

**MINUTES
COMMISSIONERS' MEETING
SIXTH TAXING DISTRICT, City of Norwalk, CT
September 18, 2019**

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

PRESENT: Commissioners Mike Barbis and John Igneri, District Treasurer Jim Hendrickson, District Fire Marshal and District Property Manager Ed Carlson, District Assistant Property Manager Jason O'Donnell, District Clerk Andrea Woodworth

ABSENT: Commission Chair Tammy Langalis

Commissioner Mike Barbis called the September 18, 2019 meeting of the Sixth Taxing District Commissioners to order at 7:00 p.m.

On a motion from Commissioner John Igneri, the Minutes of June 19 and July 17, 2019 Commissioners' meetings were approved pending a small correction by Commissioner Mike Barbis.

NEW BUSINESS

Rowayton Gardeners member Pamela Proctor made a presentation to the Commissioners for a proposal for reinforcement of the entry to the Potting Shed grounds. The Gardeners propose putting an apron under the double gate to the Potting Shed. They have two proposals. One is to use fieldstone (\$2,250) for the apron and one to use black granite (\$3,000). The apron would be 2 feet wide and 2 feet long. She asked if that is something the Gardeners might do, considering that the property in question belongs to the Sixth Taxing District. Mr. Barbis indicated that the Commissioners would be in favor of something like that and they would opt to use the granite. The problem comes that this expense has not been budgeted. This would have to be budgeted into the Fiscal Year 2020-2021. He asked Jim Hendrickson if we might be able to pay for this proposal. Betsy Bain, Wilson Avenue, suggested that the Gardeners have, in the past, paid for an upgrade and then been reimbursed by the 6TD in the next Fiscal Year. Ms. Proctor went on to

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say that the double gate gets a lot of traffic over it. The Sixth Taxing District will allow it to be done and will let the Gardeners know how it will be financed. **APPROVED**

Commissioner Barbis went on to discuss the entry fees to Bayley Beach for non-residents of the District. Mr. Barbis indicated that they would, almost surely, change the non-resident entry fee for Bayley Beach for the Fireworks to \$100.00. Commissioner Barbis said that in previous years, they have allowed parking on the Little League Field. That, however, has done damage to the field and that cannot be used now. Resident Lynne Pratt, Old Farm Road, said that she thinks the \$40 fee for entry on days of the concerts to be a great bargain, especially if they stay the day at Bayley. So far, they haven't indicated a change for the walk-in fee of \$10.00 per person. Mr. Barbis indicated that they are assessing the possibility of changing the entry fee on other days as well. They may go to \$25 on weekdays and \$30 for weekends without concerts. Mr. Barbis also said that after we do the sidewalk project on Pine Point Road, there won't be room to park cars along the fence. Any new rates that are adopted will be put in place next summer.

Resident Lesley Korzennik, Briar Street, speaking on behalf of the Rowayton Historical Society, presented a proposal that Pinkney House and Pinkney Park are in dire need of some maintenance and upgrading of the property. They would like to hire a landscaping firm that would produce a "grand plan" that would address the damage done through years of neglect and overuse. Some of the areas that are in need of work done were shown on a Power Point presentation. The RHS had a walk around recently with Commission Chair Tammy Langalis when they pointed out problems with the entryway, bare patches and weeds, flooding, etc. They would like to have a sturdy garbage disposal area instead of old garbage cans that are loose. She pointed out a picture that showed mildew on the barn. There are eroded areas, poison ivy, etc. There are benches and tables that need to be replaced. If we had a comprehensive plan, we wouldn't have to do it all at once. But we should have a plan. They are contacted often by people who have memorial funds and want to donate these funds. Mrs. Korzennik mentioned that the Historical Society would like to get away from having more benches and trees as memorials. The people with donation funds usually want to plant a tree or provide a bench or table in their loved one's name. If Pinkney Park is made to look better, people may be interested in donating money to its upkeep or for certain projects. Mr. Barbis reminded the RHS that the District some years ago concentrated on needed upkeep of Pinkney Park. They made some improvements at Pinkney House and rebuilt the sea wall. The last few years, the District's concentration has been on the Community Center and its renovation. Now, with that project almost done, the District has turned its attention to Bayley Beach. The Commissioners are considering new materials for walkways. In other words, the District is taking a phased approach to their properties. Help at Pinkney Park, however, makes sense after the Bayley Beach projects are accomplished. Mr. Barbis also noted that some years ago the District had hired a landscaping person who had come up with a plan. Nothing was ever done with those recommendations. Mr. Barbis will try to locate that plan. Mrs. Korzennik also addressed the apple trees and thinks they are not very attractive. It was noted that, without the trees, people would park there and the grass would look even worse.

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Commissioner John Ignieri said that we should all sit down and take a step back to consider different proposals. He said that everyone agrees that Pinkney Park needs some attention. The lighting is bad. He would like to see a plan that prioritizes the different projects. There should be estimates of cost for all of these projects separately. The RHS is most concerned with improvements to the landscaping. Mr. Barbis said that now is the time to start planning for projects. If there is a plan in effect, the Commissioners can try to budget the money to realize part of the plan. They will probably have to do this incrementally. District Treasurer Jim Hendrickson asked why we can't do this landscaping plan in house. If we get a copy of the plan that exists from 2006, it shouldn't be too difficult to plan projects. Commissioner Ignieri said that the RHS has made their point and that we'll look into the numbers and come up with some steps for a plan. Mr. Hendrickson reminded everyone that if any of these projects lead to a bidding process, then the 6TD needs to be in on these processes. Mr. Ignieri, once again, advocated that the RHS create a priority list. He said that if they see anything that are safety issues right now, please be in touch with the Commissioners so that they can be corrected. Betsy Bain, Wilson Avenue, said that maybe if the vision for Pinkney Park is communicated, people might be willing to invest in helping to keep Pinkney Park in good shape. Ty Haynes, Crest Road, agreed that the park is overused.

Mr. Barbis indicated that teenagers were out of control this summer as relates to Bayley Beach, especially. They did no major damage and there weren't big messes, but they had to find an illegal way on to Bayley Beach which closes at 9:00 p.m. In one instance, the teenagers disabled the automatic motion sensor lights. He said that the District would press charges if this continues this fall and next year. There has been activity at the Paddle courts as well. Mr. Barbis said that when we do the sidewalk project at Bayley Beach, we will install a gate that is much higher and much harder to climb. Mr. Barbis went on to say that we need Wi-Fi service at the beach, specifically the Pavilion. Optimum has declined to provide this service but Frontier will do it. When that happens, we can have security cameras installed if we wish to do that. This would hopefully give us another asset in determining who is getting into the beach after closing.

Mr. Barbis said that we did get requests from the RCA for their concert schedule for next year. As was the case this year, the concerts through July will be at Bayley Beach and the August concerts will be in Pinkney Park. The Labor Day Sunday concert will be back at Bayley Beach. The Commissioners are in agreement with this schedule. The RCA also asked to schedule Porch Jam, beginning in Pinkney Park, on June 13, 2020. There was a motion made to schedule Porch Jam on June 13, pending approval from the RHS. The motion passed. **APPROVED**

Diane Vuoso, who ran the concession at Bayley Beach for the first time this year, stated that she was happy with the way things went and would be happy to be considered for the same position next year. She said that they had cleaned up the concession and had a better and more varied selection of food. She had vacated the Concession as of September 14, 2019. The Commissioners are happy to have Diane once again take on the Concession at Bayley Beach for the summer of 2020.

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OLD BUSINESS

The perennial topic of drainage at Bayley Beach, especially at the Little League field, was discussed. There are many problems, but one of them is that the field is only about 6 feet above sea level. The other one is that the drainage ditch has been silted over. All the phragmites have been removed, for a first step. The Commissioners and Property Managers have been talking with contractors. When it rains, some of the Har Tru from the tennis courts comes off the courts and becomes clots of clay that really negatively impact the drainage. Along with the Rowayton Tennis Association, we've been working on it as a long term project.

Mr. Barbis said that they are now in discussion with Roton Point regarding the District's planned sidewalk project. We have a plan that we feel is the best solution. We are planning on squaring off the intersection of the beach access road with Pine Point Road. There will be a 90 degree turn on and off Pine Point Road. We want to provide a sidewalk from the Wee Burn pillars to Bayley Beach and Roton Point Club since so many people walk to the beach. Now we just need the agreement of Roton Point. We have city approval and we have already funded the project. We'll have a public event to discuss this project when the plan is finally in place. The fence on Pine Point Road now will be moved up into the woods a bit. Betsy Bain, Wilson Avenue, asked about the potential loss of the hedges. The Commissioners have a plan that would allow the hedges to stay in place. Lesley Korzennik, Briar Street, asked if there is a plan for landscaping in this. The answer is that there won't be much of a change in the landscaping but just to clean it up to allow the installation of the fence. The District has recently taken a tree down which had been killed by the poison ivy that was wrapped all around it. Tom Balsey, a Pine Point neighbor has offered some insight which has helped the District with its plan.

The District Treasurer, Jim Hendrickson, told those in attendance that there are lots of overdue tickets outstanding at the Rowayton RR Station Parking Lots. There are currently more than 400 overdue tickets on over 300 vehicles remaining unpaid. Overdue tickets are tickets that were issued at least 30 days ago. At the present time, our policy is to tow a car which has over 3 tickets outstanding on it. Mr. Hendrickson is proposing to use a "Barnacle" system, The Barnacle would be attached to the windshield of a car and would be impossible to remove unless the phone call is made to the number provided, the overdue tickets are paid and the fee for the "Barnacle" is paid. Mr. Hendrickson also said that the funds generated from the RR Station stays as a RR Station Account. The lots are owned by the State Department of Transportation. The 6th Taxing District just manages the lots. We'll partner with Fedor Towing to use the Barnacles in a few weeks if the Commissioners approve. A motion was made by Commissioner John Igneri to go ahead with the "Barnacle" system. The motion passed. **APPROVED**

The "Scofflaw Proposal" presented at the September meeting along with a notice that will be placed on the windshields of all cars in the parking lots in the next few weeks will be attached at the end of the Minutes.

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John Kiska, spokesperson for the Dog Park users, reminded the Commissioners that the Dog Park users fund most of the needs of the Dog Park. Now they would like permission to build an up and down ramp for the dogs. It would be a ramp up, a short, flat top and then a down ramp. He would construct this addition and they would like to put it in the corner where Highland meets McKinley where it would be less visible than any other place for people not using the Dog Park. Jason offered that he could help with this. Mr. Kiska has been asking for ideas on their Facebook page. Betsy Bain, Wilson Avenue, asked if the dog owners release any liability of the District. That was answered in the affirmative. The Commissioners indicated that they would be OK with this. **APPROVED**

REPORTS

Commissioner John Igneri spoke about sidewalks that are in the pipeline to be installed. He noted that it will take a few years for them to reach the installation phase. Norwalk's Department of Public Works is committed to cleaning up some of the footpaths in Rowayton. One of those, from Highland Avenue down Witch Lane will be subject to this project. They will clean up and widen the foot paths. As an answer to Mrs. Bain's question about the responsibility of homeowners who have adjacent sidewalks, the Commissioners reiterated that those property owners are responsible for keeping these sidewalks in good condition. They are responsible, especially, to be sure that they are shoveled in the case of snow. Pam Nielsen, Briar Street, said that there is a piece of steel sticking up in the sidewalk on Sheffield. Mr. Barbis asked Mrs. Nielsen to call Customer Service at City Hall at 203-854-3200, stating that it's important to keep reminding the responsible parties of the unsafe conditions. He agreed that the homeowners are ultimately responsible, but that the city is going to spruce up some foot paths.

District Treasurer Jim Hendrickson filed his report as follows:

**Sixth Taxing District
Treasurer's Narrative Report
Commissioners' Meeting
September 18, 2019**

Handouts to Commissioners*.

- Budget v Actual report as of August 31, 2019 for FY 19-20
- Treasurer's Report of Bank Balances as of August 31, 2019
- Capital Funds Project Balances report
- Community Center Spending Summary Capital Projects report
- Report of Bills Paid in July and August 2019

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Comments on Reports:

- **Budget v Actual Report for FY 19-20**
 - Our income is at 42.4% of the budgeted income for FY 19-20
 - Our expenses are currently at 17.7% of the budgeted expenses.

- **Capital Budget**
 - Including reserves, the capital account has a balance of \$366,494

- **Community Center Project**
 - A total of \$1,225,000 has been spent to date on the Community Center
 - The remaining budget is \$7,400

Events:

- The fiscal year 18-19 audit has been scheduled for the week of September 30.
- The Wells Fargo bank accounts have been closed and three new accounts at People’s Bank are set up and being used.
- Checks for the FY 19-20 Approved Grants have been mailed to the awarded recipients.

*Please note, these are preliminary drafts and not final audited reports.
(Statistical reports will be added at the end of the Minutes)

Mr. Hendrickson made the following statement as an addendum to his report. He said that by changing bank relationships, we should improve the District budget by at least \$8,000 due to lower fees and higher interest earned on our balances. That is not all expense reduction, some is interest income.

Report of the Fire Marshal	Jul-Aug. 2019		Ed Carlson	
<u>Type of Activity</u>	<u>#</u>		<u># Man Hours</u>	
	July	August	July	August
Blasting Permits		***		***
Blasting Site Inspections		***		***
Building Inspections	2	3	3	5
Clerical (office) work			18	17
Fire Marshal Conferences		1		6
Career Development Training		***		***
Investigation(s)	1	2	1	2
Meetings:				
District Monthly	1		2	
FNHCFMA	1	1	2	2
Fire Safety Talk (Hilltop Homes)		1		2
Fireworks Standby	1		6	
	Total Man Hrs.		32	34

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Expenses for the Fire Marshal: Public Fire Education Conference: \$25.00

Remarks: I attended Operation Save A Life on 9/11 and received free detectors to be distributed to residents that request them.

Mr. Carlson also said that he had inspected the schools before they opened.

Report of District Property Manager August – September 2019 Ed Carlson

Community Center:

1. Gault has locked in propane price of \$179.9 per gallon until April 2020.
2. New electrical outlet installed in Moose Room to accommodate tablets, etc.
3. Path to Rowayton School recovered with new chips.
4. St. Luke's bus (full size) pick up at 7:15, drop off at 4:40
5. Sound absorbing panels to be installed starting in October

Bayley Beach:

1. Screens at concession reworked by Gardner Gray
2. A new lockset was installed in the ladies' room.
3. The phones will be turned off after the camp out.
4. AED will be removed by Hospital for winter.
5. Diane V. cleared concession and winterized equipment that remains. All other appliances to be removed.
6. A sand digger was installed at the playground and paid for by the RPE.

Pinkney Park:

1. A railing was installed on the south porch and other repairs are planned.
2. SOS temporary power board will be removed soon. Have contacted SOS since this was supposed to be removed in July.

R. R. Parking Lot:

1. The weeds and high grass were cut back by a District employee on two separate weekends.
2. Wendy Nardi plans to start selling soups, etc. later this month from the eastbound shed.
3. Ted Cook has planted perennials and bulbs at the Eastbound entrance to the parking lot A thank you letter should be sent.

Mr. Carlson was asked if we could do some weeding on the north side of the RR abutment. It's not our property but is unsightly. Mr. Carlson indicated that that could be done.

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Joe Jensen reported that during his patrols this summer, he found the teens to be generally obnoxious and completely defiant. He had a friend come to help out when he felt he couldn't handle the situation alone. Mr. Jensen said that he has called the police for back up more than ever before in three decades.

Report of the District Clerk

September 2019

Andrea Woodworth

1. It's finally safe to say that no more beach stickers will be sold. We sold about 1550 beach permits compared to almost 1700 last year. I think a lot of people were let into the beach throughout the season without a permit
2. There was an incident at the beach last Saturday. A person had belatedly asked permission to enter the beach without paying the entry fees as she had advertised the start of a fund raising walk-a-thon from Bayley thinking that the "season" was over on Labor Day. The Commissioners had said that they would have to pay the entry fee for their cars especially since the swim races were scheduled for that day and had offered the lot of the Community Center as a start place for the race. I had failed to notify Sue of the possibility of some of them showing up at Bayley and they all did. Some of the walkers were quite rude to both Sue and Don. If anyone wishes to schedule an event on District property, they should ask prior permission even if, as in this case, they think that it doesn't really matter since it's out of season. A letter has been drafted to send to her. The reason for the walk-a-thon we certainly understood and are in great sympathy with her since her son has a very rare disease.
3. I've booked Jane Minnis' chamber orchestra practices in the Grace Room except on the dates of the October and November Commissioners' Meetings – all are on Wednesdays. When the Commission is meeting, they will practice in the Underground.
4. There has been some correspondence between the 6th TD and the Tax Assessor regarding 3 Rowayton Court. It had previously been listed in the Assessor's office as being in the 6TD but is actually in the 4th TD. Mike has a copy of the correspondence and a copy of the updated field card in his folder.
5. There were two STEM LEGO camps on successive weeks in August in the Grace Room.
6. There were many events scheduled at Bayley This summer. And, amazingly, quite a few at the Community Center. There are still many events already on the calendar for the balance of the year. The renovation of the Community Center has really sparked a lot of new rentals.

The September 18, 2019 meeting of the Sixth Taxing District Commissioners was adjourned on a motion from Commissioner John Igeneri at 8:45 p.m.

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

