

West Haven Parks and Recreation Commission  
Minutes  
June 5, 2023  
Park-Rec Office 7:00pm

Call Meeting to Order: Motion to call meeting to order by Comm. Valaitis at 7:05pm

Present: Comm. Valaitis, Comm. Beirne, Comm. Freel, Park Rec Director Mark Paine. Comm. Of Public Works Tom McCarthy

Absent- Comm. Tompkins,

Approval of Minutes: March 6, 2023: Motion set to approve minutes by Comm. Beirne. Seconded by Comm. Freel. Motion carried out by unanimous vote.

Correspondence:

- a. Other: Carrie Malangone- Girl/Boy Scouts and the high school students have spent the last year on the project of making the Free Little Libraries and looking to place them in three different parks in West Haven: Wooden Playground at Painter Park, West Haven Green, and Allintown Green. These libraries are for people to replace a book and take a new one all at once.

New Business:

- a. Elect New Chairman for Commission: Mr. Paine stated that Chairman Coyle has resigned from the commission as of April. Mr. Paine expresses Chairman Coyle's concerns as to why and states he was sad to see him leave but understands his position. Comm. Beirne has nominated Comm. Valaitis (Vice Chairman) to step up as Chairman of this commission for the remaining of the year. Comm. Valaitis nominated Comm. Freel as his Vice Chairwoman

and Comm. Beirne will remain as the Commissions Secretary. All motions carried out by unanimous vote.

- b. Summer Programs: Mr. Paine explains that the summer programs that are set to start soon are full. With two new programmers, they have brought a lot of new programs to the department and they are working out very well. Comm. Valaitis congratulates Mr. Paine and his team for the good work the department is doing for the community.
- c. Carrie Malangone: A motion was set by Comm. Freel to allow these Free Library stands to be placed in the requested areas with the condition that the Girl/Boy Scouts monitors them for dumping areas and vandalism. This motion was seconded by Comm. Beirne. Motion carried out by unanimous vote.
- d. Beach Parking: Comm. McCarthy explains the new parking system for the beach parking lots at the beach. This new system will be scanning licenses plates as they pull into the lots. If the plate scans as a resident they will be able to park at no cost. There will no longer be beach stickers given out. If the plate is a non-resident plate, they will be required to scan the QR code posted on the lot signs and pay to park. They can pay by the hour or for the day. If a resident owes car taxes, they will be required to pay to park until taxes are paid in full. The police department will also be patrolling the lots as well. They have the scanners on their cars and will be scanning plates as well. Comm. McCarthy comes to the commission with a request of changing the closing hours of the lots due to unexpected issues that have been occurring in the lots at night. As of now the closing time for the parking lots is 10:30pm. Comm. McCarthy is requesting the commission to change the closing time for the lot to be set **ONE HOUR** after sunset. This will give the police time to get the lots emptied and closed for the night until the next morning. Comm. McCarthy is

hoping with the change of time for closing the lots it may help with the current crime at the beaches that have been occurring. A motion was set by Comm. Beirne that all beach parking lots are to be cleared of any and all motorized vehicles **ONE HOUR** after sunset. No unauthorized vehicles are allowed at this time until the lots are opened the next day by police. The motion was seconded by Comm. Freel. Motion carried out by unanimous vote.

- e. Mr. Paine notified the commission that the Audubon Society has renewed the Wildlife Guards for one more year. These guards help keep the beaches cleaned and no one is hurting the nests that are being protected. The commission is very pleased with this decision.

#### Old Business:

- a. Other-Music at the beach: Mr. Paine has explains to the commission at this point the DJ's that were permitted in the past have not been asked back this year and that the program has been discontinued due issues that occurred last year that cost the city money unexpectedly. Comm. McCarthy states to the commission that if a DJ would like to pull a permit to host an event down at the beach at their costs, they most certainly can apply with the Special Event Permit packet and all the appropriate departments do have to sign off on the permit in order for approval. The person to pull the permit will have to provide the city with a certificate of insurance listing the city as an additional insured for \$1 million and also pay what the cost of the event will be to the appropriate departments. Comm. Valaitis expressed his concern as to what decision this commission has on jurisdictions in the city. Comm. Valaitis has asked Comm. McCarthy to have the city attorney from Corp Council to attend the next meeting with the clarifications that the Commission has on decision making and setting rules and regulations. A motion was set by Comm. Beirne

for the invite of the City attorney. The motion was seconded by Comm. Freel. Motion carried out by unanimous vote. Comm. McCarthy will make sure the attorney will be here next meeting.

- b. Comm. Beirne speaks on the record his concerns about this commission and how it is respected by the city administration. He feels the commission is not treated as they should be. He hopes that with going on record, it may help make a difference in how the commission is considered going forward.

Adjournment: A motion to adjourn at 8:03 pm was made by Commissioner Beirne. Motion seconded by Comm. Freel. Motion carried out by unanimous vote.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Kerri Ruocco

Please note these minutes are subject to approval