

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Parks and Recreation Commission
Minutes
September 9, 2019

Minutes are subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: Chairman C.J. Kersten, Commissioners Sheila Anson, Ray Reich, Alice Demeo, Joe Fredlund, Whitney Ryan. Coordinator Jeff Hammond and Clerk Mary Anne Greene.

Call to Order: Chairman C.J. Kersten called the meeting to order at 5:38p.m.

Motion: To add subsequent business not already on the Agenda – to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2019 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. By Sheila Anson, seconded by Joe Fredlund and unanimously approved.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the June 10, 2019 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. By Joe Fredlund, seconded by Whitney Ryan and unanimously approved.
- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the July 8, 2019 meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. By Sheila Anson, seconded by Ray Reich and unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Tennis Courts:** Jeff Hammond reported that the tennis courts at the Washington Primary School are finally done. The many delays were frustrating to Jeff and the Commission. Jeff thanked Selectman Jay Hubelbank for becoming involved and interceding with the company. Communication became much more frequent and acceptable. Feedback from people who have played on them is positive.
- **Summer Recap: Beach:** Jeff Hammond reported that all went smoothly. The complaint about cigar smoking at the beach was dealt with and has not occurred since. **Summer Recreation:** Despite slow registrations, all four weeks had solid numbers of attendees. The elimination of afternoon camps (due to lack of interest) that have occurred in past years, did not appear to be a problem. There was also little or no interest in the Shakesperience or ASAP camps. The SUP camp was well attended.
- **Shakespeare in the Park:** Although the camp offering for children did not occur, the performance by Shakesperience of “A Comedy of Errors” was extremely successful with an estimated audience of 150-200 people each of the four nights it was performed at the River Walk Park. There are plans to do a performance again next year.
- **River of Dreams Concert:** The concert held on the Town Hall lawn this past Saturday was very well attended and has received positive feedback. The stage constructed by Jesse Travers and Larry Cable worked very well. Thank you to John Gueniat for his assistance throughout the concert.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Donation Request:** Jeff Hammond reported that the Pavilion is being rented Friday, September 27, 2019 for a dinner prior to the Memorial Service which will be held Saturday, September 28, 2019 for Matt Kraft. An inquiry was made asking Parks and Rec to donate beer for the dinner.

Despite the Commissioners consensus to do what they can to support the Kraft family, a donation of this type was thought to set a poor precedent for future events. The rental fee, however, will be waived.

- **Harvest Festival:** Jeff Hammond reported that the Harvest Festival will be held on Sunday, October 13, 2019 from 12:00-5:00p.m. at the River walk Park. The Washington Business Association is responsible for soliciting vendors. Parks and Recreation is responsible for the donation of the Pavilion, train ride, mobile pub, hay maze, band, etc. There will also be the annual scarecrow contest. Jeff is waiting for the graphic for the artwork for publicity.
- **Beach House:** Chris and Leah Papsin, Beach house tenants and caretakers have informed the Commission that they will be leaving as they are building their own home – which hopefully will be done around the Holidays. Their lease goes through the end of April 2020. Both the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Board of Selectmen have approved their leaving before the expiration of the lease with gratitude for their years of service to the Town. Once a date is confirmed for their departure, the position of Caretaker and Tenant will be advertised.
- **Tree Lighting:** Due to the smaller size of the new Christmas Tree at the Town Hall it has been determined that Creative Illumination will not be needed to put the lights on.
- **COORDINATOR'S REPORT:** Jeff Hammond reported the following:

Summer Rec

Camp season went very smoothly this year. Our core camp had great numbers for each of the 4 weeks. With no registrations, acting camp was cancelled. SUP camp had solid numbers again this year.

Beach House

I have notified Chris Papsin that his letter was well received and that it won't be an issue to shorten the rental period at the beach house. I did mention that, to protect everyone from potential building delays concerning his new house, that we would ask for a one-month buffer after the projected move where he or Leah would still check on property. This way, if there is a delay in them moving out, we won't have a new tenant waiting to move in. At this time, the projected move will be sometime in December.

Concerts

At time of writing, the Billy Joel Tribute concert is a few days away. Hopefully we will be discussing how great a show it was and about how many folks showed up for it. To add to the event, the Boy Scouts will be on site selling popcorn and milkshakes to raise money for their troop.

The next concert will be The Regulators performing at the 3rd Annual Harvest Festival. Beyond that, now that we have the budget, I'd like to consider doing a concert in the Main Hall over the winter. Maybe in February in lieu of Winterfest?

Tennis Courts

After a very frustrating experience working with Putnam Tennis, our courts are now finished. Thankfully, they were completed on the Friday before Labor Day weekend. Hopefully folks have been able to use them and are happy with the new surface. Putnam will be returning in about 3 weeks to check on sand and do one final brooming of the courts.

Harvest Festival

We are less than five weeks away from this year's Harvest Festival. It's time to start thinking about our scarecrow. The Harvest Festival committee has also proposed that we eliminate the hay maze this year and offer the bounce house instead. I mentioned that a volunteer would need to be present the entire time to watch it. They have asked me to ask Parks & Rec if anyone is willing to volunteer for this. That aside, I think we are in pretty good shape so far. I have booked the Mobile Pub, the trackless train, the band and have spoken to the Fire Dept. and Washington Pizza for food options.

- **Activities/Events:** Jeff Hammond has received a request from Bonnie Gianotti of Litchfield to have Washington's Park and Recreation Commission promote riding classes that she would provide at her facility. The Commission declined to approve this request.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:50p.m. as there was no further business for discussion.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Greene
Clerk