

**Minutes for the May 3, 2018**  
**Gerald Park Association Board of Directors Meeting**  
**Held at the Library Media Room at Capt. Nathan Hale Middle School, 1776 Main Street, Coventry, CT**

John Petrovits called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Board of Directors members present were Steve Belanger, Sharon Morel, John Petrovits, Sharon Powers, Ray Shedrick. Also present were Laura Young, the Association's tax collector; Tom Hennick from the CT Freedom of Information Commission; and several Association members.

- Minutes for the February 15, 2018, meeting were approved with no amendments.
- John Petrovits stated that Tom Hennick was invited to attend in order to explain Freedom of Information requirements for the Board in light of a recent FOI complaint.
- Laura Young submitted the GPS Tax Collector Report as of 5/3/18, which indicated:
  - Total taxes & fees collected: \$7,787.56
  - Current year collection rate: 94.69%
  - Delinquent taxes & fees: \$2,729.78
  - Total Gerald Park accounts: 157
- John Petrovits reported an open position due to the resignation of Treasurer Jerry Dallas from the Board of Directors, and that a new secretary was needed due to the resignation of Ben Emanuele from that position.
- John Petrovits presented a budget summary as of April 30, 2018. There is approximately \$8,067 in the checking account; \$15,005 reserved for capital improvements; \$2,650 in the rainy day fund. He noted that the spring/fall cleanup bill has been paid and no large expenditures are anticipated.
- Tom Hennick presented a discussion of CT Freedom of Information requirements. Basic points:
  - The purpose of the law is to ensure that entities defined as public agencies do their work in public.
  - Because our Association collects taxes, it must follow FOI rules, including allowing access to public meetings and to public records.
  - Posting the Association's meeting notices, agenda, and minutes on the Gerald Park beach's locked bulletin board is sufficient. But since some members live elsewhere in the winter and because the bulletin board is sometimes blocked by snow, the Board may wish to find another place to post them, such as on a website or at the Town Hall.
  - The FOI recognizes three types of meetings: regular, special and emergency. The Association has two regular meetings a year: a budget meeting in June and a general meeting in September. The other Association meetings are classified as special because they meet on an as-needed basis.
  - It is permissible for anyone to take photos or videotape/record Board meetings.
  - FOI does not guarantee that anyone has the right to speak for however long they want at a meeting. A board can limit someone's time or ask the person to leave if he/she becomes unruly.
  - The board may ask that the room be cleared in order to conduct business in an executive session for four reasons: to discuss (1) personnel matters, (2) a legal claim or litigation, (3) pending land purchases, (4) documents that are exempt from disclosure, such as bids for a project. However, the Board must come out of executive session in order to vote publicly.
  - Outside of meetings, Board members may discuss Association issues in social settings or via email/text/phone in order to recognize a problem and exchange information, but should not go back and forth in a discussion of it until the next Board meeting.

- Minutes of meetings do not have to be very detailed; the only legal requirement is a record of who voted and how they voted. The best meeting minutes are crisp, clear, and concise.
  - Minutes must be made available within 7 days for all to see, and approved/corrected at the next meeting.
  - FOI is unclear about how long records must be retained. Requests for records must be responded to within 4 business days, and if that doesn't happen or if records aren't received in 30 days, an FOI complaint can be filed.
  - It is acceptable for meetings to be held in private homes as long as they are open to all.
- Tom Hennick offered to be available by phone to answer any subsequent questions related to FOI; Board members thanked him for his valuable input.
  - John Petrovits said several property owners have approached Board members to ask about turnover of remaining property bordering Avery Shores Drive for those who did not receive it when initially offered or who have since purchased the house/property. Board members said it seems reasonable to quit-claim the property, provided the members acquiring the property pay any and all fees (such as legal/recording) that are associated with the transfer; the association will not incur any cost. The topic will be brought up at the June budget meeting and voted on at the annual general meeting in September (unless a special meeting is requested in writing, per GPA bylaws).
  - The 2018 budget meeting is scheduled for June 21, and the 2018 general meeting is scheduled for September 20.
  - Committee reports:
    - Beach: John Petrovits is planning to put in the swim ropes at the beach the weekend of May 19-20.
    - Environmental: Sharon Powers reported that hydrilla is still an issue at the lake; more information from the town on next steps is needed.
    - Welcome to GPA: Sharon Powers reported that one new family has purchased a home within the Association.
  - John Petrovits discussed a potential safety issue involving trees at the beach and along Avery Shores; letters will be sent to affected property owners.
  - Steve Belanger volunteered to meet with Ray Shedrick to do a spring clean-up of the beach. He also offered to take over the mowing and trash removal during the season; this will be brought up at the June budget meeting. A beach clean-up day was set for May 19 at 9 am.
  - The Board unanimously appointed Avery Shores resident Lisa Catanese to fill the open position on the Board for the remainder of the term and to serve as secretary for the Board during that time.
  - John Petrovits will serve as treasurer until a new treasurer is appointed; Sharon Powers will co-sign checks if needed.
  - The next GPA Board of Directors meeting will be held May 17 at 7 pm.
  - The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.