

March 20, 2018

Good evening Representatives:

I'd like to thank the P&R Committee for inviting me to speak tonight.

I'd also like to thank all of these folks for joining us.

They represent Neighborhood Associations, Friends of Parks Groups, A Diversity of User Groups, and people concerned about Public safety in our parks.

The Hubbard Heights Neighborhood Association loves Scalzi Park

Representative Watkins is a neighbor of Cummings Park

Rodney Pratt is a friend and neighbor of Lione park

The Friends of Mianus River Park, well they are friends of Mianus River Park

Every group and Association adopts their Park as their Priority and that is very good for our City's Parks.

I have lived across the Street from Cove Island Park for 45 years, but as a Parks & Recreation Commissioner all 65 of Stamford parks are my Priority and a priority of my fellow Commissioners some of whom are here tonight.

As a member of the CNA any visit from SPD reminds us that SPD hears our concerns, but they too have Priorities, Domestic violence, Drugs, Motor vehicle issues. Those are rather important priorities. All of us understand that these Police matters will always take priority over enforcing Park regulations.

Ignoring Lifeguards, broken bottles, Illegal dumping, loud music, destruction of city property and unpermitted field use in city parks just do not rise to the same level as the above-mentioned Police priorities. These are Priorities of the Park Police.

The Mayor has his Priorities this time of year as well.

Fiscal prudence requires setting priorities and making choices. He has done that in this year's budget and that is where our priorities conflict, and we seek your intervention.

Mayor Martin and all of us know that any new employee requires a payment into benefits. He feels that an Ambassador program whether it be college kids on bikes or rent- a - cops are an adequate substitution for sworn police officers with a badge and the ability to enforce regulations with a ticket or arrest. I do not agree with the mayor.

I believe the solution lies in acknowledging that if we can afford \$300,000 for an Ambassador program we can certainly afford 4 more Parks Police.

I respectfully ask this Committee to make it your Priority to find a way to make this happen, You do not need to add anything to the budget, just change how the same amount of money would be spent. Spend it on Parks Police who make Parks their Priority.

Respectfully

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