

Somers Parks & Recreation Board

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Kevin Westerman
Chairman



MEETING MINUTES **October 28, 2020**

Chairman Westerman opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

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

Chris McCormack and John Papalia were absent.

Town Councilman Tom Garrity and Parks and Recreation Superintendent Steve Ralston were also present.

The meeting was held via Zoom.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no Public Comment

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mrs. Sanz to approve the minutes of the September 2, 2020 meeting as submitted. Mrs. Werney seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MR. RALSTON'S REPORT

Mr. Penzine asked about the improvements at Van Tassell. They will be completed by Town employee Chuck Dammeyer. The most involved project is building a ramp off the back door. A small ramp will be built connecting the back room and the middle room, the cost will be minor.

Mr. Ralston and Mr. Johnson have been very busy and do the best they can in planning programs given the limited amount of indoor facilities that are available.

NEW BUSINESS

Eagle Scout Project – Boy Scout Robert Moore presented a PowerPoint describing his Eagle Scout Project to the Board. To install a National Park Service prototype 2' by 3' sign that denotes the Somers Hamlet as being on the National Registry of Historical Places and provides information on the history of Somers including the American Circus and being part of the journey made by Washington and Rochambeau Trail in Bailey Park. In addition, the sign

will have a QR Code linking to a website with additional information. The plan is to incorporate it into the renovation planned for Bailey Park. Both Doris Smith, Town Historian and Grace Zimmerman, Vice President of the Somers Historical Society were consulted. By the time he met with Mr. Ralston, his project was already signed off on and approved by the Boy Scout Council. It was confirmed that it will be a sign only and not placed on a brick patio. The Board members were quite impressed with Mr. Moore's project and believes it will blend in nicely to the improvements made in Bailey Park, but the major concern is approving it without having a final plan for the Bailey Park renovation. It was suggested that Mr. Moore ask the Boy Scout Council if they would allow for the sign to be temporarily placed in Bailey Park with the understanding that it may have to be moved to another and permanent location once the renovation of Bailey Park is completed. In addition, he was asked to provide the Board with copies of the proposal that was submitted to and approved by the Boy Scout Council. Other comments made by the Board were to contact the Leos and Lions for a contribution; that the sign not be a maintenance burden for the Parks Staff; who will maintain the website and will the Boy Scout Council allow for minor changes needed to be made to the project – it is the hope that they would. All complimented Mr. Moore on a job well done and if anything is needed from the Board, he should let Mr. Ralston know. Mr. Moore will return to the December Parks and Recreation Board meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Bailey Park Renovations – Last month, Mr. Westerman asked if Mr. Ralston received the color renditions as promised for the Bailey Park proposed improvements. Mr. Ralston hoped he would have had them for this evening's meeting, but unfortunately, he has not heard back from Landscape Concepts. There is much frustration on behalf of the Board as this process has been going on for over a year. It is becoming a bad reflection on the Board as so much time has passed. Mr. Penzine will reach out to the company in an effort to get an immediate reply. Landscape Concepts has only been secured to submit a proposal for drawings and estimate, but if they submit a bid, consideration should be given to have a contract with a timeline, deadlines and penalties. If things don't work out with Landscape Concepts, Mr. Boniello can reach out to some landscapers. Mr. Westerman welcomes any and all alternatives. If a quick response is received from Landscape Concepts, a special meeting may be scheduled to make a decision rather than waiting until the next meeting on December 2nd.

2021 Budget Hearing – Last week, Mr. Ralston and Mr. Westerman went to the Budget Hearing for the 2021 budget. There were no changes made to what was submitted and the proposed budget has some placeholders for programs as things are still uncertain for next year. Mr. Garrity thanked Mr. Ralston for the hard work he did on the budget, and announced that the tentative budget will come out on Friday and fortunately things are not as bad as originally thought.

COVID Update – Mr. Ralston was happy to report that they have weathered the storm. Sports are just about completed and there will be no formalized activities again until April. Mr. Johnson has already been talking to former Day Camp staff and they will be in need of a nurse. Some facilities in the park will remain open and it is the hope that folks will come to just enjoy the outdoors. Thankfully the average visitor followed the rules. Mr. Westerman said he is unaware of any complaints made about the Parks and Recreation Department and the Parks and Recreation Board always stands behind Mr. Ralston. To date, Mr. Ralston has not been

informed of an COVID related cases as a result of someone being in the park. Disinfecting takes place twice daily and everyone has their temperature taken first thing in the morning as well as having to complete a required health questionnaire. Mr. Garrity thanked Mr. Ralston for doing a phenomenal job in dealing with COVID. The Board echoed Mr. Garrity's sentiment.

Angle Fly Preserve Conservation Easement Modification Update – It was reported to Mrs. Schirmer that the next steps are to provide a package of the Conservation Easement Amendment to the Office of Attorney General for their approval and their preparation of the required instruments for recording at the County Clerk's Office to memorialize the agreed to amendment.

Due to the impact that COVID has had on the movement of papers between the DEC and the Offices of the Attorney General and the State Comptroller, this has severely impacted the timing. The DEC is targeting the 3rd quarter of November to have the modification document for execution by the Town of Somers, the County and the DEC.

MR. RALSTON'S COMMENTS

Mr. Ralston had no additional comments.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Garrity asked about the status of the concession stand. They were not able to open nearly as much as their contract indicated they could due to COVID and as a result, they lost money. Mr. Ralston is working with Finance Director Bob Kehoe to determine the amount that will have to be paid to the Town.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m. and the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, December 2nd at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Parks & Recreation Board

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

