

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Parks and Recreation Commission

Minutes
July 11, 2022

Minutes are subject to the approval of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Present: Chairman C.J. Kersten; Commissioners Sheila Anson, Joe Fredlund, Tim Cook, Greg Kraft, and Ray Reich.

Public Present: First Selectman Jim Brinton, Tracy Brinton, and Jenn Pote.

Beach/Boat Ramp Staff Present: Ralph Averill, Joe Gervasio, Katie McGarr, and Hank Valley.

Call to Order: Chairman C. J. Kersten called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the June 6, 2022 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. By Joe Fredlund, seconded by Tim Cook and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Beach/Boat Ramp:** Joe Gervasio and Katie McGarr, co-directors of the town beach, attended the Commission's meeting to bring the members up to date. Discussion included the car window stickers vs. a hand pass, Airbnb renters purchasing day passes, purchasing online and increasing the fees in the future. There was a suggestion of getting an opinion from the town attorney about policies concerning renters who lease for the summer or on a weekly basis and how many guests a resident can bring to the beach. The key is Washington residents getting priority. Washington has the lowest fee in the area. Greg will talk with Finance Director Linda Gomez and Treasurer Linda McGarr about setting up wireless payment. Joe (Gervasio) requested a larger rake for the beach and the members noticed a couple of the benches are in need of repair or having the town crew remove them completely. Signage for the kayak/canoe drop off is needed and also a flag for the caretaker's house. Ralph Averill (caretaker) and Hank Valley (boat ramp director) updated the members on the town beach area and the boat ramp. Hank mentioned Joe and Katie helping at the boat ramp during the week and that is going well. Tom Wilkas, race director for the upcoming Hopkins Vineyard Triathlon, has enlisted the help of a couple of lifeguards and Joe to bring kayaks over and monitor the water as the swim portion of the event takes place. The overall consensus of the Commission was to work with each other through this season and review the overall operation of the town beach in September.
- **River Walk Park/Fields:** At the June meeting a motion was made to hire WPS custodian Josh Murphy to work part-time while Jesse is out. Josh still needs to be contacted to get him started. Matt Szejewski has been hired as the weekend pavilion custodian. *See attached Coordinator's report for additional information.*
- **Summer Camp Update:** Camp is off to a great start! *See attached Coordinator's report for additional information.*
- **Basketball Resurfacing:** Jenn Pote will follow up with Region #12 about any funds raised for it.
- **Fourth of July Freedom Run:** Great morning! Over 132 runners and walkers.
- **Bus Trip with Warren Parks and Recreation:** *See Coordinator's report attached.*
- **Field Hockey Clinics:** *See Coordinator's report attached.*

NEW BUSINESS:

- **National Iron Banks 175th Anniversary Concert:** Washington Depot Branch Manager Justin Spring is organizing the concert and very excited about the event. In addition to music, there will be a silent auction with numerous items donated by local businesses, a dunking booth (water to be delivered by the Washington Volunteer Fire Department) and other activities going on. The only request Justin has of the Commission is to please attend! ***See attached Coordinator's report for additional information.***
- **Bryan Memorial Town Hall Bowling Alley:** Shepaug Valley Partnership has relocated its classroom back to their original space. The lanes should be sanded and a more thorough cleaning before renting to residents.
- **Personnel:** ***Jenn Pote*** has been hired as the Recreation and Senior Center Director and is currently in the process of interviewing and hiring an assistant. The Commission welcomed Jenn to the position. Her office will be relocated from the town hall to the American Legion Hall. ***Mark Showalter*** has been hired as the Facilities Director. Both positions officially begin August 1st. There was discussion by the Commission to schedule a walk through of all Parks and Recreation facilities with Jenn and Mark.
- **Meetings:** The August meeting is cancelled due to lack of quorum. Jenn will look over the rest of the year's dates and coordinate with her Board of Education meeting dates.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: C.J. Kersten reported the following:

- **Resignation of Alice DeMeo:** Alice DeMeo has submitted her letter of resignation from the Washington Parks and Recreation Commission but has offered to help with any special events (see attached). The Commission regretfully accepted her resignation and will forward to Board of Selectmen to add to their next meeting's agenda. Alice will be missed!

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 PM as there was no further business for discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheila M. Anson, Vice Chairman

Old Business:

- **Town Beach** – There have been some issues with people losing their “stickers”, misplacing their forms, etc. I feel that both Kate and Joe have good ideas going forward for a system that will have better control. In looking at the procedures of area beaches – Washington has the lowest rate of beach pass, by far. Most area beaches charge per car and limit the amount of passes issued. Ex; Warren is \$30 per pass/each vehicle is an additional \$30; Litchfield/Morris residents pay \$75; non-residents \$150. New Milford is \$65, etc.
- **Boat Ramp** – Hank has the boat ramp running at top speed. There have been no issues to date, with exception of some missing 2022 blank registration forms. Copies of the original have been made available for use.
- **River Walk Pavilion, walk and fields** – The doors have been painted. Tim DeRosa will be back one last time for a touch -up. There are some bushes that have overgrown into the walkway - Larry has offered for us to use the gas-powered pole trimmer to cut them back. Luke has been dragging the walk weekly – there are some “bald spots” in the stone dust that need to be filled in. We requested stone dust in this year’s budget – hoping the have O&G roll the River Walk when they work at WPS doing the paving. The infields of the ball fields need attention, as crabgrass has started to take hold. Last season, we had Meadowview apply weed killer to the infields – hoping that will happen soon. With Jesse out for the season, there are some areas on the walk to need attention. I have been changing the dog bags and emptying the canisters – someone will need to take over that dog duty.
- **Summer Camp** – We have over 65 kids currently signed up for camp. With over 45 per week, we now need to have an additional van/bus for our field trips. We have booked 2 trips to Sandy Beach – but it is currently closed due to an insurance issue. Will explore taking the kids to Mt Tom and determine the associated costs.
- **Senior Project** – basketball resurfacing – no update
- **4th of July Freedom Run** – Sheila and Ray are best to update this year’s event
- **Bus trip to Yankee Stadium** - As of the end of June, the trip to Yankee Stadium is fully booked and there is a waiting list. Don Murphy, Warren Parks & Rec Director as graciously offered to collaborate on more trips in the future. I wholeheartedly endorse taking him up on the offer. They have gone to Nashville, NY Botanical Gardens, Radio City, etc.
- **Field Hockey Clinics** - There are currently 35 participants for practice and Nutmeg competition. This year, Berkshire FH is entering 8 to 10 “little ones” into competition this weekend at Sage Park in Berlin. Best wishes for a great tournament and bring home the Gold!

New Business:

- **National Iron Bank’s 175th Anniversary Concert** – I have confirmed with Larry that he will bring over the stage as requested by Justin. Due to the highway department’s summer schedule – the stage will arrive on Thursday. Talked to Justin on Friday – he is excited for the event and is all set with the arrangements.
- **BMTH Bowling Alley** – The Shepaug Partnership has cleared out all of their materials and “stuff” – it is locked in their room. As far as I see, the room is good to go. Recommend having someone clean and buff the wood on the alleys – there are numerous scuff marks on the lanes.

Not listed:

- On Wednesday, July 13th – I will be assisting Rory Larson with a moonlight walk at the Macricostas Preserve from 8pm to 10pm. The registration is full and Rory has a waiting list. Hoping for good weather!
- “River of Dreams” is set to come to Washington on September 17th. For their annual concert. The price is now \$1450; up from \$1200 last year.
- We’re ordering field hockey equipment for present and future clinics. Owen Moore and Jaye Stuart will inventory and store it for now. There is space in the storage room downstairs in Town Hall – but will need a designated shelf/area.

Respectfully submitted,

Connie

Alice R. DeMeo, LCSW

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RECEIVED:
JUL 11, 2022 at 01:06 PM
Sheila M Anson
Washington Town Clerk

July 11, 2022

Good Morning,

Please accept my letter of resignation from the Washington Parks and Recreation Commission. I am unable to continue to commit to this position due to my employment requirements.

I have enjoyed my time with Parks and Rec and wish you the best moving forward. I am happy to help out with special events when possible and look forward to continue to seeing you all in our beautiful town.

Sincerely yours,

Alice