

**CITY OF NORWALK
HEALTH, WELFARE
AND
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE
MARCH 24, 2011**

ATTENDANCE: Richard Bonenfant, Chair; David Jaeger; Clyde Mount;
Joanne Romano

STAFF: Ellen Wink, City Clerk

OTHERS: Glenn Iannaccone, Fire Marshall

WELCOME AND ROLL CALL

Mr. Bonenfant called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and introduced the Committee members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

OCTOBER 28, 2010

**** MR. MOUNT MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF OCTOBER 28, 2010 AS PRESENTED**

**** MOTION PASSED WITH ONE (1) ABSTENTION (MS. ROMANO)**

NOVEMBER 18, 2010

JANUARY 27, 2011

Mr. Bonenfant noted that the November and January meetings did not have a quorum, therefore they were not official meetings and no action was taken on the approval of minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

HEALTH DEPARTMENT – No items to present

POLICE DEPARTMENT – No items to present

FIRE DEPARTMENT

A. **Adopt Fire Marshall Fee Schedule** – proposed

Mr. Iannaccone explained that the Fire Marshall does not currently charge for any services except for a blasting permit. Mr. Jaeger asked how the proposed fees compare to surrounding communities. Mr. Iannaccone said that the proposed fees are a little less than other communities.

Mr. Bonenfant explained the procedures necessary to adopt the fee schedule. He said that they could schedule a public hearing to take place at the next meeting. Mr. Iannaccone said that he would like to target July 1st for the approval. Mr. Iannaccone said that most of the fees would come from plan reviews.

**** MS. ROMANO MOVED TO SCHEDULE A PUBLIC HEARING AT THE NEXT MEETING**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

DISCUSSION

A. Hunting and Noise Issues Near City Parks

Mr. Bonenfant explained that Mr. Mushak asked if he could come before the Committee to discuss the issue.

Mr. Mushak spoke as a private citizen. He said that he has been aware of the hunting in the area; however, on January 2nd he was shaken out of bed at 6:00 a.m. by shot gun blasts coming from Veteran's Park. He said that he drove there and saw cars with New York plates and hunters and boaters shooting birds in downtown Norwalk, Veteran's Park.

Mr. Mushak said that he started investigating this and contacted Senator Duff who told him that he has worked on efforts to control the hunting. He also talked to Chief Rilling who said that the Police department received 43 complaints over the last three years.

Mr. Mushak said that the law allows hunting up to the high tide line but a number of towns along the coast have placed restrictions on hunting in rivers and harbors. He said

that the shooting exceeds the noise ordinance. It defies common sense to allow a few hunters to negatively impact tax paying residents. Mr. Mushak said that he would like to see a limit on hunting in all City parks and the inner Harbor. He said that other cities do not allow fire arms in city parks. Mr. Mushak said that he saw DEP officers in boats checking licenses, but it is time to balance the right of Norwalk residents.

Ms. Pat Van DeCamp said that 6:00 a.m. is a reasonable hour, but not 5:15 a.m.

Ms. Susan Liggitt said that the boaters are right off shore at Marvin Beach. She said that neighbors have told her that hunters shoot from the end of Cove Avenue. She said that it is illegal to shoot on Sundays. Ms. Liggitt said that she walks at Calf Pasture in the mornings. Recently she watched as hunters shot at geese pointing their guns in land, rather than out toward the water. She said that she contacted the DEP, but they have to witness it themselves. Ms. Liggitt said that she is not against hunters, but noted that in addition to the hunters, there are also a lot of people walking at Calf Pasture during the winter.

Mr. Mark Errico said that he sees hunters from his office and said that the shells are all over the yard at the Third Taxing District and on the boats. He said that there are hunters in the Harbor every day. He said that he is concerned about safety, noise pollution and the quality of life.

Mr. David Park said that he has issues with hunters who blast at geese when he is launching his kayak. He said that the hunters shoot in the air and the geese land above the high water mark. Mr. Park said that he complained to Chief Rilling and he had the Marine Police patrol the hunters. Mr. Park said that there are shot gun cartridges at the boat launch and along the shoreline on the islands. Mr. Park said that the Norwalk River Watershed Alliance finds a lot of shot gun shells when they do shoreline cleanup and reports that to the Ocean Conservancy.

Ms. Pat Van DeCamp said that she is horrified that fire arms would be allowed in public parks. She said that this is an accident waiting to happen. She said that she would like the Chair to tell them what to do to move this along.

Mr. Mushak said that now is the time to contact the DEP to request limitations like other communities in Connecticut. He said that the new director has promised to have a user friendly approach.

Mr. Jaeger said that these are all valid points and it is worth re-opening with the new head of the DEP. He suggested creating a joint resolution to request that the DEP open this issue.

Ms. Romano said that she was uncomfortable with hunting in the neighborhoods. She said that the first point of business is for Park and Recreation to contact DEP. She said that the City could make restrictions in the parks, but hunting is on the State level. She also asked if New York hunting licenses were valid in Connecticut.

Mr. Mount said that he agrees and that it makes him ill that people shoot in the Harbor. He said that he would like to figure a way to limit shooting to outside Manresa Island. He said that it is disturbing that this can't be changed.

Mr. Ted Van DeCamp suggested focusing on what they could do as a City to stop this. He suggested passing an ordinance that no one could enter a park if they are carrying a shotgun.

Mr. Ian Hoyt said that when he and other residents were walking at Calf Pasture, he saw hunters 30 feet away from them shooting.

Mr. Bonenfant said that he spoke with Mr. Maslan and was told that the City does not have the authority to regulate hunting with local ordinances. He said that Recreation and Parks asked the DEP to regulate hunting in the parks a number of years ago. He said that this is the beginning of a discussion on this topic.

Mr. Westmoreland said that they pay City taxes and would like the City to help get this done. Mr. Bonenfant said that this is the beginning of discussions.

Mr. Bonenfant said that they would have to go to the DEP with a request to ban hunting in a specific area. He noted that generally the DEP cherishes the right to hunt. Mr. Mount said that it is a big issue when someone is shooting in the wrong direction.

ADJOURNMENT

**** MR. MOUNT MOVED TO ADJOURN
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

There was no further business and the meeting was unanimously adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rosemarie Lombardi
Telesco Secretarial Services

