTES - January 13, 2010

Page Six

has seen the promised letter.

COMMISSIONER Tammy Langalis said that the Commissioners will soon be interviewing candidates to be the District Counsel. There are three candidates who are being considered. They will start this process toward the end of the month.

Tammy also stated that the new pumper truck previously approved has been ordered. It will be about 7-9 months before it arrives.

Communications and Report of the **DISTRICT CLERK** January 13, 2010

1. A letter has been readied to send to Louis Paris, one of the RR guards, who called police to report a man on the tracks at Rowayton Station sometime near the end of last year.
2. A gift basket was sent to John Soltesz, another RR guard, as a get well wish due to his recent illness. We received a Thank You card from him.
3. A "Congratulations on Retirement" letter along with gift certificates was delivered to Dom Tesauro on the occasion of his retirement as a RR guard, effective December 31, 2009.
4. There are no RR permits left. We have a relatively short, "active" wait list. I am awaiting the disposition of a recently requested rebated permit.
5. A Thank You letter to Lynne Pratt for her years of service in processing beach permits has been readied.

PROPERTY MANAGER

Ed Carlson

January 2010

Community Center:

1. The dog park fence installation has been delayed due to the weather.
2. The new truck/plow has performed very well in the recent snows.
3. The engine on the JD Gator is not seized up anymore; but it needs further work to get it running.
4. Estimates from Encon to replace existing boilers with propane. (It was about \$12K for the propane conversion. The installation of an above ground tank behind the CC was advised).
5. The process of selling the 1990 truck appears to be over. Paperwork was given to the new owner for submittal to DMW. (The old truck was sold for \$1600).

MINUTES - January 13, 2010
Page Seven

Bayley Beach
No Report

Pinkney Park:

1. I have received reports from ADT about motion sensor alerts. If they continue, I will have ADT check the system. (It is suspected that on very windy days, the leaky windows cause the blinds to move, possibly setting off the motion sensor).
2. The shutter that was damaged is beyond repair. (Ed thinks there may be some unused shutters that could replace the damaged one and will look for them).

REPORT OF THE FIRE MARSHAL

December 2009

<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>#</u>	<u>#Man Hours</u>
Blasting Permit(s)	***	***
Blasting Site Inspection(s)	***	***
Building Inspection(s)	2	3
Clerical (office) work		22
Fire Marshal Conferences	***	***
Career Development Training	2	6
Investigation(s)	***	***
Meetings: Construction	1	1
District Monthly	1	2
FNHFMA	1	2
(Other) Evacuation Plan/United Church	1	2
(Other)		
(Other)		
<hr/>		
Total Man Hrs.		38

Expenses:

Remarks to the Commissioners: I would like to thank the Commissioners and the Treasurer for getting the order in for the new pumper.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ed Carlson

MINUTES - January 13, 2010
Page Eight

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR

Jack Robson

Community Center Trees:

Brown & Company have completed the removal of all problem trees on Highland Avenue and McKinley Avenue. The remaining trees (1 Norway maple and 2 Sugar Maple trees) have been trimmed. One Sugar Maple has had a cable installed. These three trees are on the west corner of the Highland Avenue end of the Community Center property. They should remain until new trees can be planted to fill in the gap they make once removed.

Remaining work to be done:

Grind down the stumps of all trees removed. We have \$850.00 left in the budget for this purpose. Or, hold these funds for an emergency. **(\$850.00 to grind down the stumps was approved to be spent).**

The cost to grind 20 stumps is **\$3,400.00.**

We presently have \$850.00 left from the approved **\$10,000.00.** This work should be added to the new budget. The contractor broke down the number of stumps by sections. Some old and some new.

Most of the smaller pieces of wood from the newly cut trees have been removed by the public. The remaining larger sections need to be split before they can be removed. Perhaps Ed Carlson could assist with the splitting, while the grounds are still frozen. Then the public would be able to help themselves once more.

There was damage to the lawn by trucks and cars driving over the property to retrieve this wood. Work on the lawn may be needed in the spring to restore it to its original condition.

The Meeting Room still needs a panic bar installed. It has been on back order for a number of weeks. Mike Hazzard expects to hear from the supplier next week. He will let me know when it arrives and then install it.

Work on the drains around the Community Center has been put on hold until the weather improves, probably very early spring.

The Planning Committee has recommended that we install two above-ground 330 gallon oil tanks at the rear of the Community Center. They also recommend leaving the old tank in ground and not incur added cost for removal. Estimated cost: **\$5,000 to \$7,000.** (The cost of leaving the tank in the ground is not included in the estimated cost).

MINUTES - January 13, 2010

Page Nine

I am waiting for James Grant, our structural engineer advisor, to reply on what he feels the 2nd floor load requirements should be. Michael Stein, Architect, drew up a diagram of the structure based on the inspection that was conducted by cutting through the ceiling from below the second floor. Mr. Grant has this drawing.

Ambler Parking Lot

Weeds still need to be removed from the wetlands side of the parking lot and treated to prevent their return in the spring.

A single light needs to be installed on the existing pedestal in the center of the parking lot. P&Z approval is required. Approximate cost to install **\$500.00**. (Ms. Langalis noted that letters had been sent to all the neighbors regarding installation of this light in the Ambler Lot. She has only had one response, which was positive).

Bayley Beach

Silvestri Fencing has installed a 50ft. linear x 8 ft. high black chain link fence behind the basketball court. This was determined to be high enough so as to prevent basketballs from bouncing over and onto boats in the Roton Point Beach Club. However, Ernie LaRocca, the manager for the club, called me and said the fence needed to be higher. I told Mr. LaRocca we would review the situation in the spring. Roton Point has agreed to pay half the cost of the installation. Total cost was \$1,400.00 shared by the Sixth Taxing District and Roton Point.

RR Parking Lot

Both guard shacks are in need of re-staining. I suggest we do this when weather permits.

There was a build up of icicles under the RR bridge a few weeks ago. DOT was called to have them removed before they fell on passing traffic. Craig Bordiere assured me that the construction of the bridge would be reviewed and corrections would be made to prevent this from happening again.

A protective cover is needed for the newly installed window on the west bound guard shack. This would be connected every evening as a safe guard. (Gutters on one of the shack are not sealed. Mike Hazzard will look at that).

Pinkney Park

Missing pinwheels along the seawall will need to be replaced once the weather improves and the ground thaws. Cost approximately \$68.00

MINUTES - January 13, 2010

Page Ten

So far, there has been no evidence that the geese have returned. Spring, and the return of the geese, will give us a better sense as to whether the pinwheels are truly effective.

TREASURER'S REPORT - Andy Conroy reported that the audit report from the auditors has been received as the audit was just completed. It was a good audit. The actuals were really better than budgeted. Therefore, we ended up with a little extra money, but not much. The cash position of the District is fairly good right now as we have just received some tax revenues from the city.

OFFICER JENSEN'S REPORT - Officer Jensen reported that there was a prowler at the train station on December 23. They think that this prowler or prowlers have been checking out cars in preparation to possibly stealing one or more of them. There was a suspicious car, a red Toyota, driving around. Joe feels that they discovered there was a guard on duty and were possibly scared off. At any rate, there have been no more incidents.

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner John Igneri and seconded by Commissioner Mike Barbis. Commission Chair Tammy Langalis adjourned the meeting at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea J. Woodworth
Clerk, 6th Taxing District