

Town of Newtown, CT

3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION.

The Parks and Recreation Commission held a virtual meeting on Tuesday, July 14, 2020 on our respective phones and laptops in Newtown, CT.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Marks at 6:04 pm.

Present: Edward Marks, Patrick Barczak, Clinton DePaulo and David Payne

Commissioners Absent: Warren Spencer, Rance Thompson and Vincent Yanni

Staff Present: Amy Mangold, RoseAnn Reggiano and Carl Samuelson

Public: Ms. Terry Ritchie, 81 High Rock Road, Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Ms. Yvonne Landolfi, 23 Sherman Street, Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Mr. William Tomanio, 29 Spring Trail, Southbury, CT 06488

Mr. Glenn Boyle, 2 Marlin Road, Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Public Participation:

Ms. Landolfi, representing Newtown Dog Park, asked how things were going with the benches that are to be installed at the Dog Park, to which Carl Samuelson stated that they took delivery of the benches the prior week, but have not been able to install them yet due to fewer staff and more social distancing projects all due to COVID. She also asked about the pump to get the fourth water feature there up and running. Mr. Samuelson explained that to get the fourth water feature up and running, it would cost \$14,000 leaving it too cost prohibitive to run the fourth water feature when the other three are running well with the current system in place. Inquiries were also made regarding Purell stations at the dog park (still waiting as they are in high demand) and about the final proceeds of the Dog Park Calendar Fundraiser. Since that inquiry, Ms. Reggiano researched that the Dog Park Calendars earned \$2,140, all of which goes straight to the Dog Park Fund. Ms. Ritchie, also from the Dog Park Committee, raised concerns about enforcing the use of resident parking permits at the Dog Park. Her concern is that many non-resident Dog Park users have volunteered numerous hours (and many, money) to directly benefit the Dog Park. In addition, Mr. William Tomanio brought up the need to implement a "vicious dog" policy. Commission Chairman Marks then asked Parks and Recreation Director, Amy Mangold to gather information on both of these issues and to get back to the committee and make some decisions.

Mr. Glenn Boyle of Newtown Tennis Association joined the meeting to inquire about when players will be allowed to play doubles tennis at the parks. Carl Samuelson notified him that as of July 6th, doubles play has been allowed. Players do not need to wear masks while playing, but must wear a mask while waiting to get on the court. Mr. Boyle then asked Mr. Samuelson when the tennis courts were being sealed to which Mr. Samuelson answered "two weeks". He then explained that they have had the materials in for weeks, but the company who performs

the service is down two out of their three crews due to COVID. Both the nets and courts will be pristine after the sealing occurs, Mr. Boyle was reassured. Mr. Boyle then thanked Parks & Recreation for all of their hard work on behalf of Newtown Tennis.

Acceptance of Minutes:

Motion:

Commissioner DePaolo made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 9, 2020 commission meeting. Commissioner Pat Barczak seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the accepted minutes.

Old Business: (See attachment #1)

- *Summer phase-in planning/reopening.* Director Mangold had high praise for all of her Parks and Recreation Staff. Please see her Director's Report which provides summer updates.

New Business:

- *Dog Park: see Public Participation*

Chairman's Report:

Edward Marks, Chairman Newtown Parks and Recreation:

- Chairman Marks addressed all three of Parks & Recreation's Director and Assistant Directors in expressing the public's appreciation of all the effort that Parks and Recreation has gone to, regarding programming while implementing COVID restrictions.
- Mr. Marks also commented how swamped Cheshire's pickleball courts have been. He would like to revisit pickleball next month to perhaps shift some priorities to include that into the CIP requests.

Director's Report:

Amy Mangold, Director of Parks and Recreation: (see attachment #1)

- *Please refer to attachment #1.*

Assistant Directors Reports:

RoseAnn Reggiano, Assistant Director of Recreation:

- Ms. Reggiano reported that day camp has been phenomenally successful. All counselors are following the rules and covid guidelines. They are really knocking themselves out in order to provide a great camp experience. The public is thrilled. One nice caveat of this whole Covid situation, is the realization that the campers love having the pool to themselves for open swim, something they are now considering for future summers.
- Ms. Reggiano said that not only are the counselors really rising to the occasion, but the maintainers have been extremely helpful erecting barriers for social distancing, and just

meeting every need that has arisen. Ms. Reggiano thanked Mr. Samuelson as his department has gone above and beyond in order to keep people safe, making it difficult with his smaller staff (due to Covid restrictions), and yet, still maintaining fields and facilities.

- All sports camps have not been able to run, but the ones that have, have been very successful thus far. Softball and soccer camps are going well. “You Gotta Believe” basketball camp has been having kids bring their own basketball, and parents have been thrilled thus far. Murphy Basketball Camp is also up and running successfully. Instead of their normal 80 campers, they are running at a maximum of 40 this summer. They have been taking temperatures, setting up cones for each child’s break period (snack), and encouraging hand sanitizing and parent curbside drop off and pick up spots. Everyone is extremely happy with how it is going.
- Summer Swim Team is up and running, and going very well. It runs Monday through Friday from 6:30 – 8:30 pm with a limit of 30 swimmers per session. The parents have been wonderful. An avid Treadwell tennis player phoned in just to say how she has noticed that the pool employees have been doing an incredible job. Between supervision, sanitizing and great attitudes, things have been running extremely well at all of the parks.
- As far as the fall scheduling goes, Ms. Reggiano stated that it will have to remain fluid (the way summer had to be). Regulations are constantly changing so, although she is already speaking to instructors, schedules are still up in the air. She is constantly monitoring the situation, and putting things in and out of RecTrac on an “as needed” basis.

Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director of Parks: (See attachment #2)

- *Please see attachment.*

Commissioners out and about: None.

Motion:

Commissioner Clinton DePaolo moved to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 pm. This motion was seconded by Commissioner Patrick Barczak, which was carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, August 11, 2020 at 6:00 pm in the Multi-purpose Room located at 8 Simpson Street, Newtown, CT.

Submitted by,

Kate Geerer, clerk

*7/14/2020

Everything is open at this time, some areas have limitations such as the dog park to 20 visitors at a time

Basketball 10 on a court request at one time

Thursday Concerts will be #3 at this Thursday already. We have had the maintenance crew paint circles in the lawn for the viewers to sit in. They are going great. Thank you to Claris Construction for sponsoring and to Kate G for organizing and managing the concerts. Viewers feel very safe and really appreciate the live events. The bands are thrilled to be performing again as well.

Day Camp is going very well. We managed to get everything ready to meet all of the guidelines, the park crew were a tremendous help in getting it set up for us. Tents, fencing, sanitization products.

Treadwell pool and Eichler's cove beach are operating under the reservation system and to meet the CDC guidelines. Again it was a great team effort with the crew and office staff. We had a lot to do to learn and manage the reservation system and we are still assisting customers every day but we are getting everyone set up and it is going very, very, well. We continue to sell passes to residents and nonresidents and do not seem to have complaints yet that a reservation cannot be made. Our office staff was slammed end of June and early July, we are still on hold to replace the full time secretary position and we have been lucky to have Kate and Victoria our part time staff really step up and help us out.

Resident permits are a hot commodity and we have made almost \$3,000 with nonresident permits.

We continue with Ambassadors at the parks and we also now have 4 students from NHS through the summer youth Employment Program. Those students also monitor activity at the Dog Park and The Skate Park.

American Ramp Company did get us a schematic design for a bicycle playground but the last group zoom meeting was postponed because we were all just too busy with the start of programs and other items to connect. We will connect in the next couple of weeks.

We want to reinstate the bicycle share program but are concerned with building entrance activity and sanitization of the equipment. We are trying to do some long term loans for some families who cannot at this time obtain bikes. Brad from Guardian bikes is helping with that program.

It is almost CIP time. The calendar calls for the selectman to present on Sept. 24th. This CIP season Bob Tait is sharing the software with Department heads for ease of making the CIP we will have some training to operate it. At this time the one item P&R has in the CIP is 2020/2021 for Lake Lillionah Improvements and that is actually listed as another funding source from a lakefront account. The Eichler's cove account was renamed the lake front account per Bob Tait. For the August meeting we can review what we had planned as a department for the CIP and decide what we might want to present for Sept.

We will be planning on an outdoor movie in August which we would love to ask you all to promote or attend.

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CARL SAMUELSON
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PARKS

TOWN OF NEWTOWN

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

PARKS AND FIELDS REPORT

TO: Newtown Parks and Recreation Commission,
Amy Mangold, Director

FROM: Carl Samuelson, Assistant Director – Parks

DATE: July 14, 2020

RE: Monthly park update and field report

Reopening, field use and ever changing guidelines still have us changing directions on a regular basis. A new Covid related task, was our staff assisting public works, deliver concrete blocks to restaurants for outdoor seating. We have still had a higher than normal labor loss due to condensed vacation timing and Covid related quarantine time.

Dickinson Park: The playground, basketball courts and Skate Park are fully open. The pavilion was set up for day camp. The beds have all been mulched including the addition of a new “Jacks Grove” plaque instead of the sign. The water system was sanitized flushed and tested prior to opening the bathrooms. Our tennis court vendor has promised he will be on site within two weeks, as all of the required materials are in. We will begin basketball court prep soon. Tents have been set up to allow for social distancing of campers as well as marking out the concert area so patrons could safely enjoy the weekly concerts.

Newtown Middle School: Normal field maintenance has begun, as well as lip removal from both fields.

Orchard Hill: No new news.

Lake Lillinonah: Normal maintenance continues here as use has dramatically increased over the summer.

Oakview: Normal maintenance for the most part here. Outdated Irrigation air cards were replaced and the field was aerated.

Tilson Field: Nothing new here, just regular use.

Treadwell Soccer/Softball: Softball has been weeded and groomed for regular use. The

lighting system damage from earlier lightning has been repaired here.

Glander Fields: Glander 3 has been aerated and all three fields have been prepped and put into use. Regular grooming shall continue.

Liberty Fields: Fields have been weeded and groomed for use. The planting beds have been mulched and outdated irrigation air cards have been replaced.

Walnut Tree: This field is in the process of having lips removed from the field. A rope swing was removed from a tree which kids were using to swing into the lake.

Fairfield Hills: We planted 4 larger trees at the community center, as well as replaced a Dogwood tree at the front entrance. All of the previously installed paper Covid signage was replaced with more permanently printed plastic signs. High Meadow Field which was fraize mowed early in June is doing great. We are a little ahead of schedule on the recovery as opposed to where we thought we would be.

NHS Fields: All of these fields have been lined, and prepped for use. Regular fertility inputs and spraying as needed has these fields in good shape. The original thought of the CIAC allowing summer scholastic use seems to have been cancelled.

Sandy Hook School: An irrigation leak has been repaired and many boxes that were cracked have been replaced. Baseball is using the field on a regular basis.

Hawley School Fields: The fields here were prepped and are now in use. Some ruts from removed stumps were filled and seeded here as well.

Eichlers Cove Marina: Things are going well here. The beach was set up in 15 ft. squares for social distance usage. We have been grooming after recent heavy rains. The wifi wiring and controller was wired and mounted on the gable of the garage for needed communications.

Dog Park: The dog park has reopened. The water features are on except for the people fountains. A memorial tree was planted outside of the Dog Park for one of the Sandy Hook therapy dogs.

Treadwell Park: All of the picnic tables were unbolted and removed for camp. All of the beds were mulched. The pool was opened and balanced. The pool gutters were painted since our new gutters have yet to arrive due to Covid delays. Things seem to be running smooth here although we have a few minor items to touch up here.

Pole Bridge Preserve: No new news.

Watertown Field: Watertown field #2 banks have been graded and seeded. Topsoil is being spread on the field as weather allows. Infield clay is being delivered at the end of the week which will allow us to form the infield.

Staff:

- 464 hours of vacation/sick/personal/injury/discipline hours were used out of 2000 potential work hours in the past month. This represents a 23.5% loss in workforce.