

Somers Parks & Recreation Board

PO Box 46 Somers, New York 10589

OFF: (914)-232-8441

FAX: (914)-232-8548

Kevin Westerman
Chairman



MEETING MINUTES

March 24, 2021

Chairman Westerman opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

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

Councilman Rich Clinchy and Parks and Recreation Superintendent Steve Ralston were also present.

Jim Boniello and John Zattola were absent.

The meeting was held via Zoom.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public present.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. McCormack to approve the minutes of the February 24, 2021 monthly meeting as submitted. Mrs. Sanz seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MR. RALSTON'S REPORT

Mr. Westerman asked if the seniors have resumed outdoor exercise at VanTassell with the Nutrition program. Mr. Ralston is not sure, but assumes it will when the weather is nicer.

The old playground equipment has been removed and the scrap sold. All necessary prepping for the new equipment is done. On March 29th, the new equipment will be delivered, and the installation will begin, with a completion date of April 9th.

NEW BUSINESS

There was no New Business.

OLD BUSINESS

Bailey Park Project Review – This evening, Mary Ann Rivera, of Landscape Concepts, met with the Board to present hopefully the last proposal for the Bailey Park project. A lengthy review and discussion took place. Mr. Ralston and Mrs. Rivera met with an arborist from Save a Tree. Two trees at risk to fall were identified as needing to be removed. Some pruning on some of the other trees will be required. As there is no immediate risk, the tree removal work can be done when the project begins, hopefully late summer. The work can be done around NYSEG's guide wires and pole, but it would be preferred if they could remove the old guide wires and pole. Save a Tree's proposal includes removal, pruning, root pruning and disposal of all debris, but not stump removal, which can be done by the contractors. This portion of the project will be bid out as well.

Prices were secured for pavers and fieldstone. Although over time, the pavers could potentially require more maintenance than the bluestone option, all agreed that, on balance, the best option would be to use larger pavers for the patio by the gazebo, the three smaller patios and walkway. The initial price would be lower, any needed maintenance could be done on a smaller scale and the pavers would also blend better with the existing sidewalks. They will be reddish in color with a gray edge around all the patios. The walkway will not have an edge.

An adjustment will be made to plant more deer resistant plantings with a native natural look, as well as shrubs and lower perennials that flower, but also look nice when not in bloom. Ultimately it will have an English country garden design. Although there is no water spigot in that area, if everything is planted in the fall it will only require a minimal amount of watering just after being planted. Natural rainwater and melting snow will suffice for the winter and spring. Parks and Recreation does have a water tank that can be placed on one of the trucks and used for watering. Mr. Ralston reminded Mrs. Rivera that the parks staff doesn't have expertise in pruning. She assured him that what is planted will be easy to maintain and require very little pruning. The perennials only need to be cut down at the end of the season and will re-bloom on their own.

The Board members thanked Mrs. Rivera for her time and effort, ultimately resulting in a great plan. All agreed to move forward with what was presented this evening. Mrs. Rivera will prepare a general description including costs to accompany the plan. This package will be given to the Town Board for their discussion and referral. They will make a decision and, if favorable, the goal is to start the project in late summer so it is ready for the Veteran's Day parade and celebration. Members of the Parks and Recreation Board can attend the Town Board meeting. There is enough money in the Recreation Fees account that spending this money would not prevent another project from happening.

Pavilion Rental Discussion – The Governor has increased the group gathering requirement from 50 to 200. No one had any issues with Mr. Ralston renting the pavilion with the 200 people maximum limit.

Basketball Courts Re-opening Discussion – Nets and rims were removed from the basketball courts at Reis Park at the onset of the pandemic. The Board discussed whether it would be appropriate to put them back at this time. The courts typically draw many people for

informal pick-up games. The New York State Department of Health, however, has determined that basketball remains a higher risk sport *vis-à-vis* COVID-19, because among sports, it has the least ability to maintain physical distance and avoid touching shared equipment. Unlike organized play, such as tournaments and league games, which have controls and protocols in place, pick-up basketball games in Reis Park would be very difficult to monitor and enforce. Without protocols to enforce mask wearing, as well as sign-ins and temperature checks, all agreed that the current risks warranted keeping the rims and nets off the court at this time, especially since the Town's COVID numbers have risen recently. This position will be reviewed again at the next Parks and Recreation meeting.

Day Camp Update – It was the hope that by now, updated information and clarification would have been received by the Westchester County Department of Health on how to proceed with plans to operate summer camp, including COVID procedures and guidelines. Unfortunately, nothing has been received, so planning for Day Camp will move forward using the criteria that has been received. Registration begins on April 21st. A Health Director has not been secured and only 15 Counselors have committed to accepting the position. Not only do the fees collected have to break even with the budgeted amount, the number of campers that can be accepted will be determined by the number of Counselors hired. If there are any updates from the County, Mr. Ralston will make everyone aware and a special meeting will be scheduled.

MR. RALSTON'S COMMENTS

Mr. Ralston had no further comments.

BOARD COMMENTS

At next month's meeting, Mr. Krug would like to speak further about investing money for infrastructure in the Dog Park as it is the second most used Park in Town.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m. and the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 28th at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Parks and Recreation Board

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

