

As regular users of City Parks and fields in general we confront issues related to field use every day.

Our 2,000 children share fields with our friends running other sports organizations in Stamford on both the youth and the adult sides.

Of primary importance is congenial and supportive collaboration between all of our groups and it is in fact the case that we work together extremely well.

Something out of our control is nonpermitted use of fields, sometimes by nonresidents.

When they are on the fields using expensive equipment that, in many cases, youth groups have helped the City purchase they sometimes act as people will do when there is no accountability (their name is not on a permit) and equipment gets damaged and expensive turf fields are abused. For example, the Stamford Youth Soccer League alongside of adult users has spent close to \$7,000 on replacement goals over the last couple of years at West Beach alone.

On occasions when a permitted user arrives at a field and finds nonpermitted folks there an opportunity for a confrontation ensues. In most cases the folks on the field are Stamford residents using a City park, which they should be able to do, and they accept that the permitted group now has use of the field at that time....no problem.

There are other times when the group found on the field does not want to leave and we need to be able to call on someone to avoid trouble. The police department generally does not want to be involved in this kind of stuff and, frankly, we agree that there are more important public safety issues that they should spend their time on.

This is where Parks Police come in. They can easily sort this kind of thing out but getting their help is difficult because there are far too few of them to cover the City.

If \$300,000 is available to spend on Ambassadors then there must be that much money to spend on Parks police.

Ambassadors are a nice feature for downtown but in terms of providing safety **they can do no more than any Stamford resident** who happens to be in the area when something inappropriate takes place....call the police.

If their mission in part is to provide a veneer of safety then they would be providing that where there are already people to provide that for....and they can do no more than the people who are already there themselves....and at no cost to the City!

It's nice to feel that Stamford has the luxury of spending more than a quarter of a million dollars on a "modern city image" but we are more interested in spending money on actual enforcement of laws.

Please use the \$300,000 being suggested in the budget to provide additional Parks Police. Stamford needs enforcement. After that need is fulfilled then add the "window dressing".

We appreciate your attention,

Stamford Youth Soccer League