

**MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES**  
**SIXTH TAXING DISTRICT, City of Norwalk**  
**November 12, 2008**  
**Rowayton Community Center**  
**33 Highland Avenue**  
**8:00 p.m.**

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

Commissioner Ed Kweskin called the meeting to order at 8:10 p.m.

A motion was made by Tammy Langalis to accept the minutes of the October 15, 2008 meeting as submitted. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

**REPORTS**

**COMMISSIONER – Tammy Langalis**

Mrs. Langalis reported that she had attended a SWERPA roundtable discussion and came away with some ideas of how to get commuters who fail to pay the daily parking pass to comply with the parking policy. One suggestion was that we create a document saying that there are committing a “violation”. As of now, we have no wording on any notice that specifically cites a person not paying the daily parking fee that they are “violating” the parking regulations. However, it is difficult to find out who the people are because of privacy policies. The only way we can trace through the DMV who an offender is, is by paying \$5 per request to the DMV. In truth, there are few repeat offenders and if we can narrow it down to only a few, it might be worth going to the DMV and finding out the identity of the offender and creating a better means of collecting past parking fees. It was suggested that after a certain number of violations, there could be a penalty fee in addition to the daily parking fee. If such a policy became known, and especially if the offenders were identified at the parking lot, we might see more compliance. This will be looked into further.

There is a possible plan to tear down some parking facilities in Stamford in a year and a half or so. If that happens, we might anticipate additional use of our parking facilities. However, it remains to be seen whether that plan will come to fruition considering the

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state of the economy.

**COMMISSIONER – Mike Barbis**

On the subject of the Underground, now that the floor is finished they have gotten the furniture out of storage and are in the process of setting up what is still usable. They are still looking for someone to run the program with a goal of starting up again in January.

In Pinkney Park, Jack Robson has determined that we do not need to get a permit to cut down trees. Bruce Ladrihan will be taking down the one cedar tree that is closest to the deciduous tree on the southwest side of the park. The neighbor who was anxious to improve her view is paying to have it cut down.

On the subject of the antique fencing, we have been in communication with the contractor who will be taking it down. He is aware of our interest in retaining the fencing.

We began, at the end of the summer, to revise the beach rules. We haven't had another meeting but that will get under way after the first of the year.

There has been some correspondence regarding the situation at White Bridge (or Tokeneke Bridge). Mike has e-mailed several people in town about whether they have any real interest in changing the status of the bridge and has had a very lukewarm response. Of course, with the state of the economy, there is no money to deal with this issue. The danger is that if there were a big storm, it is thought that the old bridge, being so unstable, might actually take out the new bridge.

Mike would like to address the situation that has developed since the old bridge was closed. Rowayton Fuel has managed to take over the entire area and is using it as a parking lot. It is really an eye sore. In talking with Andy Conroy, Mike said that Andy didn't really trust the numbers that the DPW were coming up with that would be necessary to remediate the situation. Dick Shock, one of the railroad guards who was present at the meeting, said that the middle of the old bridge has always been used by surveyors to take their measurements. Ed Kweskin said that we might want to call Arcamone Surveyors to find out the ramifications of their not being able to use that point on the bridge. What might be their alternatives. Mr. Barbis just wanted the discussion to be opened since he feels the situation now creates an eyesore in town.

There will be a Special Meeting on November 24 with several questions on which electors will be asked to vote. One is the possible transfer of funds from the capital account in order to finish the interior work at Pinkney House. The cost overrun for all the Pinkney projects was about \$65,000. This would be a temporary transfer of funds.

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The electors would need to consider the purchase of a new pumper truck for the Rowayton Fire Department. The fire department committee tasked with the research on such a purchase have gone back to Seagrave, their first choice of suppliers of such a truck, and there has been a 14% price increase for the fire truck that they wanted. So they have gone back to the other bidders. One of them has only increased the original asking price by 3%. The District has \$200,000 set aside to help to purchase the truck. They're rushing to come up with some new hard numbers to present to the electors on November 24. We do want to go ahead with this now since there will be new specifications required after January 1 that could easily cost an additional \$30,000 - \$40,000. The order should go in before the end of 2008. Ed Kweskin stressed that it was important to come into the meeting with the highest amount that the truck could cost, rather than the lower. It would be worse to underestimate the cost and then have to go back to the electors with the reality of a higher price.

Mr. Barbis said that one of the issues they came across as they were trying to modify their proposal based on their needs was that they were anxious to have a pumper that would require less manpower at incidents. During the week when there are fire calls, there is a significant shortage of volunteers. There is equipment available that would not require an engineer to remain at the pumper and would free that volunteer to more actively fight the fire.

Mr. Kweskin asked Ed Carlson if, as Fire Chief, would he be happy with the apparatus being described if that was what was decided. Mr. Carlson indicated in the affirmative. Mr. Kweskin said that he was interested in the fact that they were looking at equipment that would be more effective in dealing with fires in houses that were very close together. The alternative that they are looking at does have a similar capability. The price for the equipment that was originally favored has gone up so much more than competing equipment and it is felt, especially in the current economic climate, that going with the original choice is not responsible or even possible. On the proposed Agenda Item #3, Mr. Kweskin suggested that it should read "To hear and discuss a proposal of the Rowayton Fire Department to purchase a new 1500 GPM Pumper Fire Truck, or comparable, for a base cost of \$520,000 or less (price is subject to increase and will vary depending upon the extras selected, date of delivery, and the date of payment of the purchase price)".

Mr. Barbis brought up the subject of vacation holiday policies for employees. The current policies were approved February 11, 2004. For some reason, we do not give all the municipal holidays that all the neighboring towns give, i. e. Veterans' Day and Columbus Day. Mike is proposing that we add those two holidays to the list. Additionally, we do not have a provision for longstanding employees. Currently, after an employee has been with us for 10 years, they have 10 days of paid vacation. Most other companies give additional vacation days after more years of service. We have no provision for that. Mr. Kweskin asked about the policies of the City of Norwalk.

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We will find out what their policies are.

There has been a request by the library for a speed bump near the entrance to the Library. We do have a temporary speed bump for when the library was in the Underground, Mike and Ed Carlson have spoken about it and they will install a temporary one now until we have the funds to install a permanent one.

Mr. Kweskin suggested that we might use temporary fences that cars would have to weave through but it was felt that cars might just drive through them.

## **PROPERTY MANAGER – Ed Carlson – November 2008**

### **Community Center:**

1. The items from Westy's storage have been brought back to the Center and placed in the basement. A decision needs to be made regarding what to keep. (There are too many tables and chairs)
2. The pine tree near the library was removed by American Tree.

### **Bayley Beach**

1. The pavilion deck was power washed.
2. The pine tree near the tennis court was removed by American Tree.
3. The water is shut off for the season and the pavilion closed. (The small boat that was donated got away during a storm and ended up on Weeburn Beach. It has been returned).

### **Pinkney Park**

1. The outside water has been shut off and drained for the winter months.

### **R. R. Station Lot:**

1. The phone in the north shack was replaced and the phone line problem corrected by AT&T.

**Note:** The cannon was splashed with paint on Halloween night. I had covered the base and most of the cannon with a tarp. Pink and white latex paint was found on the uncovered part and also the concrete walk around it. The pain was removed by power washing and solvents. This required the labor of three men for three hours each. I am suggesting that a quote from All Seasons Marine be obtained to have the cannon shrink-wrapped prior to Halloween 2009.

Ed Carlson  
Property Manager

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Mr. Robson asked Mr. Carlson if the Pinkney Park side door issue had been addressed and he was answered in the affirmative. Ed will also unclog the filter at the public parking lot.

**FIRE MARSHAL – Ed Carlson – October 2008**

<b>Type of Activity</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>#Man Hours</b>
Blasting Permit(s)	***	***
Blasting Site Inspection(s)	***	***
Building Inspection(s)	2	3
Clerical (office) work		19
Fire Marshal Conferences	***	***
Career Development Training	1	3
Investigation(s)	***	***
Meetings: District Monthly	1	2
FNHCFMA	1	2
(Other)		
Building Plan Review	1	2
(Other)		
(Other)		
<hr/>		Total Man Hours
		31

Expenses:

Remarks to the Commissioners:

All Nursery schools were visited during the month for Fire Prevention exercises.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Carlson

Mr. Carlson reported a quiet month. He had a couple of meetings with some propane people. Mr. Barbis noted that the Rowayton Fire Department had the most calls in a month ever in October, being 25 calls, however, no fires. Many were auto alarms, and people being locked out of their homes.

**DISTRICT ADMINISTRATOR – Jack Robson**

**Monthly Meeting**

**Sixth Taxing District, City of Norwalk**

**November 12, 2008**

**Pinkney Park**

**Seawall Construction:**

Construction of the seawall is now complete. Grading and seeding of the grounds behind the seawall has been completed. A barrier has been put up to keep traffic from disturbing the newly seeded areas. This should remain until there is evidence that the seed has germinated and grass has been established. (Overall, Jack is very pleased with the seawall project and thinks the contractor did a very good job. Mr. Kweskin asked if there had been a bond posted for the work? Mr. Barbis answered that the state didn't require a bond. Jack answered that we had paid \$200 for a permit and that a certificate of permission was granted. When the work was completed, Jack filled in the necessary paperwork and submitted it. The EPA was contacted when the work started and when it was completed. To actually close the file on the project, the surveyor must sign off on that. If there were a bond, we couldn't release that until everything was approved).

Half of the new seawall from the Rowayton Avenue side has been opened up to the public. Grass is established in this portion. However, the Canadian geese have also discovered the newly seeded open area and have invaded the new wall and grass. They are creating a hazard with their droppings. It does not present an inviting place for the public to walk or sit.(As soon as another section is opened up, the geese move in).

Our neighbors across Five Mile River have had the same problem on their seawalls and lawn. They experimented with spraying the area, which worked fine, until it rained, and then they had to spray the areas again. Their landscaping contractor, who happens to be our contractor, devised a method which has worked. They simply put up PVC pipes that were 1" in diameter, and approximately 24" long. They drilled holes top and bottom, then strung black vinyl coated wire through the top and bottom sections. The geese have never come back to haunt them, leaving the area free of messy droppings.

I propose we do the same. The pipes can be installed on the inside of the seawall or on the outside wall by securing the pipes in the river bed next to the seawall. The estimate from our mason for labor and materials would be **\$1,350.00**. (Mr. Barbis would be in favor of this if it really worked. Tammy Langalis stated that she was skeptical that it would actually keep the geese off of it. It's a vinyl covered black wire. There was no vote on this proposal and it was decided it didn't need to be done right away.. Dick Shock pointed out that encouraging people to walk their dogs in the park would go a long way to keeping the geese away).

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#### **Pinkney House Foundation:**

Our mason is scheduled to start on pointing the deteriorating stone foundation within the next few weeks Cost **\$550.00**. Our Treasurer informed me that we had the funds to build the stone retaining wall next to the washhouse if you wished to complete that project as well. (Mr. Kweskin noted that if the funds are available for this, he would be in favor of it. It was decided to pay it under the "Maintenance" line in the budget. **APPROVED**. (Jack will check into the pointing under the lattice under the porch. There are voids in the foundation. There's also quite a bit of work to be done on the back wall under the porch). We will have the mason move a stone marker that is now lying to the right of the porch and move it to the front of the porch so it can be better viewed.

#### **Pinkney House:**

The exterior painting/staining of the entire house has been completed. All the shutters have been assembled. A new kitchen window has been installed and painted.

#### **Gazebo Roof:**

The roofer that was to repair the leaks in the joints of the cedar roof has not gotten back to us as yet. I have asked the contractor to give us a definite cost breakdown before proceeding. We may have to put a hold on the repair for this year, due to lack of funds.

#### **New Memorial Tree:**

A new cherry tree has been planted between the Museum building deck and the Belgian Block garden. We removed an overgrown, very old lilac bush from this spot, as it was the best location for the cherry tree. All parties involved agreed with the location choice. Karen Casey was the contact on this project. (The memorial tree was planted in memory of Yvonne Black).

#### **Reclaimed bushes from old original seawall:**

Two bushes/small trees have been relocated next to the cedar tree which is closest to the Pinkney House. They are next to an already established small tree that was not moved during the construction. Other (4) small bushes that used to line the seawall along the first 75 ft. have been relocated to the left of the cedar trees and placed in such a way that they blend in with similar plants. They have been trimmed back so as to not hinder anyone's view of the water. The entire seawall is now free of any obstruction, and there is a full view of the river for the public to enjoy, that they did not have before. (It was noted that there is nothing there now that exceeds the height of any of the growth that was there before the construction. In fact, there was view obstruction of about 75' before the construction that is not there now. So the view is actually better).

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#### **Pinkney Park Cedar Tree Removal**

I had put a hold on the removal of the one cedar tree next to the old cherry tree, as it sits directly on the old seawall foundation line. I wanted to be sure we would not have a problem with DEP. I contacted our engineer on the project and he said that clearance from DEP was not required, and to go ahead with the tree removal. If we are still in agreement to take the one cedar tree down, I will call American Tree and arrange for this to be done. Their price was **\$350.00**. Maryann Jones will be responsible for the cost of the removal.

#### **Community Center:**

As of last week, the Underground basement floor has been finished. Ed Carlson has started to move the furniture that was in storage back into the basement.

In addition, a dead pine tree has been taken down from in front of the library. A similar dead pine tree was removed from Bayley Beach between the baseball field and the tennis courts.

#### **Dog Park Fence:**

There are two ways to go on this. A temporary fence vs. a full repair of the stone wall incorporating a fence in the structure.

I contacted one fencing company to give us an idea of cost to install a proper fence in front of the stone wall. The purpose is to prevent dogs from jumping over the wall into the adjoining school yard property. Silvestri Fencing in Danbury was contacted. They proposed a black vinyl coated 1" Hex Wire on black vinyl coated pipe, plus a 3 ft. wide gate to close off an area between the paddle tennis courts. **Cost \$4,180.00**.

I think that a repair of the CC stone wall should be first on the agenda, and then install a 3' fence on top of the wall from McKinley Ave. to the paddle tennis courts. (Trees and their roots are encroaching on the wall and helping to destroy the wall. Jack was proposing creating a new straight line and not using the existing foundation of the wall. Ed Kweskin asked if what he was proposing was taking down the entire wall. He was).

What I am suggesting is to rebuild the wall and install a 3' fence on top of the wall from McKinley Avenue to the Paddle Tennis Courts. Combine **\$80,700** with a 3' fence, the total cost might be approximately **\$83,000.00**. (Another mason estimated a cost of \$95K) We could put a fence in front of the wall. Mr. Kweskin asked which would be more economical. The fence in front of the wall would be more economical but it wouldn't look as great. The subject was tabled for further discussion at a later time. Mrs. Langalis noted that she had spoken with Gail Jacques, a dog park regular user, and that she said that she felt that it was not a huge problem and few dogs actually ran away that way. Mr. Robson noted that there is an area between the paddle court and the fence that really needs a gate. The whole issue was taken under advisement).

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#### **RR Guard Shack:**

The New Haven bound side guard shack has had a repair. Decaying wood at the base of two sides has been removed and replaced. New gutters have been installed to prevent water from causing the problem again. The new siding has been stained. We discovered that the guard shack was well insulated.

#### **RR Guard Shack Chair**

The guard shack chairs on the New York side are in need of replacement. Both are broken and should go to the dump. Staples have a range of chairs to choose from. **\$70.00 to \$280.00.** A mid-range model for **\$159.00** seemed serviceable. Two chairs would cost **\$320.00.** The question is, do we now get a similar chair for the other guard shack? (Replacing the chairs on both sides was **APPROVED**).

#### **Ornate fence railing on New Haven side of RR Bridge:**

I have contacted Craig Bordiere, who is the Transportation Rail officer with the Connecticut Department of Transportation, about this railing. Craig referred me to Rodney Armstrong. He is in charge of the bridge construction. Rodney indicated that the rail material would become the property/responsibility of the contractor. Rodney suggested that I contact the prime contractor, Ducci Electrical, and speak with the Project Superintendent, Lee Hahn. Unfortunately, Mr. Hahn will not be back until next week. I will try to speak with him about the ornate railing, and see if we can claim ownership.

#### **Bayley Beach concrete walk:**

I have discussed the repair of the walk with our seawall mason. His fee for fixing the footing and cracks along a 200' stretch would be **\$7,000.00.** (Mr. Barbis noted that he didn't think we had the money for this now but would need to check with Mr. Conroy. We'll look into that further in the spring when it is actually needed).

#### **Communications and Report of the District Clerk – Andrea Woodworth**

1. The District received a letter from the Disabled American Veterans for the \$50 contribution made to them in memory of Edgeworth Hull, a former Railroad guard.
2. A fruit basket and card was delivered from the District to Al Alk at the time of the death of his wife, Celine.
3. The District received a letter from Shakespeare on the Sound announcing the appointment of Joanna Settle as Artistic Director of SOS.
4. I received a request from an out-of-district person requesting use of the Community Center for weight loss meetings which would also promote the sale of Herbalize International products. I discouraged the request but he asked that I present his request to the Commission. We don't have a fee schedule which would be for short meetings over the course of several weeks. **REQUEST DENIED.**

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5. I received a request from a resident to use the Commissioners' Room for a half hour per week for about six weeks for the purpose of tutoring. There isn't a fee schedule for this. The room would be open, but I'm not sure if this would be allowed. If it were, should we set up a fee schedule for this? Also, this would be something that might be accommodated in the Underground. We have no fee policy for that either. (A discussion ensued about use of the Underground. It will be set up so that more than one event may be going on at the same time, hopefully of a similar nature. The decision was made that we would charge **\$25/hr or part thereof** for use of the Underground for the time being. We will work on an event form for prospective renters. It was thought that one-on-one tutoring or events of that nature would not need to supply Certificates of Liability. However, if there were larger groups even for the same purpose, that issue would have to be visited. The Clerk will attempt to use discretion in not booking so far out that a large group that would want to use the space would be turned away because of one-on-one events).
6. There are some personnel issues with the railroad guards. Tammy and Jack have been looking into them and these issues will be addressed in Executive Session.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Robson noted that the temporary speed bumps installed at the Community Center are in need of touch up yellow painting. That will be taken care of by Ed Carlson and crew.

Surveyors were doing some work at the Railroad station (Mr. Barbis offered the information that MetroNorth will be offering Wi-Fi service in the future). Dick Shock, one of the railroad guards, told the surveyors that they couldn't do the work then as there was a danger of something falling and causing damage to the cars parked underneath. He told them that they would have to do it on weekends or nights. Mr. Shock estimated that they would only be there for one day. Mr. Kweskin asked that for that one day could we not fill the spaces underneath the workers. If we can't get them to do it on a weekend, how much parking revenue would we lose. It was estimated to affect 10 – 12 spaces. Mrs. Langalis suggested coning off the area and asking commuters to park elsewhere. We don't want to get a reputation for hindering operation. Mr. Kweskin asked to first see if they can do the work on the weekend. Then, if not, let's cone off the area and try to be cooperative.

There is a work order to have a local only phone installed in the hallway of the Community Center. The pay phone has been removed.

Accounting Assistance: We will wait to hear from Andy on any progress he's made in finding someone. Mike Barbis knows of an accountant who is doing

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books for the Rowayton Yacht Club. She would be willing to work about ten to twenty hours a week. Mr. Barbis feels that we need some provision for this. We will put it on the agenda for the next meeting.

Parking Problems at the Community Center: Ed Carlson reports that we are getting a lot more traffic at the Community Center with increased library programs, paddle tennis court use, Gardeners' workshops, etc. The main problem occurs, however, on Fridays when the Farmer's Market is operating. Half of the lower lot has to be blocked off for parking. We need to brainstorm some solutions. It was agreed that the upper spaces should be reserved for the library. Mrs. Langalis suggested that we contact groups to encourage to car pool, walk or park on McKinley. We may have to look at some scheduling issues when there are too many events at one time.

We may write to the various groups and ask them to notify us when they are having events that will be more of a draw so that we can plan for excess parking. The task force looking into planning for the Community Center may be looking into additional parking. The Clerk will write a letter to SOS, the Paddle Association and other users of the Community Center asking that they notify us when they will be using more parking spaces than usual. There may be a need for a sign posted that the upper spaces are reserved for library patrons during library hours.

We have the schedule from SOS for 2009. They are asking the Commissioners to approve their schedule. Ask Mary to also circulate the letter to the neighbors, and others involved. **APPROVED.**

Mike Barbis asked the other Commissioners if they would look at the sewer bill, which is \$1800 at Pinkney . Can we look into this since it is so much higher than before now. Ed Carlson said that there is a leaking toilet but that would not be enough to justify this bill. It is noted that the water lines are really old.

Tammy Langalis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mike Barbis seconded it. The motion passed and the meeting was adjourned to Executive Session at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Andrea Woodworth  
Clerk, 6<sup>th</sup> Taxing District