

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Parks and Recreation Commission
Minutes
June 12, 2023

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

Present: Chairman C.J. Kersten, Commissioners Greg Kraft, Joanne Kelly, Tim Cook, Joe Fredlund.
Community Services Director Jenn Pote; Clerk Mary Anne Greene.
Guest: Steve Inglese.

Call to Order: Chairman C.J. Kersten called the meeting to order at 5:40p.m. noting there was a quorum present.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the May 8, 2023 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. By Tim Cook, seconded by Joe Fredlund and unanimously approved.

Subsequent Business:

- **Letter from the Board of Selectmen:** At the request of the Selectmen, the following letter is to be read at all Board and Commission meetings and to be made part of the minutes:
Recently we've noticed some behavior at a few of our board and commission meetings that we feel is in contrast to the way the town has conducted itself for many years. We, as the Board of Selectmen, felt it was important to address this conduct and to make it clear to everyone what we believe has made Washington a unique place to live.

The Town of Washington believes that residents have the right, and in fact, the responsibility to take part in how the town operates and makes decisions. We have a long history of having the one of the highest percentage of residents participating in local, state and federal elections, as well as volunteering to fill positions on our various boards and commissions. Not only do we volunteer for town government, we actively volunteer for our fire department, ambulance association, and the many nonprofit groups in town that seek to make Washington a better place.

Participating in these organizations is a privilege and an expectation for those of us living in Washington. It brings joy to those who serve, and it also brings responsibility. One important aspect of participating is remembering that working together is critical to any organization's success.

Whether you're a member of a commission or board, or participating as a member of the public, we expect everyone to act in a manner that respects all people no matter their beliefs. As a town we expect everyone to listen to others without interruption, speak when recognized and respect those who have agreed to take on a leadership role. Especially important is the respect the chair of a committee deserves. Running a meeting is no easy task. We cannot and should not accept behavior that belittles, bullies or threatens others. We believe it is vital to the continued success of our town to accept that our opinions will not always be accepted by the majority, and to agree to disagree in

a respectful manner. We may not always get what we want, but we must respect others who have taken the time to participate.

We feel strongly that the same courtesies and respect be extended to all staff and employees. Whether it's Public Works, Land Use, Clerks or elected officials, all of these individuals work tirelessly to serve the residents of our community.

Shepaug High School athletes have long been recognized by their peers as athletes who show the utmost sportsmanship in the Berkshire League. Our sons and daughters win and lose with dignity. Let's all try to live up to their example and treat each other with the same respect we expect people to treat us.

The vast majority of our residents have proven time and again that they meet and indeed exceed the high expectations we have for those of us living in Washington. Let's work together to maintain these high standards.

Respectfully

James L. Brinton
Jay Hubelbank
Dean Sarjeant

Justin Spring, National Iron Bank. Country Fest – July 22, 2023: Justin was not able to attend this evening's meeting. Jenn Pote reported the following: The event, being organized by Justin and the National Iron Bank will feature live music in front of the Town Hall. There will be a dunking machine, ax throwing, food trucks and food and drink from the Washington Pizza House, Litchfield Distillery and the Mobile Pub.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Community Block Party-Postponed:** Due to weather, the June 2nd Block Party was cancelled. It is hoped it will be rescheduled for the end of summer.
- **Basketball Court Resurfacing:** Work on the Court behind the Washington Primary School started today with cleaning of the surface. As the school parking lot is going to be re-paved following the close of school, work will be coordinated with Region #12 Facilities Manager Don O'Leary and Washington's Facilities Manager Mark Showalter.
- **Pickleball Update-Camp:** The sessions are full and have been a huge success. Jenn is hoping to continue to schedule upcoming camps and to offer a camp for kids this summer.
- **Summer Camp Update:** Registrations are still being accepted. Staffing is in place with some counselors returning and some applicants having to be turned away.
- **Morning Swim Update:** The program will continue being offered Monday, Wednesday and Friday during the summer. Thank you to the Radcliff's for continuing monitoring.
- **Town Beach Update:** Jenn reported that with all new procedures, there has been some problems with registering for beach passes but for the most part all is going well and Jenn and staff continue to offer assistance to anyone requiring or requesting it. Seniors and First

Responders are very appreciative of the free beach passes. Facilities Manager, Mark Showalter is working with Scott's Landscaping regarding cleaning and upgrading of the grounds.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **July 4th Freedom Run:** Jenn reported that Commissioner Sheila Anson has been helping to organize the run with Resident Trooper Hamel. Due to the tunnel Road Bridge work being done in Steep Rock the race this year will be held at the Shepaug School with the course starting at the school and continuing to South Street to Nichols Hill Road to Painter Ridge Road to Davenport Road to South Street and ending back at the school.
- **Lifeguard Recertification Fee:** The Commissioners approved paying Heather Hurley for recertifying the lifeguards.
- **Newsletter line item:** The cost of the Senior Center's newsletter has exceeded what was budgeted for this current fiscal year. Jenn has spoken with Finance Director Linda Gomez regarding financing this shortfall. As there are remaining funds in the General Fund Parks and Recreation budget, these funds can be used with the approval of the commission which was granted.
- **Thank you to Assistant Director George Steiner** for his power washing of the Town Beach house and walkway.
- **Possible future programs:** Jenn is speaking with Region #12 Athletic Director Matt Perachi and the Washington Primary School PTO about possible offerings of a tennis clinic, after school art classes, pickleball clinics, etc. More information to follow.

Chairman's Report: C.J. Kersten offered the Commission's congratulations to the Shepaug girls' softball team and the boys and girls tennis teams.

The Commissioners thanked Steve Inglese for attending this evening's meeting and advised if he is interested in becoming a member of the Commission to write a letter of interest to the Board of Selectmen for their endorsement and appointment.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:20p.m. as there was no further business for discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Greene
Clerk