

MINUTES
SIXTH TAXING DISTRICT, City of Norwalk
June 10, 2009

Rowayton Community Center
33 Highland Avenue
8:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Commissioners Ed Kweskin, Mike Barbis, Tammy Langalis, Treasurer Andy Conroy, District Administrator Jack Robson, Property Manager and Fire Marshal Ed Carlson and District Clerk Andrea Woodworth.

The June meeting of the Sixth Taxing District Commission was called to order at 8:10 p.m. by Commission Chairman Ed Kweskin.

Tammy Langalis made a motion to accept the minutes of the two May meetings, as submitted. Mr. Kweskin seconded the motion. Hearing no discussion, the minutes of the May 13 Special Meeting and the May 13 regular meeting of the Commission were approved as submitted.

Communications and Report of the District Clerk - Andrea Woodworth

1. A letter was sent to Mr. Pat Proto at the DOT indicating the Commissioners' strong interest in having the buttress widening project at the Railroad bridge on Rowayton Avenue finished.
2. I have delivered a letter to Scott Whiteman indicating the necessity of his payment for last year's rent before Sports Camp activities are undertaken. Another copy of the letter was posted to his P. O. Box. **(A check for last year's rent was given to the Treasurer).**
3. We have processed 989 beach permit applications so far this year. There are still a few that were missing key items that have not been taken care of yet. However, aside from a few days I spent in Illinois, the applications were processed the day received and mailed out the next day.

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4. Railroad renewal letters have gone out to all parking permit holders and to the first 25 on the wait list, since the Commissioners authorized the sale of 25 more permits this year. The renewal will take place between 8 and 12 a.m. on June 20. The cleared wait list permits will be processed a week later on June 27. Signs noting the renewal date are at both railroad shacks and reminder notices will go out twice before that date.

5. There is a gentleman who has reserved the pavilion for an anniversary party for his parents on June 21. They are now getting a little concerned regarding the weather. He has asked if they could move the venue to the Community Center. There is, however, a party the night before and June 21 is a Sunday and Father's Day. I would be glad to open for them, but the party on the 20th would have had to clean up pretty well to accommodate this. **(Ed and Andrea agreed to work out the details and allow the party to go forward).**

6. I think it would be advisable for a few of us to get together to go over the current contract for renting the Community Center. Last weekend's party was moved into the courtyard and the garbage was left out all night. We may only need to take another look at the rules and make sure nothing is left in the courtyard overnight, especially not full garbage bags. Conditions of moving the party may need to be spelled out as well. I'm sure Ed Carlson and I could review these rules.

Mr. Kweskin next announced that we would be dispensing with the order of the Agenda to address the issue most on the residents' mind, i.e. the Shakespeare on the Sound fence. Mr. Kweskin explained that the Commissioners at the May meeting, had given SOS permission to erect a 4' above ground level fence along Rowayton Avenue. SOS proposed that the fence, besides enhancing their artistic ideas, would cut down on the noise and light nuisance to the neighbors and would cut down on the noise and headlights from the road during the production. However, Mr. Kweskin said that he has received many e-mails and calls from residents stating that they felt the fence was divisive and exclusionary within the community. People feel very passionately about this fence, in a negative way. People are also very passionate about Pinkney Park and they feel shut out of it by the fence. In any case, the most important thing to keep in mind is that we all live in harmony here, in spite of our differences. We would like to encourage everyone to keep their differences in proportion. Mr. Kweskin's view is that the Commissioners made a commitment to SOS and they will honor it. However, if the Commissioners could have visualized how it would look, they probably would not have agreed to it. Mr. Kweskin recommended that SOS reconsider and take the fence down. He thinks that the negative feeling of a lot of people will affect SOS in their fund raising and general good will from the community. People like to drive and walk by and watch the evolution of the set as it's being put up. The fence reinforces the view that SOS is separating itself from the community. Additionally, the Commission never intended to approve a fence that would continue on down the driveway toward Pinkney House. He acknowledged that a lot of that portion had been removed, but that there was still a portion, that was not envisioned

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by the Commissioners, that jogs a bit into the park.

Mr. Barbis said that he had a lot of e-mails from different residents and stated that he was very much disappointed in the tone that was taken in many of them. Although he may have sympathy with their frustrations, he felt that the inappropriate language used was totally contrary to the feeling of community that we usually feel here. People are saying that they can't see any part of the performance driving by and are disturbed by the separateness that the fence causes. Mr. Barbis reiterated his feeling that we should show respect for each other and each other's opinions.

Mrs. Langalis spoke next saying that she had gone to the park with some SOS officials and had gotten a somewhat different perspective on the fence. Even knowing the negative feelings of a large number of residents, she feels that it is important to give SOS the chance to show their vision to their audiences. She would like to try to come to a middle of the road place for everyone and allow SOS to try out their creative license.

Mr. Kweskin stated that unless they were otherwise persuaded, the fence could stay. Mr. Kweskin opened the floor to people in attendance at the meeting.

Mary Osborne, managing director of Shakespeare on the Sound, was the first to speak. She said that the original idea of the fence was meant to cut down on the sound and light, and therefore disturbance, for the neighbors of the park. They were also considering safety issues knowing that basically one entry point would be easier to control, crowd-wise. SOS had originally asked for a 6' fence. In retrospect, they were happy not to have gotten what they asked for. With the 4' fence, you can see into the park if you're walking along the sidewalk. They realize there is an issue with the color of the fence in its raw state, but they are painting and/or staining it to better blend in with its surroundings. If they had not gotten permission to erect the fence, they would not have positioned the stage the way that it is now. The wall that went into the park and has been taken down was to have been part of the stage. Some of the action of the play takes place on the grass. They're trying to create a little more openness visually. SOS has received both positive and negative letters. The way the stage is positioned, taking down the fence would create an impossible position for the production.

Bill Nollman spoke in favor of the fence. He noted that even though it seemed exclusive, it actually will become part of the creative experience. Bill noted that there's a very interesting rendering of the artistic design on the web site. It shows how they are actually using the trees as part of the set of a forest for a "Midsummer Night's Dream". He thinks the whole design will turn out to be very exciting.

Michael Sagalyn, Vice-President of the board of SOS said that he loves Rowayton in all respects, but especially as a parent and as a property owner. He wants to empathize with and listen to the community. He understands when people say that SOS has sort of

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outgrown the borders of Rowayton. That is why they started presenting the productions in Greenwich. He has always had a real fear of kids crossing the road during the presentation and putting their safety in jeopardy. He feels that the concept and staging of this play has really ramped up the creative level of SOS and, in doing so, has helped with the safety issues that some of them had had. He feels that SOS is really staging a creative jewel here and that the audience experience is going to be a lot better even than in the past. He feels that events such as this also lifts property values in the area and that the community is enhanced, and not harmed, by its presence.

Margo Packer stated that she thinks that this is the most incredible set ever. And, that it is kind of cool the way the stage is built into the ground using the varying grades. It's definitely going to be different, and in a positive way, she feels.

Piet Marks noted that many people are upset by the feeling of exclusion that the fence has created. He noted that the Commissioners decided correctly when they authorized a 4' fence instead of a 6' fence and that their decision should stand for this year. Maybe they will make another decision next year.

Joe Jensen spoke in support of Michael Sagalyn's view that the fence enhances the overall general safety of the audience. It will definitely provide a more easily monitored entrance to and exit from the park. In past years, people have generally flooded out from many places. It was a very difficult situation to control.

Bill Nollman also thought that the staging will be a lot less detrimental to the park grounds than in the past.

Cynthia Johnson asked what the response was of the tenants of Pinkney Park, those being the members of the Rowayton Historical Society. There were no representatives of the RHS at the meeting.

Mike Sagalyn again spoke and said that letters had been sent to all the direct neighbors of Pinkney Park who were also invited to an event where their views could be made known. SOS is well aware that it's a visual change to the environment of the park, but that it is going to be temporary. His sense is that the neighbors are less concerned with the fence than they are with the positive effect it will have on the noise and light pollution caused by the production.

It was noted that the Old School Field will be a parking area for the production, as in the past.

Bunny Scott said that she is in the park almost every day with her dogs and she has found the evolution of the set very exciting. She wishes that the fence had been put up later in the process so that people could see more of what was going on.

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Piet Marks asked if there was a safety bond carried by SOS. Of course, SOS has its own insurance.

Ed Kweskin recommended that SOS should make a point of inviting people into Pinkney to see what is going on. That might go a long way in defusing the negativity. They might wish to put something to that effect on the RCA, or their own, web site.

Dick Schock went on the record saying that SOS does a great job. He thinks the Commissioners should stick with their original decision to allow the 4' fence.

The Commissioners are in agreement that the fence will stay up for the production this year.

REPORTS

Treasurer's Report - Andy Conroy

Andy said that we are in a fairly low point in our bank balances. The City of Norwalk owes us some more money (around \$30K) because our taxes were incorrectly calculated. The railroad also owes almost \$40K to the District. We won't get any more infusion of funds until late July or early August. We really don't have any extra money to do anything. When we have it, we share it. When we don't, we don't.

Property Manager - Ed Carlson - June 2009

Community Center:

1. The estimate for material to extend the dog park fence is \$850.00. I have contacted Gail Jaques to request ½ of the cost from those using the dog park. (Feedback from dog owners suggests they will be happy to contribute to it).
2. The new truck for the District has been ordered. The dealer advises 6 -8 weeks for the new one to arrive. I have received one bid for the old truck and am awaiting another one.

Bayley Beach:

1. The wood and debris that was gathered together was removed by District employees.
2. The new grill enclosure has been well received by the residents.
3. Estimates have been received for playground repairs and recommendations for mulch and added parts.
(Additionally, we have received the parts for repair to the playground equipment. We have an estimate for \$869 to install them. Ed's crew put in all the parts that we needed, thereby saving \$869. Estimates from the last inspection of the playground suggested putting play mats under the swings at a cost of \$512. We don't have to do that. The mulch present is OK.

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There are some filler pieces that we should probably get, which would cost \$28.32. Tracey Stidolph and her original committee had some leftover \$ which was previously spent on a part that had to be replaced. She doesn't have any money left over. The inspectors felt that there is not enough mulch [cushioning]. Last year we used 33 yds. This year, the recommendation is for 90 yards. Each piece of equipment requires a minimum layer. Ed doesn't think we need that much extra. Ms. Langalis felt she needed to mention that several years ago we spent \$7K for a playground that lasted a long time. Now we have a very fancy playground that needs to constantly be maintained. She feels that they are constantly trying to sell us what we don't need. She feels that Ed Carlson has a good sense of what we need. We might check with the Gardeners to see where they get their mulch. It comes with a certificate of cleanliness. We'll leave it up to Ed Carlson's judgment. Hopefully, the payment for the extra mulch will come after we get the next infusion of cash).

Pinkney Park:

1. The toilet on the second floor shows no evidence of water on the floor. The leak in the front hall is possibly from rain.
2. New water lines for the public bathroom were installed by GT Plumbing.

Report of the Fire Marshal - Ed Carlson - April 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		20
Fire Marshal Conferences	***	***
Career Development Training	1	3
Investigation(s) House Fire	1	5
Meetings: District Monthly	1	2
Propane tank install	1	1
(Other) Carnival ride inspection w/ State Fire Marshal	1	2
(Other) Fuel Oil Truck inspection	1	2
(Other)		
		Total Man Hrs. 38

Expenses:

Remarks to the Commissioners: The hydrant installation on Wharf Road should be completed this summer.

5/27/09: House fire at 7 Harstrom Place. Many compliments from various individuals

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individuals on response of RFD.

(Mr Carlson reported that the house fire at 7 Harstrom Place on May 27 was started by a gas grill that had been left on. The residents were awakened by the sound of the tank venting from the heat. There was smoke damage on the second floor and the first floor was pretty much destroyed. The owners have relocated until renovations can be made. There were no smoke detectors in the house. People should really be reminded to have working smoke detectors on all floors. The Commissioners recommended that we get the word out with a reminder about this. The Clerk will ask the RCA to do an e-mail blast concerning this and also ask that it be put in "Clamdigging").

Regarding the hydrant on Wharf Road, Mr. Carlson has received updated estimates from the water company and the excavators. Two neighbors would cover the balance remaining from the original collection of funds. There is the issue of a check that was received from a resident for about \$839 shortly before she died. There is no record of it ever having been cashed. We will have to go through the Executor of her estate now to reclaim that contribution. SONO water is asking for \$3750, which is a higher estimate than what was received in the past. The water company will return anything that they don't need.

District Administrator - Jack Robson

Pinkney Park:

The new grass, along the seawall, has started to establish itself around Pinkney House and the Museum Building. However, I still feel that the landscaper will need to return in the early fall and apply an overall seeding to the area last worked on. There are still signs of bare spots. This will be done at the landscaper's expense.

The geese continue to inhabit the seawall and leave their calling cards. I would like to proceed with our proposed plan for deterring them, once the 2009/2010 budget is in effect.

Ed Carlson has re-installed the Memorial benches on the Pinkney grounds.

A request was made a number of weeks ago by Mary Osborne re: Shakespeare on the Sound, to have the light on pole 1590 turned off for rehearsals and for the duration of the performances. She indicated that this was done in the past so the overhead light would not interfere with the stage lighting. Would this be acceptable, now that there is a new direction to the staging for this year? (Mr. Carlson noted that that light was off every other year. They initially asked for more lights to be off, but we don't think that that is good. That might become a safety issue with crossing the road with no light. **(Only that one pole is approved for turning off).**

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Bayley Beach:

The painter who did the work on the Pavilion returned and repainted the railings and the posts due to unusual wear from last year. He offered to paint the entire floor rather than spot paint areas that were showing signs of peeling. This has been done, but he did not inspect the work after it was done. There are a few problems with the floor and he said he would return to fix the area.

The Grill Enclosure is completed except for one base line that is intended to strengthen the chain link fence on the bottom. The fencing contractor promised to return as soon as possible and finish this one last detail. I called again as a reminder, but haven't heard back as yet. They are extremely busy now and will work this into their schedule.

Once the base link has been installed, I would like to insert some 2" x 12" boards that Ed Carlson has near the ball park, into the sand next to the base of the chain link fence so we can keep sand from drifting in from the Wee Burn side and the cement walk side of the property.

Striping Bayley Beach Parking Lot:

I contacted a company called "We Do Lines". They came out last Wednesday, June 3, to look at the situation and give a quote on a simplified version of striping for the beach parking area. Ed Carlson and Don Wilson met with them. They presented a quote of \$550.00 for a first time execution which will involve a new layout and the striping. The scheduling for this work is tentatively for June 29, 2009, but no later than July 2nd, 2009. If they were to return near the middle to end of August, and redo the striping, the fee would be \$350.00 for a redo. This would help control the parking and make Don & Ed's jobs a lot easier. (They won't stripe actual parking spots, but only a forward line. There will also be a designated fire lane with hatch marks to indicate "No Parking" There will also be an exit stripe running along the ball field. Mr. Kweskin asked if we need it. And, if so, do we need to have it professionally done. Ed Carlson's opinion is "Yes" on both questions. It should be done before the 4th of July. Andy said that we could pay for it now. It would be good if it were done for the June 29th concert).

DEP inquiry:

I have been playing phone tag with a Susan Joacobson who is with DEP in Hartford. The purpose for the calls is to get a ruling on the state of responsibility for the ditch along the Bayley Beach and Wee Burn border. The other reason for the calls was to get an approval to re-seed the wetlands, next to the Ambler Parking Lot, with grass that is native to the area or some other flowering, wild plant, that would meet with their approval. The

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vines and weeds in the wetland area behind the stone wall at the Ambler Parking Lot are invading other plants and need to be removed.

Community Center:

The old library doors are now installed at the Community Center leading into the Moose Room. A new window has also been installed, replacing the old rotted frame. Both have been repainted. New stain will be applied to the frame around the entire outside of the new doors. The outside of the old library doors need to be refinished at some point in the future. The door needs to be sanded down to the bare wood and varnished with a matte finish.

Ambler Parking Lot:

The landscaped grounds around the parking lot could do with some major weeding, as it has become overgrown. The wetlands section behind the stone wall needs to be cleaned out to prevent further infiltration of these weeds onto our landscaped area in front of the wall. Frani Taylor has pulled some of these weeds as they were invading her property. A possible solution for this would be to lay down a landscaper's screening cloth or plastic membrane, smother the weeds, and leave room for plants and trees to absorb water. Mulch would be applied after the laying down of the membrane.

Rowayton RR Parking Lot:

A bike has been chained to the bike rack on the New Haven side since the summer of 2008. I left it there thinking that the owner would return to claim it. He never has. A good Samaritan, who rides a bike to the station, told the guard that he wanted to take it home and restore it to working order. He left his name and card. This has since been lost. The bike was returned and put back on the chain. The morning guard has an interest in the bike. I would like to give the bike to the guard, instead of turning it over to the police or Goodwill so they can dispose of it.

Tuesday afternoon, I received a call from the guard on the New Haven side. There was a problem involving an Audi A6 sedan. The sedan pulled in so close to the guard shack that he ran over the downspout and crushed the elbow with his right rear wheel. I went to look and took photos of the incident. The driver was so close that another ½" and he would have hit the corner of the shed. I left a note on his windshield about the damage he caused and said that he would be contacted. The damage is not serious as it only entails the end elbow from the drain pipe at the guard shack. It could have been serious, for both car and the shed, had he been ½" closer.

Is this serious enough a problem to pursue for costs? (It is probably a \$5 fix, but we just want him to realize that it could have been serious) The owner of the vehicle is Alex Ely,

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6 Hilltop Road on Wilson Point. The following is a description of the car and ID stickers. Grey Audi A6 3.2 Quattro sedan, License Plate # 862-UJH. Rowayton RR Parking Permit# 00468, Valid 7- 1-08 to 6-30-09. His license # was not recorded on the permit. I received a call from him late this afternoon. He left a message. I tried to return the call several times, but his line was busy.

Home # 203-855-1214

Cell # 1-646-884-5000

Office # 212-508-6415

e-mail aely@bennettlawrence.com

(It was agreed that it wasn't expensive enough to ask for reimbursement).

Bunny Scott spoke up regarding the amount of goose droppings in Pinkney Park. She feels that putting pinwheels along the sea wall might keep the geese from landing there. It's a very inexpensive attempt at a solution and it just might work. We'll give it a try. She says that the real problem comes when the droppings dry and the dust from them becomes airborne. This can cause a very serious respiratory ailment. She wanted to know if Ed Carlson's crew could rake them up before mowing over them and creating an even bigger problem. **(That will be done)**

Tammy Langalis said that she had received a call from a concerned resident who had been approached at home by a traveling salesperson selling magazines who had become quite aggressive. They called the police and were advised to always ask people going door to door if they have a permit. Joe Jensen says that we should not be too casual about leaving our doors open. He said that the police do get a number of similar complaints each year. If anyone feels uncomfortable or unduly pressured by any of these people, they should call the police. They need to register with the city and state. The Clerk was asked to put an alert for people in "Clamdigging".

Mike Barbis said that Shelley Trubowitz' memorial service would be held at Bayley Beach on Saturday, June 13. The family has received almost \$3400 in donations in his memory. They are paying to have a garden planted at the south end of the tennis courts in Shelley's memory. The family will supplement any costs that the donations don't cover. They also propose to spend about \$5000 to build a patio around the tennis shed. If it costs more than \$5K, the Tennis Association will make up the difference.

Two women in town have taken over the Farmer's Market and are going to run it for profit. They were encouraged to use the Ambler Lot, but they are determined to use Pinkney Park. So, we will let them do it there this year as an experiment. There were essentially two reasons for moving it from the Community Center. One is that there are a lot of programs and events going on there and the parking situation was a problem. Additionally, they were a little bit isolated there. The downtown merchants are happy to have it closer to downtown, hoping that will bring more traffic in general. The vendors paid a fee in the past and that was given to the library. The vendors will pay a

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flat fee and the organizers will take 5% of the daily sales. This is not an unusual arrangement for these farmers' markets. The time will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Some people are unhappy with the early closing but the vendors are anxious to get on the road because of the heavy northbound traffic. The organizers have had a lot of permitting to do, through the Health Department and other governmental agencies. Maybe in the future, we will get a cut of the market. But, that is not the case now. The market will set up to the right of the drive into Pinkney. There will not be any parking allowed in Pinkney Park.

Mike also mentioned the ongoing drainage problem at Bayley Beach. He wants to get a comprehensive long term plan in place.

The 140 Rowayton Avenue shopping center people have been complaining that the Ambler Parking lot does not have enough signage. The communication sent to the Commissioners had an offensive tone. Mike feels that the tenants of 140 Rowayton Avenue use the Ambler Lot and we all should be more sharing. Ed Kweskin shares Mike's sentiments.

There was recently an incident on Tokeneke Road. We must remind children to never talk to strangers, and definitely not to those in cars. This seems to have been an isolated incident, but we can't be too careful. Children are all getting similar warnings at school, as well.

Officer Joe Jensen reported that he has been attempting to get a radar sign for Roton Avenue. Several of the signs have equipment problems at the moment and they are hard to come by. He predicted that one of the signs would be on Roton Avenue near the beach entrances by next Tuesday. Tammy will call Lt. Pete Randall. If needed, a letter to him will be sent, informing him of our concerns.

Mike reported that two officers from the Rowayton Fire Department had participated in a simulated hurricane drill recently. He said it was very interesting. They were working on the assumption that much of Rowayton would be under water in such a severe hurricane event. It certainly gives everyone something to think about. The evacuation center for this community in such an event would be Brien McMahon High School.

Bill Nollman was called on to present an idea that he has been working on for awhile. This year is the 40th anniversary of Woodstock. Bill is proposing to have a free anniversary concert in Pinkney Park on August 16, which date will be exactly 40 years + one day of the Saturday concert at Woodstock. He noted that the Summer Arts Festival has nothing scheduled for that date. His band and one other will perform only the songs from the Woodstock Festival. They are only asking for permission from the Commission and filed a proposal with the clerk. The issue of insurance coverage

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will be investigated. **Permission granted.**

Ed Carlson mentioned the proliferation of signs outside the Community Center lately. It was noted that this is officially State property, so we don't really have anything to do about it.

Ed Kweskin said that everyone is in agreement that ODMD will be reappointed as the 6th Taxing District's audit firm. Ed will send in the agreement to the company.

Mike Barbis noted that the RCA, as part of the 100th Anniversary of Bell Island, is planning a House Tour on Friday, September 25th on Bell Island. They would like to ask permission to use Bayley Beach parking lot as a staging point and for parking. **Permission granted.**

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mike Barbis and seconded by Tammy Langalis. Hearing no discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 10:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Andrea Woodworth
Clerk, 6th Taxing District