

Minutes  
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee  
June 2, 2010

**Mission Statement**

***To create within the downtown area of Torrington a first class horticultural oasis in accordance with and strict adherence to the intent of the Coe Godfrey benefactors and the Coe Family Trust.***

**Present**

Parks and Recreation Superintendent J. Brett Simmons  
Parks and Recreation Chairperson Patricia Fairchild  
Parks and Recreation Commissioners Dan Lovallo and Jim Pescatore  
Coe Memorial Park Advisory Committee Members: Margaret Keywan, Susan Coe Holbrook, Dr. Isadore Temkin, and Mary Zbell

**Absent**

Marc Trivella and Frank Pennington

Chairperson Patricia Fairchild opened the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Sue Coe-Holbrook expressed an objection to the minutes of the May 5, 2010 meeting, stating that Emeritus member, Robert Driscoll's name should not have been omitted as absent since his date of passing was after the meeting date. A motion to approve the minutes of the May 5 meeting as corrected was then made by Margaret Keywan, seconded by Mary Zbell, and approved unanimously.

**Citizen's Comments**

None

**Park Operations**

Mr. Simmons referenced the meeting information that had been emailed to the Committee and handed out an expense report which had been received after the email was sent.

Discussion relative to the Spring As-Builts that were previously emailed began. It was stated that this document was not the final As-Built, but rather what is currently planted in the Park. Lori Stickney from Still River Gardens then addressed the Committee and stated that they had planted as many plants as they could in order to have the Park ready for Memorial Day and that more plants would be added to the Park in the weeks ahead. A report will be prepared by June 15 which will contain the quantity and what annuals have been planted.

Margaret Keywan questioned when a review of Still River Gardens would be held. Mr. Simmons replied that a review would be done annually, to which Ms. Keywan and Ms.

Coe-Holbrook objected and stated that quarterly reviews were to be done after each report was submitted. Ms. Coe-Holbrook questioned when the Committee would see invoices, to which Mr. Simmons explained that Still River Gardens was required to submit copies of receipts and an expense summary before they can receive their payments. It was requested, and Ms. Stickney agreed, that future invoices include a breakdown of how many individuals worked the hours shown. Ms. Keywan suggested that the Park have better flow of color, to which Ms. Stickney and Mrs. Fairchild responded that they have been receiving many compliments about the appearance of the Park. When questioned about pruning back some of the bushes, Ms. Stickney replied that once the bushes have flowered, they would be pruned.

With regard to the expense summary report, Ms. Coe-Holbrook commented that the reports do not show any income for the months of April and May and questioned whether the Parks and Recreation Commission was waiving all of the maintenance fees for rentals. Mrs. Fairchild explained that requests for use of Coe Memorial Park Civic Center had been down significantly. Discussion continued relative to the fees collected for Parks and Recreation Department use of the Civic Center in comparison to the maintenance that the Parks Department provides for the upkeep of the Park without cost to the Trust. Dr. Temkin suggested that Torrington Savings Bank involvement would be able to resolve many of these issues.

In response to a question from Ms. Keywan, Mr. Simmons replied that the folding chairs had not been stenciled yet, but he would make sure to contact those who had offered to help so that the project could be completed.

Mr. Simmons reported that the leaks to the fountain were not as bad as originally thought and would be patched before the fountain is shut down for the winter.

Mike Zaharek has completed some pruning and cabling within the Park. Messrs Zaharek and Simmons have discussed other work necessary for the Park and it was suggested that a proposal be prepared with the Park being broken into zones and work completed one zone at a time, with safety pruning taking precedence. Mr. Simmons will continue to work with Mr. Zaharek on this proposal. It was reported that Mr. Zaharek had separated out some of the rhododendrons in the area where the spruce trees were removed. The remaining spruce trees will be removed in the fall.

Ms. Keywan questioned how many weddings were on the schedule. Mrs. Fairchild responded that unless the Civic Center or its equipment was to be rented, weddings that were in the park for pictures were not required to be on the schedule.

Ms. Keywan made a motion not to change the blueprint of the design of the park that was designed by Ferrero-Hixon unless we consult with them first. This motion was seconded by Sue Coe-Holbrook and approved unanimously.

## **New Business**

Mr. Simmons explained to the Committee about the operation of the irrigation system during off-peak hours and the inability to access the system for water during peak hours. Artistic Irrigation has suggested a solution by changing over the Toro clock to a Hunter clock that would allow control of the entire Park with the use of a transceiver remote. This would enable specific zones of the irrigation system to be run as needed

or to install a hose through a “quick-connect” to access water without interfering with the clock. Considerable discussion was held, with Ms. Coe-Holbrook expressing her concerns about overriding a system that works as well as the associated expense of \$1,725. Following discussion, a motion was made by Dr. Temkin that these expenses be incurred for the irrigation system. Mary Zbell seconded the motion which was approved by Ms. Keywan, Ms. Zbell, and Dr. Temkin. Ms. Coe-Holbrook was opposed.

### **Old Business**

It was noted that Still River Gardens had been given a calendar of events for the Park, as suggested by Dr. Temkin.

Ms. Keywan reported that Cystic Fibrosis had grills in operation up against the Civic Center during their recent rental for their Walk-A-Thon and were also using the Civic Center’s facilities. Mrs. Fairchild responded that the Parks and Recreation Commission had not given approval for such use and noted that cooking is not allowed in Coe Memorial Park. It was suggested that Cystic Fibrosis not be allowed to use the Park next year for their event.

### **Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mary Zbell, seconded by Sue Coe-Holbrook, and approved unanimously at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Rategan  
Parks Department Secretary