

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Parks and Recreation Commission
Minutes
May 10, 2021

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

Present: Chairman C.J. Kersten, Commissioners Greg Kraft, Joe Fredlund, Tim Cook, Sheila Anson, Alice Demeo. Coordinator Jeff Hammond; Clerk Mary Anne Greene.

Call to Order: Chairman C.J. Kersten called the meeting to order at 5:38p.m. noting there was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the April 12, 2021 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. By Tim Cook, seconded by Joe Fredlund and unanimously approved.

Visitor:

- **Hank Vallely, Boat Launch Manager:**
Hank attended this evening's meeting to ask the Commission to reconsider his earlier request of giving Doug Griswold, Boat Launch Attendant, a "bonus" for his commitment to the position during COVID. This initial request was denied. Hank explained his personal work in Emergency Services and the concerns of dealing with the public and coming into contact, not only with people, but also with objects that could possibly be contaminated with the virus – in this case, cash and boat registration forms. It is his feeling that Doug has gone "above and beyond" filling his duties. The Commission thanked Hank for coming, explained they would discuss the request further and get back in touch with him.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Pickleball:** Jeff Hammond reported that Kenyon Clark has ordered the yellow tape for lining the courts and will install them as soon as the tape is received.
- **Community Block Party:** Jeff reported that the "Jazz for Juniors" band will be performing on June 4, 2021 from 6:00-8:00p.m. on the front lawn of the Town Hall. The Block Party, sponsored by the Washington Business Association, will take place throughout the Depot beginning around 5:00p.m. The Washington Food Market, the Pantry and Marty's will be providing "To Go Bags".
- **Summer Recreation:** Jeff reported that although the State has relaxed some of its guidelines in regard to COVID, camp will be limited to only 20 campers a week due to the program having to be held at the Washington Primary School. Because the Shepaug campus cannot be used because of construction, other programs will also be using the Primary School – making it necessary to share the space. Camp will begin on Tuesday, July 6th. Once a week there will be a "visiting program" and there will be field trips once a week in weeks 2, 3, and 4. The Arts & Crafts portion of the camp will be dialed back because of having to limit the art supplies to "Art in a Cart". Jeff thanked Camp Director Brian McCauley for his willingness and enthusiasm to make the program happen despite the hurdles.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Beach:** The Beach is scheduled to open Memorial Day weekend with the Beach Director and 1 guard on duty. Three guards are not returning. Jeff is actively looking to fill these openings. Social distancing will be required on the grassy area with limited capacity. The Commissioners discussed if the dock should be put in or not. It was decided that with the guards monitoring the number of swimmers on the dock, it should be put in. Jeff also reported that he had applied for a grant for an AED which was approved. It will be kept in the Beach Office. Beach House tenant and caretaker, Ralph Averill, has been doing spring cleanup on the grounds and is also helping out at the Boat Launch.
- **Country Concert:** Jeff has scheduled this for July 24, 2021 and has two bands confirmed: Country Steel and Frankie Justin. There will be an additional performer supplied by National Iron Bank who is co-sponsoring the event. There will be two food trucks as well as the Mobile Pub. Jeff has designed a logo for “Country Night at the River Walk” that will be used for promoting the event. T-shirts will also be available for sale with the logo.
- **Middle School Field Hockey Clinic:** Jaye Stuart and Owen Moore will be entering a middle school field hockey team into the Nutmeg Games in July 2021. They have permission to use the turf at the Frederick Gunn School for practices. In addition to training with the team, they would like to offer a free clinic to any middle school girls who would like to learn how to play or improve their skills whether they play in the Nutmeg Games or not. They are requesting they be a “sanctioned” Park and Rec program. The Commission will ask for more information.

COORDINATOR’S REPORT: Jeff reported the following:

- **Swim Lessons:** Registration is open and forms have started to come in.
- **Concerts:** Jazz for Juniors has been hired to perform the Community Block Party on Friday, June 4th. They will offer a wide variety of music spanning multiple decades that will appeal to all ages. The planning for the country concert, set for July 24th is progressing. A logo has been designed for marketing and t-shirts.
- **Summer Rec:** Registration is open! After some back and forth with the school, we have worked out many of the details and will be holding camp this summer at Washington Primary School. Because of space limitations at the school and COVID considerations, camp will be limited to 20 kids per week. We will also have a reduced staff. Several guest presenters have already been booked and we are working out the details for some trips to Sandy Beach.
- **River Walk Pavilion and Park:** This year, we are dealing with a growing issue of disrespect, carelessness and disregard for rules/guidelines both posted and unwritten. When folks don’t work together and aren’t considerate of each other and their surroundings, it makes maintaining the facilities difficult. Issues include: parking, bathroom use, unleashed dogs, tree climbing, dog waste and harassment of employees. There was lengthy discussion particularly about parking spaces for people who rent the Pavilion. Jeff explained that on 2 occasions, the sign stating “Parking for Pavilion Event” has been moved and cars that are there for games – particularly on a Saturday – have taken all available spaces. It was decided that at least some spaces close to the Pavilion will be roped off for the renters use.
- **Everything Else...**I’d like to ask everyone to please keep an eye on our Facebook page. Please share my posts about events and such to help get the word out.

Discussion of Hank Vallely’s request: The Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of approving Hank’s request for a bonus for Doug Griswold. While no one disagrees with the reasoning behind the request, or the fact that Doug has done an exemplary job during this period, it could possibly set a

precedent that would be difficult to live up to. **Motion:** The Commission will not support the request for a bonus at this time. However, there will continue to be discussion as to how to lessen the possibility of having the COVID virus come in contact with the attendants by looking into different methods of payment. By Sheila Anson, seconded by Tim Cook and unanimously approved.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:06p.m. as there was no further business for discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Greene
Clerk