

**TOWN OF WASHINGTON**  
**Parks and Recreation Commission**  
**Minutes**  
**May 11, 2020**

**Meeting held via video conferencing.**

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

**Present:** First Selectman James Brinton. Chairman C.J. Kersten, Commissioners Joe Fredlund, Sheila Anson, Whitney Ryan, Ray Reich, Carrie Rowe, Alice Demeo. Coordinator Jeff Hammond; Clerk Mary Anne Greene.

**Call to Order:** Chairman C.J. Kersten called the meeting to order at 5:31p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the March 9, 2020 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. By Ray Reich, seconded by Joe Fredlund and unanimously approved.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- **Revisiting River Walk Maintenance Building location:** Jeff Hammond reported to the Commission that after consulting with the Land Use Office, determining where the septic system is, etc., he felt that a better placement for the new maintenance building would be perpendicular to the existing shed and parallel to the back of the Pavilion. It would not interfere with any playing fields and water and electricity would be accessible. Land Use permitting would be possible. If placed in an alternate location as was suggested previously, in order to receive Land Use approval, a variance would need to be applied for. Jeff provided the Commissioners with photographs of his proposed location. **Motion:** To accept Jeff Hammond's recommendation for placement of the maintenance building pending approval by the Buildings and Properties Commission. By Sheila Anson, seconded by Ray Reich and unanimously approved.
- **River Walk Park:** The Walking Path remains open however walkers are being directed to "one way" direction. Water has been turned on at the Pavilion but the bathrooms remain closed. Opening of the Pavilion will be dependent on guidance from the State. When the facility is allowed to open, strict protocols will need to be followed in regard to cleaning of the bathrooms, picnic tables, numbers of people allowed to adhere to social distancing, etc.
- **Beach:** State beaches and parks will begin to open in mid-June. Opening of the Town Beach has not been determined but will not open Memorial Day Weekend. Again protocols will need to be followed to insure safety. There was discussion regarding allowing people on the beach "at their own risk", placement of swim lines to keep boats out of the swim area, the practicality of asking our young guards to monitor and enforce regulations. Beach caretaker and tenant, Ralph Averill, is doing very well. Beach Director, Jeff Cox, has guards lined up for when the beach does open.
- **Dug Out repair:** Jeff is waiting on insurance determination.

## **NEW BUSINESS:**

- **Coordinator's Report:** Jeff Hammond reported the following:

What's Happening?

As you all know, since mid-March, everything has been shut down. As the State tries to reopen, questions and uncertainty abound. Here is what I do know...

### **Boat Ramp**

The ramp opened on schedule, Saturday, April 18<sup>th</sup>. I have put protocols in place for the safety of my staff and the boaters. The ramp attendants have sufficient PPE and wear masks whenever someone come to the ramp. Gloves have also been made available for inspections and the accepting payments. We have gone to a no touch registration. The attendants fill out forms and have boaters verify. We are asking for exact change to limit any interaction. As expected, the ramp has been very busy.

### **Beach**

At this time, we will not be opening the beach on Memorial Day Weekend. Depending on State guidance, we may look for mid to late June. If and when we do open, additional protocols will need to be put in place to ensure folks are adhering to social distancing. Beach staff has been kept informed as information becomes available.

### **River Walk Park**

At this time, all ball fields, tennis courts and playgrounds remain closed. The bathrooms at the Pavilion also remain closed. We are currently not accepting reservations to rent the facility. Dates remain uncertain but phase 1 of reopening will involve allowing family size groups onto ballfields for catch, batting practice, etc. as well as opening the tennis courts for singles play only. The immediate hurdle with this will be monitoring. There has been some talk of using seasonal staff but time and days of availability may be an issue.

I would like to revisit the location/placement of the new maintenance building. I will have pictures to show outlining why I believe the originally proposed location, perpendicular to the existing shed is still a viable option. In my opinion, after having time to mull it over, none of the other locations are ideal and would either create an eyesore to some or need Inland Wetlands permits or a Zoning variance.

### **Summer Rec**

Big question mark here. I have been in contact with other rec professionals and we are all in the same boat. While the State has announced that summer camps are allowed, we may not have the ability/resources to pull it off this year based on the guidelines put forth. I will share more detailed findings with you during the meeting.

### **Concerts**

At this time, I have cancelled The Wool Hats who were scheduled to perform at the Community Block Party in early June. We currently have two additional concerts planned. The country double feature in July and the Billy Joel Tribute band in early September. They are both still scheduled but there is a good possibility we will have to cancel the country show in July.

As part of the Summer Concerts Series I have moved forward with the expansion of our "Movie Night" option. We now have a 200" screen to show indoor or outdoor movies when are allowed to do so again.

- **Activities/Events:** The Commissioners discussed various ideas of events that could possibly be held with limited numbers of people, social distancing and other protocols due to COVID-19 such as a movie night with seating in marked distancing "blocks", walks/hikes in one of Steep Rock preserves with limited numbers of participants, Learning stations around River Walk.

**Chairman's Report:** C.J. Kersten reported:

- **Expressions of sympathy** to the families of Tom Hearn, Dick Kaylor and to Heather Rowe on the passing of her husband.
- **Stay Strong, Stay Well!**

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 as there was no further business for discussion.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Anne Greene  
Clerk