

Somers Parks & Recreation Board

PO Box 46 Somers, New York 10589

OFF: (914)-232-8441

FAX: (914)-232-8548

Kevin Westerman
Chairman



MEETING MINUTES **May 27, 2020**

Chairman Westerman opened the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

The members present were: Stephen Krug, Chris McCormack, Don Penzine, Michele Sanz, Michele Werney, Kevin Westerman, and John Zattola.

Jim Boniello and John Papalia were absent.

Town Councilmen Rich Clinchy and Tom Garrity, as well as Parks and Recreation Superintendent Steve Ralston were also present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public present.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Penzine to approve the minutes of the April 30, 2020, special meeting. Mr. McCormack seconded the motion. All were in favor.

A motion was made by Mrs. Sanz to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2020 special meeting. Mr. Krug seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MR. RALSTON'S REPORT

Mr. Ralston included pictures of improvements made in Reis Park over the past two months during the Pause. All complimented him on how nice things look. All of the park maintenance staff are back to work every day. One of the full-time office workers is retiring and the part-time clerk had her hours reduced to zero. A question came up about how phone calls are being answered. During the office hours of Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., either Mr. Ralston and/or Mr. Johnson are usually in the office to answer the phones. For the times when their responsibilities require both to be out of the office at the same time, callers can leave a voicemail message, which would be retrieved quickly. The possibility of calls being forwarded to a centralized person for the Town was inquired about. At this point, most of the departments have limited staff in their offices. Having calls forwarded to Mr. Ralston, when he is working at one of the Town's parks was also discussed. Mr. Ralston's cell phone is his personal phone and, depending on what he is doing while he is not in the office when the phone rings, he may not be available to answer the phone. Mr. Ralston does not anticipate a problem with the phone calls being answered or messages being timely returned.

NEW BUSINESS

Parks Reopening, Restrictions and Guidelines – Reis Park will re-open for use of the tennis courts and batting cages, as well as passive recreation on Monday June 1st. All areas that remain off limits, including a section of the parking lot, have been blocked off with caution tape and signs have been posted. The basketball rims have been removed. Staff are available daily except Sundays to monitor how things are going. Mr. Ralston is trying to re-arrange maintenance staff schedules so there is coverage on Sundays. If issues arise, the police can be called, although such problems are not expected.

Mr. Ralston spoke with the new President of SYSO, Kevin Marcus. New York State's Phase 4 for recreation won't start until at least July 9th, which is the earliest that the sports teams may be able to play. This affects both organized as well as unorganized team sports. When play can resume the guidelines will be provide to SYSO based on State and County regulations. Guidelines have been established for use of the batting cages and tennis courts.

OLD BUSINESS

Department Camps and Programs Discussion Update – Mr. Ralston only received one complaint about the cancellation of Day Camp and Tusker Trax. Evidently there were some comments on some of the Facebook pages, but were overwhelmingly positive. People seemed to be more upset about the Summer Camp staff now not being able to have employment opportunities than the campers not being able to go to camp this summer. At this point, plans can't be made for programs offered by outside agencies during late summer. Mr. Ralston is not even sure if the fall programs will take place.

Reis Expansion Professional Services RFP Update – All received a copy of the former proposal done by Woodard and Curran. It will be used as a starting point for a new proposal after it is edited by Mr. Ralston and tweaked by Mr. Westerman. Some have sent their suggestions to Mr. Ralston and all are encouraged to do so by the end of the week. Hopefully, this document will be approved at the June meeting. A question came up as to whether it made sense to putting energy into this proposal now since the land swap hasn't happened yet and there might not be enough money to do all that is hoped for. As of May 8th, the paperwork for the land swap is in Albany awaiting a "Commissioners Determination" and there have been no opposition raised or indications that it is not going to happen. This proposal is important as it is an active working master plan and when the land swap finally happens the department will have an updated plan in place.

Parks Master Plan Review Update – At the February meeting, Mary Ann Rivera of Landscape Concepts met with the Board regarding a proposal for improvements at Bailey Park. The Board was quite pleased with the proposal. Mr. Ralston followed up with Ms. Rivera concerning the following: prevailing wage; landscape lighting; natural stone walkways along the Route 100 and 202 sides of the property; and handicap accessibility. Mr. Penzine will reach out to Mrs. Rivera in an effort to determine when we can expect an update.

MR. RALSTON'S COMMENTS

Mr. Ralston thanked the Board members for their support during these trying times.

BOARD COMMENTS

There were no Board comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m. and the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, June 24th at 6:30 p.m. in the Recreation Center in Van Tassell Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Parks & Recreation Board

cc: Parks & Recreation Board
Superintendent of Parks & Recreation
Town Board
Town Clerk