

**MINUTES  
COMMISSIONERS' MEETING  
SIXTH TAXING DISTRICT, City of Norwalk, CT  
May 12, 2021**

**7:00 p.m.  
Rowayton Community Center**

ATTENDEES: Commissioners Tammy Langalis, Mike Barbis, John Igeri, District Treasurer Gil Kernan, District Fire Marshal and District Property Manager Ed Carlson, District Asst. Property Manager Jason O'Donnell, District Clerk Andrea Woodworth.

(The meeting was moved from the Grace Room to the Moose Room to be able to accommodate more people. While everyone was getting settled,) Commissioner Mike Barbis called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. He introduced the Commission and mentioned that we also have attendees via Zoom meeting).

Since the majority of attendees were at the meeting to speak to the proposed Rowayton Sidewalk Project, the second topic of New Business on the Agenda was moved to the primary spot.

Mr. Barbis introduced Mr. Jim Travers, the new Director of Norwalk's Transportation, Mobility and Parking Department. He has joined Norwalk coming from the Bureau of Transportation in Stamford, CT. While in Stamford, Mr. Travers completed a design manual for them. He took care of traffic signals and added some where they were needed. In his 8 year tenure there, Stamford was far below the national average of traffic fatalities.

Mr. Travers said that his main purpose in Norwalk will be to improve the safety of all manners of transportation. This is his first public meeting since last February (of course, COVID prevented most meetings from happening in public). Mr. Travers also noted that Rowayton has a lot of pathways which we would like to keep. But the goal is to put in

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sidewalks with concrete curbs where needed. Along with a conversation with Common Council members, he has walked Rowayton Avenue. This will probably be the primary focus for the first sidewalk project. We need to get people back to normal and in the best manner possible. We are looking at some design plans for the roadway from Pinkney Park to Rowayton Avenue. Instead of asphalt walkways and curbs, he is not in favor of asphalt curbs as they are hard to see at night, for one thing. When he comes back to another meeting, he will have a plan for people to look at.

A Hunt Street resident said that more than 400 residents there and on Witch Lane, which joins Hunt, have signed a petition to create sidewalks that will enhance pedestrian safety.

Common Council representative Tom Livingston said that sidewalks are, and have been, a perpetual issue in Rowayton. Tom thinks that we now have an opportunity to put the wish in front of you, the residents of Rowayton.

A resident of Thomes Street said that Rowayton is a very dense area. Houses are getting bigger and lots are getting smaller. The infrastructure has not kept up. There are no sidewalks that would facilitate pedestrians getting anywhere safely on that street. Joanna Berry, a Thomes Street resident, thanked the Commissioners for their service to the community. She said that it's very dicey walking her child to school at UCNS. She is so happy that we're looking at that issue for safety. She asked to please tell the residents what we can do to help make this work as soon as possible. Mr. Travers said that they are certainly having the conversation about the safety of pedestrians. He said he is known as being a person who has a track record of delivering on his proposals. He noted that there are more pedestrians all the time that are not using public transportation but are choosing to walk places].

Mr. Travers noted that we have to start somewhere. Obviously, all the hoped for projects can't be done at once. The projects have to get budgeted before anything starts to happen. He said that we could adopt a 10 foot standard instead of the standard wider sidewalk.

Commission Chair Tammy Langalis said that residents should call the City of Norwalk's Customer Service line to voice their opinions or report something dangerous. That number is 203-854-3200. Tammy said that we have for years thought of ourselves as a rural state and that we don't need sidewalks. But habits have changed and there are a lot more pedestrians now than there were in years in the past. She also noted that it takes the city's capital budget years to get the money for sidewalks. Mrs. Langalis also said that the Commissioners work closely with our community policing officer, Jeremy Salley. When we see areas that look as if the traffic is creating a problem, we will let Officer Salley know so that his presence in that area can be noted.

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Mr. Travers said that he is confident that he can work with City Hall to find the funds for Rowayton's sidewalks.

Hunt Street resident Robert Stromsted also thanked the Commissioners for keeping this topic before the community and city government. Mr. Stromsted is a retired civil engineer working on transportation issues during his career. He said that he represents 27 residents who think that the primary problem is speed. We need to institute traffic calming tactics. He is hopeful that the speed limit on Witch/Hunt can be lowered. His group would be in favor of speed bumps on Hunt Street.

Part of the process will be to do a traffic study. All of these questions need to go through Planning and Zoning. All of these actions take time. He also mentioned Thomes Street as an impossible place to attempt to walk to another location. Mr. Travers said that he will come back to the 6TD Commissioners' meetings every three months until we get things done. He said he understands the frustration, especially the length of time that these projects take to come to fruition. Common Council representative Tom Livingston made the same pledge to be back every quarter.

Commissioner Mike Barbis said that it took us almost twenty years to get a "No Thru Trucks" ordinance. He predicts this will not take as long.

Another resident mentioned that traffic calming techniques have to be a part of these projects. Mr. Barbis said that the 6TD had looked into purchasing a speed trailer to be moved around to various parts of town. They do cause a calming of the traffic. However, the District didn't have the funds to do that.

For the first project, Rowayton Avenue will be the priority. The proposed sidewalk project will cost about \$500,000. Budget meetings for both the District and the City are in January and February. It would behoove all of us to keep this issue in front of the budget committee.

Mr. Barbis thanked everyone who came out specifically for this issue and said we would continue with the rest of our agenda now. Most of the residents left then.

Another New Business item was the procedure for organizations to hang a banner across Rowayton Avenue at Pinkney Park. Mr. Barbis said that Andy Meyerson has taken over keeping track of who wants to hang a banner and when and will attempt to make fair decisions for everyone on this issue. Andy may be reached at [aameyerson@gmail.com](mailto:aameyerson@gmail.com) Mr. Meyerson will let the organizations know how long their banner may be allowed to hang over the street.

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We have new chips to spread at the playground and hope to have the playground open very soon.

There has been quite a bit of discussion about who can use tennis Court 5 at Bayley Beach. Some time ago the Rowayton Tennis Association made a very substantial investment in improving Court 5. That court was in the past held for people who were not members of the RTA. Since the RTA had put so much money into that, RTA members may sign up to use Court 5. Residents and renters who are not members of the RTA may go to the Tennis Shack and sign up to use that court if it has not already been scheduled. They hope that there will soon be a way non-members may sign up online to use the court.

Under Old Business, Commission Chair Tammy Langalis said that the state does not want to grant us permission to take over the Station House at the Rowayton RR Station.. We had identified a party interested in opening a café there, but that will not be possible now. We do have three temporary Pickle Ball Courts installed there in the almost empty parking lot and they are being used quite frequently.

Dogs are not allowed on Bayley Beach from May through October. Dogs may exercised on the beach from November through April. Service dogs are allowed at any time.

We have decided to have four opportunities for walk-in sessions to obtain Bayley Beach Permits in person. We have already had two events. They were on Saturday morning, May 8, from 9 a.m. – 12 noon and on Monday evening May 10 from 6 – 9 p.m. They were both very well attended. The next two additional opportunities will be on May 22 from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and on May 24, from 6-8 p.m.

### REPORTS

**Commissioner Mike Barbis** in his report said that there will be a small version of the Memorial Day Parade on Sunday, May 30, beginning at noon from the Rowayton Community Center. There will be a memorial service held at the cannon at the end of the parade.

Mr. Barbis also said that Fireworks on July 4 are unlikely to be scheduled. However, the Sixth Taxing Districts' 100<sup>th</sup> birthday will be celebrated at Bayley Beach on September 18. We MAY have fireworks at that time.

The other two Commissioners had nothing additional to report.

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**Report of the District Treasurer**

**May 12, 2021**

**Gil Kernan**

Mr. Kernan, the District Treasurer, said that he had given the Commissioners the list of checks sent out and income brought in for their information and consideration. Mr. Kernan also said that we are in good shape at this point in the Fiscal Year.

**Report of the District Fire Marshal**

**April 2021**

**Ed Carlson**

| <u>Type of Activity</u>     | <u>#</u> | <u># Man Hours</u> |
|-----------------------------|----------|--------------------|
| Blasting Permits            | ***      | ***                |
| Blasting Site Inspections   | ***      | ***                |
| Building Inspections        | 2        | 3                  |
| Clerical (office) work      |          | 18                 |
| Fire Marshal Conferences    | 2        | 9                  |
| Career Development Training | 1        | 3                  |
| Investigations(s)           | 1        | 1                  |
| Meetings:                   |          |                    |
| District Monthly            | 1        | 1                  |
| FNHCFMA                     | 1        | 2                  |
| CTIAAI                      | 1        | 1                  |
| <hr/>                       |          |                    |
| Total Man Hrs.              |          | 38                 |

Remarks: Per Norwalk FM: hydrants on private property are not maintained by SNEW. Awaiting confirmation from Norwalk FM.

**District Property Manager Report**

**May 2021**

**Ed Carlson**

**Community Center:**

1. The Good Wives Quilters have returned to the Moose Room for their meetings.
2. New propane price with Gault 2.099 till 4/22.
3. Fire escape needs inspection by third party. I will research companies that perform it.

**Bayley Beach:**

1. Six new tables have been assembled and placed in the picnic area.
2. Bathrooms are open daily. Cleaning person hired to clean twice a week until summer staff starts.
3. Playground inspection by H. Segur Insurance.
4. 63 yds. of chips were delivered to be spread in the playground area.

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#### **Pinkney Park:**

1. Six tables assembled and placed in Park. Welcomed by many.
2. RCA cleaned left bay of barn. Many items were tossed and they did a good job.

#### **Report of the District Clerk                      May 12, 2021                      Andrea Woodworth**

1. The Walk-In Beach applications have been a big success. Last Saturday we processed 184 applications and 72 on Monday night. This is compared to a couple of years ago of 40 – 50 or so, at best. We're scheduled for another one on May 24 from 6 – 9 p.m. I would maybe suggest we make it for 6-8 or 6 – 8:30. The last hour was really dead. (The May 24 opportunity will be from 6 – 8 p.m.)
2. I emailed the person trying to find a location for a photo shoot and was interested in Bayley Beach. I let him know the condition for such an event and he never got back to me. He did say he was going to come out to take a look. Maybe it wasn't the venue he had in mind.
3. I like to get the permits into the mail the day after they're received. I'm about a day behind but should be able to catch up soon.
4. I've had some voice mails where either the message or the phone # or the message was inaudible. People don't often speak distinctly and not directly into the phone. One family recently was very frustrated that they couldn't arrange a date at the Pavilion. I had had a message from the mother who had mentioned a June 6 date so I put that on the calendar in case they called back. I couldn't understand the phone number she left. When I spoke with the husband he said they only wanted June 5 even though his wife had said June 6. He suggested, and I agree, that my email address along with the phone # should be listed on the web site so there would be two ways to reach me, and now Bill Nollman, especially since the cell phone service at the beach is not great.
5. A resident on Acorn Lane reported that the AFK truck crushed the curb in front of her house. I think Al Kery was notified.
6. I have 6 beach permit applications waiting until I receive required and missing documentation.
7. There are many events scheduled at the District properties.
8. A Rowayton resident on staff at the OxRidge school wishes to have a year end party at the Pavilion mid week in June. **APPROVED**

On a motion by Commissioner John Igneri and seconded by Commissioner Mike Barbis, the Minutes of the April 21, 2021 Commissioners of the Sixth Taxing District meeting were approved as amended by Mike Barbis.

Commissioner John Igneri made a motion which was seconded by Commissioner Mike Barbis to adjourn the May 12, 2021 meeting of the Sixth Taxing District Commissioners.

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The next meeting of the 6TD Commissioners will be on June 16, 2021.

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