



RYE TOWN PARK COMMISSION

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD MARCH 30, 2016

A special session of the Rye Town Park Commission of the Town and the City of Rye, New York, was held on Wednesday, March 30, 2016 at 6:00P.M. at the Rye City Hall, 1051 Boston Post Road, Rye, New York with Supervisor Gary J. Zuckerman presiding.

PRESENT: in addition to Supervisor Zuckerman were Commissioners Julie Killian, Paul Rosenberg, Dennis Pilla, Joseph Sack, Benedict Salanitro and Commission Secretary Debbie. Reisner

ALSO

PRESENT: was Town Attorney Paul Noto, Assistant Park Director – Finance Terry Fanelli, Assistant Park Director – Development William Lawyer, and Town Councilman William Villanova.

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Joseph Sack led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. A video recorder and an audio recorder were in use during the proceedings.

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Supervisor Zuckerman called the meeting to order and asked Commission Secretary Debbie Reisner to call the roll.

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Commissioner Sack observed that the public comment portion of the meeting was omitted from the agenda and asked that time be allotted for this purpose. It was agreed that the public would be invited to comment on each of agenda item as the proceedings progressed.

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Commissioner Zuckerman notes that the previous accountant, Sam Terenzi, had passed away and in result of that the Town of Rye was interviewing firms and individuals to fill this position. In regards to that, the Commissioner tells those assembled that M Group was selected to be the accountant. Commissioner Zuckerman called for a motion to vote on a resolution to engage M Group as the accountant for the Park.

Commissioner Sack denies this motion and Extensive discussion ensued.

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Commissioner Sack mentions that the Town of Rye and the Rye Town Park Commission are two separate entities and questions why the same accountant, outside auditor, attorney, and secretary is needed. He mentions that the City of Rye is much larger than the Town of Rye, and in fact the Town of Rye almost voted itself out of existence last year. With that being said, he asks again why we need to have the same employees for the Town of Rye and Rye Town Park.

Commissioner Zuckerman asks Commissioner Sack if his question on the matter has anything to do with the City of Rye taking over management of the Park. Commissioner Zuckerman brings attention to Page 4 of the Operations Manual, where it states clearly that Rye Town Park is managed by the Town of Rye.

Commissioner Killan questions where Commissioner Zuckerman is gathering this information from.

Commissioner Sack notes that Commissioner Zuckerman has never directed anyone on the commission up till this point, and brings his attention to New York State Law, which has more authority than the Operations Manual. In doing this he points out that Rye Town Park was established by New York State and it clearly states that the Rye Town Park Commission runs the park, not the Town of Rye, especially not one person, being Gary Zuckerman. He brings the question forward again asking why is it necessary to have the same employees? Commissioner Sack asks why the City of Rye could not bring their auditor in to do the outside audit. He goes on to suggest that the Town of Rye could have their accountant do the books but it would make sense to have the City of Rye auditor come and preform the audit.

Commissioner Zuckerman pronounces that Commissioner Sack is out of order and he would like to focus on the resolution before the commission, which is the appointment of an accountant for Rye Town Park.

Commissioner Killian asks what other firms and individuals were interviewed for this position. She mentions she would like to gather more information on those individuals to vote on the matter. She would also appreciate more clarity and understanding of who does what.

Commissioner Sack brings to attention that the Town of Rye and the City of Rye are equal partners and he does not believe Commissioner Zuckerman is treating the City of Rye as such. He would appreciate him reaching out more to himself and the other commissioners about what he would like to do.

Commissioner Rosenberg says the meeting has gotten so far away from the agenda and would like to move forward. He notes that he would not be opposed to the City of Rye taking over the audit, as long as the price is the same or possibly less.

Commissioner Killian notes that she finds no issues with M Group, she is not opposed to this firm, and she would simply like to have more information before voting.

On a motion by Commissioner Rosenberg to bring further discussion of this matter to the table and a second by Commissioner Pilla, further discussion ensued.

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On a motion from Commissioner Salanitro and a second from Commissioner Pilla, the following Resolution was adopted:

WHEREAS, the Rye Town Park Commission is in need of accounting services for Rye Town Park operations for the 2016 season.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Rye Town Park Commission hereby retains MGroup Consulting LLC, 222 Bloomingdale Road, White Plains, New York 10605 to provide accounting and financial services for Rye Town Park; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MGroup Consulting LLC shall routinely provide financial information pertaining to the Park operations to the Rye Town Park Commission on a regular basis and assist the Rye Town Park Commission in all aspects of the Park management for the 2016 season; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that MGroup Consulting LLC shall be paid \$14,400.00 annually for all accounting services.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Commissioners Zuckerman Rosenberg, Pilla, Sack, Salanitro

NOES:

ABSENTIONS: Commissioner Killian

Dated: MARCH 30, 2016

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CONSIDERING ADOPTION OF A FEE AND PERMIT PRICING SCHEDULE FOR THE 2016 SEASON

The proposed fee schedule had been discussed at the monthly Commission meetings on February 16 and March 15. Commissioner Pilla made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Rosenberg to bring the fee schedule to the table for further discussion. Discussion ensued wherein the commissioners weighed the impact an increases in nonresident fees might have on the budget and on park attendance.

Comments were invited from the public:

Richard N. Runes of 3 North Kirby Lane, Rye, who identified himself as a former member of the Rye Town Park Commission commented that the commission should be discussing the elasticity of the demand curve in the context of the rates at Playland. Commissioner Salanitro replied that the Commission had consciously placed the park's rates higher than those of Playland. And that by raising the nonresident rates the Commission hoped to accomplish two things, make things more pleasant for the residents and earn enough revenue to break even.

Russel Gold of 7 Hayward Place in Rye, recalled that one of the primary reasons the decision was made to raise the rates was to reduce the number of parking places. He also noted there hasn't been a rate increase since 2012.

On a motion by Commissioner Pilla, seconded by Commissioner Rosenberg, the fee schedule was adopted.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Commissioners Killian, Zuckerman, Rosenberg, Pilla and Salanitro

NOES: Commissioner Sack

ABSENTIONS:

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CONSIDERING ADOPTION OF THE BUDGET

Commissioner Pilla made a motion to bring the budget to the floor of the commission. Discussion ensued regarding various components of the budget whereupon Commissioner Zuckerman invited public comment on the budget.

Richard N. Runes (address above) did not think the commission should go out and spend money on professional fees to hire a consultant that would analyze the RFQ.

Mack Cunningham of 502 Forest Avenue in Rye asked if the position of Park Director had been posted publicly. He also observed that there was no line for contingencies in case the City does not prevail in the pending certiorari lawsuit. He recommended the Commission take a more conservative approach to its revenue projections.

More discussion ensued among the commissioners regarding the budget, the assumptions underlying it, as well as the process of hiring a park director.

Laura Brett of 661 Milton Road in Rye, identified herself as a former Rye City Councilwoman and member of the Rye Town Park Commission. She commented that the process is out of order and suggested that since there is no contingency portion of the budget, the Commission move the additional funds proposed in the budget for the prospective Park Director into a contingency line. She also suggested the Commission place the additional \$10,000 proposed for consulting services be placed in Contingencies, as well.

On a motion from Commissioner Pilla, seconded by Commissioner Salanitro, the proposed budget was amended in the following respect: The Park Director's salary was reduce by \$25,000; consulting fees of \$10,000 was removed; a \$35,000 contingency for unresolved circumstances was added.

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Commissioners Killian, Zuckerman, Rosenberg, Pilla and Salanitro

NOES: Commissioner Sack

ABSENTIONS:

On a motion previously made by Commissioner Pilla and seconded by Commissioner Rosenberg, the budget was adopted:

ROLL CALL:

AYES: Commissioners Killian, Pilla, Rosenberg, Salanitro and Zuckerman

NOES: Commissioner Sack

ABSENTIONS:

CONSIDERING THE ADOPTION OF A RESOLUTION TO ENGAGE THE CONSULTING SERVICES OF BFJ PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The proposal was tabled.

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CONSIDERING THE EXTENSION OF A CAPITAL COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE RFQ SUBMISSIONS.

Commissioner Rosenberg made a motion, seconded by Commissioner Salanitro to bring the issue to the table for discussion. Discussion ensued.

Commissioner Zuckerman invited comments from the public.

Howard Vies, of Water's Edge identified himself as the president of the residential community ad expressed the view that none of the submissions were acceptable.

Deirdre Curren of Harrison said she did not think the RFQ would solve the capital problems at the park.

Commissioner Pilla recommended that before proceeding with the resolution, the Commission consider pursuing a master planning process for the park and that the Center for Urban Park Management be invited to make a presentation. Discussion ensued. On a motion by Commissioner Pilla and seconded by Commissioner Salanitro the will be held at a subsequent meeting.

Commissioner Zuckerman requested a motion to table discussion of the process by which the RFQ Responses would be studied until the Center for Urban Park Management accepted Commissioner's invitation and makes a presentation. On a motion from Commissioner Pilla, seconded by Commissioner Rosenberg the resolution was withdrawn.

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Bill Lawyer reminded those assembled that there will be a community conversation held Saturday, May 14 at 10:00am till whenever.

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CONSIDERING TO APPOINT THE PARK DIRECTOR

Commissioner Zuckerman recommended that the resolution be tabled pending further discussion by the commission regarding the process to be followed for hiring a Park Director. After some discussion, it was agreed that the job description would be circulated among the commissioners and the position posted as soon as possible.

Commissioner Zuckerman invited comments from the public:

Russ Gold (address above) noted that whatever is decided, the decision to hire a new park director should be a majority vote by the commission.

On a motion to adjourn special meeting made by Commissioner Salanitro, seconded by Commissioner Rosenberg the meeting Adjourned.