



## ***Parks & Recreation Committee - Board of Representatives***

Jennifer Matheny, Chair

Daniel R. Sandford, Vice Chair

# **Committee Report**

**Date:** Monday, August 18, 2025

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

**Place:** *This meeting was held remotely.*

The Parks & Recreation Committee met as indicated above. In attendance were Chair Matheny, and Committee Members Reps. de la Cruz, Gilbride, Kuczynski, and Weinberg. Absent or excused were Reps. Curtis, Saftic, and Sandford. Also present were Reps. Boeger, Pollack, Summerville, and Walston; Mike Toma and Chris Dellaselva, Law Dept.; Erik Larson, Purchasing Dept.; Kevin Murray, Director of Parks & Recreation; Melanie Hollas and Benjamin Pomerantz, Parks & Recreation Commission; Peter Gould, Park Police Coordinator; and members of the public.

Chair Matheny called the meeting to order at 6:30pm.

Item No.	Description	Committee Action
1. <a href="#">PR31.045</a>	<b>APPROVAL</b> ; of a fully executed Agreement with Grucci, Inc for the City's firework displays for this year and optional years 2026-2029 06/26/2025 – Submitted by Mayor Simmons <b>07/17/2025 – Approved by Board of Finance 6-0-0</b> <b>07/28/2025 – Meeting Cancelled</b>	<b>Approved 5-0-0</b>

Director Murray and Attorney Dellaselva reviewed the contract and there was discussion.

The cost this year was \$89,990.00. This was first time in three years that the City did not have to exercise the rain date, which is a 15% cost escalation.

Contract is for 2026–2029. An RFP went out to bid. It is best to lock in the pricing now with the unknown of how much prices will increase in the future. Material costs are inclusive in the contract.

There is an annual increase of 3.5%, which reflects the Consumer Price Index guidelines. However it is not capped at 3.5%. The increase could be more, but it would have to be mutually agreeable. If the increase becomes substantial, the Administration would need to decide whether or not to have the fireworks show.

It is a 25 minute show with 2,210 fireworks.

The City was very satisfied with Gucci this past year and other years used, both with the shows and the administrative work. They are a very professional company to work with.

Stamford gets the invoice in March. A 50% deposit is required no later than April 15<sup>th</sup>, then 40% no later than June 15<sup>th</sup>, and 10% balance no later than July 10<sup>th</sup>.

Rep. Gilbride brought up the idea of low noise fireworks. If BOR were to pass a low noise ordinance, there is a convenience clause in the contract in which either party would be able to terminate the contract. There was nothing in the RFP about low noise fireworks.

The insurance and workers' compensation certificates will be updated every year.

Director Murray will ask Gucci when the City can expect to receive a price change notification if necessary. He will also ask about incorporating lower noise fireworks into the shows.

A motion to approve Item #1 was made, seconded, and approved by a vote of 5-0-0 (Reps. Matheny, de la Cruz, Gilbride, Kuczynski, and Weinberg in favor).

2. <a href="#">PR31.047</a>	<b>REVIEW</b> ; Regulation 175-1-23, clarification of "unreasonable noise" requested by the Parks and Recreation Commission 07/10/2025 – Submitted by Rep. Matheny <b>07/28/2025 – Meeting Cancelled</b>	<b>Report Made</b>
-----------------------------	--	--------------------

Commissioner Hollas, Commissioner Pomerantz, Attorney Toma and Officer Gould introduced this item and there was discussion.

After the denial of the Stamford music festival, Director of Operations Matt Quinones and Director of Economic Development Leah Kagan met with the Parks & Recreation Commission. The Administration would like to see more revenue-generating events in Stamford. The Commission acknowledges that more of these types of requests will be forthcoming and is asking for guidance from the BOR.

Commissioner Pomerantz added that there are terms and conditions on special event permits and the first two are 1) no amplified music and 2) no distribution or consumption of alcoholic beverages except for beer.

The Commission can grant permits within its discretion but that can lead to inconsistent results and people asking why they were denied a permit when others were granted one.

Attorney Toma gave his review of the noise ordinance. Its intention is to apply to privately held properties and does not expressly state it applies to parks. Given the way it is structured it requires objective decibel readings for many of its violations. The ordinance seems to be geared more to noise that is going on in neighborhoods

from industrial or business owners whose properties are in close proximity to residential areas.

It makes sense that the Parks & Recreation Commission has their own provisions for noise. A blanket statement cannot be made that all amplified music is going to be unreasonable. It should be within its authority to allow exceptions outside of the standard permit conditions. However if this is done, a statement should be added to the permit.

If there is a hard line rule about decibel limit there is no discretion. But an Officer must be trained in taking decibel readings and the equipment must be calibrated on a regular basis. Decibel readings are not necessarily superior. Attorney Toma thinks it is preferable to have the subjectivity of the current definition as it allows the City to make decisions on what is unreasonable, as long as those decisions are made in good faith. He is in favor of leaving the definition as is in the current ordinance.

Officer Gould strongly agrees with Attorney Toma to leave the current language in the noise ordinance as is. It is very difficult to enforce noise issues in a parks environment, as opposed to a building because sound deteriorates with distance.

Amplified music such as concerts can affect an entire neighborhood. The noise level from Alive at 5 in Mill River Park went way beyond the park. What the City has done with these concerts is to decide whether it is worth it to have the annoyance to some be overshadowed by the benefit to others.

The noise ordinance has worked well since it was implemented in 2008.

Rep. Boeger stated Parks & Recreation rules and regulations cannot override an ordinance.

Parks & Recreation permits do not allow for amplified music. Exceptions to the rules and regulations must be made by both the Commission and the Director of Operations.

Per the Fire Marshal, Cove Island is capped at 2,000 people and Cummings Park at 16,000. If Stamford moves forward with large events they will be at Cummings Park.

In Attorney Toma's opinion it would be in the City's and Commission's best interest to adopt criteria across the board which would eliminate the issue of a selective process. If the criteria is applied, there should not be any successful challenges to the denial of a permit. He does not think the Administration can override the Commission's decision on a permit, as this is authority that the Commission was granted by the Charter, and the BOR put the regulations in place per an ordinance.

The Parks & Recreation Commission would have to bring any changes to the rules and regulations to the BOR. If the BOR wants to make changes in the provisions of permitting, that would be taken up in an ordinance and the Commission would have to honor it.

Commissioner Hollas stated that based on the feedback from tonight's meeting the Commission will look at the permitting process and bring suggestions and recommendations back to the BOR Parks & Recreation Committee.

Chair Matheny asked Committee members to send her any suggestions they have and she will facilitate that with the Commission.

Chair Matheny stated she has received some messages involving noise complaints from constituents, and she was in Scalzi Park recently while there was excessive amplified music. She asked what is the best course of action. Rep. Boeger and Officer Gould said to call the routine police number 203-977-4444, or even 911 if need be. Both stated no one should ever feel uncomfortable about making a noise complaint.

Chair Matheny brought up the idea of adding the phone number for noise complaints to the rules signage at the parks.

A report was made on Item #2.

- |                             |   |             |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------|
| 3. <a href="#">PR31.044</a> | <b>REVIEW</b> ; Ordinance for Discussion, Regulating The Use Of Existing Artificial Turf Fields And Banning Future Installation Of Such Fields.<br>06/04/2025 – Submitted by Reps de la Cruz, Camporeale, Berns, Walston, Figueroa, Campbell, Saftic, Strain, Adams and Curtis<br>06/23/2025 – Recommitted to Steering 4-2-0<br><b>07/28/2025 – Meeting Cancelled</b> | <b>Held</b> |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------|

Item #3 was held.

Chair Matheny adjourned the meeting at 8:45pm

Respectfully submitted,  
Jennifer Matheny, Chair

This meeting is on [video](#).