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Kent Park and Recreation
August 17, 2020 Monthly Meeting Minutes

Present: Blythe Everett, John Grant, Lynn Harrington, Michael Perkins, Abigail Smith-Hanby, director Lesly Ferris.

Public and Invited Guests: Darlene Brady, Bonnie Jo Cheron, Joyce Kearns, Connie Manes, Jean Speck.

Chairman Lynn Harrington called the meeting to order via Zoom at 7:06 p.m.

Elevation of Alternates: No alternates were in attendance.

Acceptance of Agenda: Ms. Smith-Hanby made a motion to accept the agenda as submitted. Mrs. Everett seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Acceptance of Minutes: Mr. Perkins made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2020 monthly meeting and July 13, July 27 and August 13, 2020 special meetings. Mrs. Everett seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Correspondence: Ms. Ferris said the correspondence relates to the commission vacancies.

Public and Invited Guests: There was no discussion.

Director Report: Ms. Ferris provided a written report prior to the meeting.

Old Business: After-School Program: Ms. Ferris explained the protocols for the program, including the limit of 14 youngsters/day. There was discussion about how program registration could work to ensure this limit while allowing families flexibility to use the program as needed. Ms. Ferris noted the school would not be allowing changes to students' plans during the day so a cut-off time the night before would work. There was discussion about using Eventbrite to facilitate registration and generation of a daily list. Ms. Smith-Hanby suggesting looking at what other regional Park and Rec after-school programs look like for the fall. Mrs. Everett made a motion to offer Susan Vizzari a contract as After-School director for the 2020-2021 school year. Ms. Smith-Hanby seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. Ms. Ferris meanwhile will post a job notice. Ms. Speck recommended having a deadline for applications on the notice. Ms. Ferris will contact the other programs in the region to see how they are handling registration.

Parks: Mr. Grant said the parks are in okay condition. He will repair the broken window pane at Emery Park and said the windows inside the barn building will need to be re-puttied. He sprayed the walking path at Kent Common Park with the vinegar solution and recommended getting a large quantity of vinegar for use in the spring. Ms. Ferris noted one beaver was removed from the feeder pond at Emery Park.

Parks Master Plan: Ms. Ferris noted she and Mrs. Everett worked on language to post on the

Park Inspector Report Mrs. Ferris noted she and Mrs. Everett worked on language to post on the

locker room at Emory Park.
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Mrs. Smith-Handy seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously. Mrs. Ferris
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Public and Invited Guests There was no discussion.

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Acceptance of Minutes Mrs. Ferris made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 15, 2020

Everett seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.
Acceptance of Agenda Mrs. Smith-Handy made a motion to accept the agenda as submitted. Mrs.

Declaration of Absences No absences were in attendance.

Chairman Lynn Harrington called the meeting to order via Zoom at 7:00 pm.

Spock.

Public and Invited Guests Barbara Brink, Bonnie Jo Cheson, Lynn Henson, Connie Menez, Jean

Director Lesly Ferris.

Present: Mythe Everett, John Grant, Lynn Harrington, Alisha Perkins, Alisha Smith-Handy.

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Kent Park and Recreation
August 17, 2020

10:10 AM

Town and Park and Recreation websites related to the intent and status of the Parks Master Plan (attached). The commission consensus is the document is fine.

Concert Series: Ms. Ferris said she contacted the bands, and they are available on Sunday afternoons as discussed at last week's special meeting. The commission discussed details of its Safe and Sound Plan for Restarting the Summer Concert Series (attached), specifically focusing on:

- Is an isolation tent required and does it have to be staffed?
- Is a state police presence required?
- Are CERT volunteers available?

Ms. Smith-Hanby and Mrs. Everett expressed concerns about removing requirements that are in the document. Mrs. Everett said maybe the commission is over planning but the plan came out of a desire to be responsible. Ms. Smith-Hanby said she doesn't have the confidence that Park and Rec is the group to move this plan forward and suggested handing it off. Mrs. Harrington said she feels commissioners are overthinking the plan. Ms. Manes said the Land Trust could put the series on, working with the Lions Club and Park and Rec. Mrs. Everett made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support the Kent Land Trust to sponsor the concert series. Ms. Smith-Hanby seconded the motion, and the motion was approved. Ms. Ferris said she would contact Ms. Manes tomorrow. Ms. Smith-Hanby emailed the plan to Ms. Manes, and Mr. Perkins shared the Eventbrite document for online sign-up that he created.

Ms. Smith-Hanby left the meeting.

Five-Year Capital Plan: Ms. Ferris reminded the commission that requests for submissions for the plan would come in October/November.

Sports Programs: Ms. Ferris said she would be meeting with the other regional recreation directors to determine if there would be travel soccer programs or just local instructional programs.

2020-21 Budget: Ms. Ferris said Park and Rec did not receive a monthly report.

Halloween Bash 2020: Ms. Ferris shared with the commission that the Kent Community House still isn't open to the public and still may not be in October.

Playing Field Subcommittee Report: Ms. Ferris noted the work that Premier Turf offered to do at no cost and the July and August work that the commission agreed to fund also haven't been done. Mr. Grant noted the infields are covered in grass. Ms. Ferris will contact committee member Bruce Adams to move forward with a solution.

Commission vacancies: Ms. Ferris shared with the commission two letters of interest received for the commission vacancies (attached). Mr. Grant made a motion to appoint Kate Symonds to an unexpired three-year seat until January 21, 2020 and Diane Impastato to an unexpired one-year alternate seat until January 20, 2021. Mr. Perkins seconded the motion, and the motion was

year afternoon seat until January 20, 2021. Mr. Perkins seconded the motion and the motion was an unopposed three-year seat until January 21, 2020 and June 1st instead to an unopposed one- for the commission vacancies (attached). Mr. Quinn made a motion to appoint Kate Symonds to Commission vacancies. Mr. Perkins shared with the commission two letters of interest received

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- Are CRR volunteers available?
- Is a state police presence required?
- Is an isolation tent required and does it have to be staffed?

on: Safe and Sound Plan for Resuming the Summer Concert Series (attached) specifically focusing afternoon as discussed at last week's special meeting. The commission discussed details of the Concert Series. Mr. Perkins said she contacted the bands and they are available on Sunday

(attached). The commission consensus is the document is final. Town and Park and Recreation websites related to the intent and status of the Parks Master Plan

approved unanimously.

Rob Zombie Event proposal follow-up: There was no new discussion.

New Business: Pumpkin Run Sponsorship: Ms. Ferris shared that the Pumpkin Run this year will be a virtual event and Park and Recreation has been asked if it would like to be an event sponsor even if at a reduced donation. Ms. Ferris noted the usual donation is \$500 and recommended a \$250 donation. Mrs. Everett made a motion that Park and Recreation agree to sponsor the Kent Pumpkin Run at \$250. Mr. Grant seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The next Park and Recreation Commission meeting is Sept. 21, 2020 at 7 p.m.

Mrs. Harrington made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:38 p.m.

Lesly Ferris
Director

Minutes are not considered final until approved. Refer to the minutes from ensuing meeting for any changes and/or corrections.

Park and Recreation Director's Report

July/August 2020

From the June 2020 meeting:

- I sent a letter to Jennifer Calhoun to acknowledge receipt of her resignation and thank her for serving on the commission. I also notified the Town Clerk of the vacancy and posted notice on the Park and Recreation website. Update: John Grant identified two potential candidates to fill the two vacancies (one unexpired three-year and one unexpired one-year alternate seat) and I am attached their respective letters of interest.
- Women's Support Services of Sharon has begun providing summer activity bags each Monday which I deliver to 20 youngsters in Town (offered first to last year's Camp Kent youngsters and then After-School Program children who meet the age criteria). WSS is working with the recreation directors in each of the six towns.
- The playgrounds have reopened and signs are posted at both parks.
- The regional recreational Little League program for ages 9-12 is meeting Monday and Thursday evenings at 5:30 p.m. in Salisbury. The program features pick-up games; youngsters have to bring their own equipment and social distance when not on the field. Helmets are provided for the season to those who don't have their own. This program is being offered at no cost. Players do not have to commit to each meeting.
- The start of the adult fitness in nature class was delayed to July 18 due to the wet weather conditions.
- The collaborative, four-week program with the regional recreation directors and Sharon Audubon Society has begun. There are different habitats to explore outdoors each week. Update: this program had limited participation in one town and no participants in four other towns, including Kent, so the Zoom gathering planned as a culmination activity was not held.
- I am working with Abigail and Blythe on language to put on the Town and Park and Recreation websites regarding the Parks' Mission Statement as discussed at the meeting. Update: this is attached.
- I emailed the Board of Selectmen the commission's mission statements for continued discussion with the selectmen as previously discussed. Update: the selectmen acknowledged receipt of the statements.
- The work is complete on the Emery Park trail.
- I have contacted the state to re-request the permit for removal of the beaver in the feeder pond; that permit was reissued and that work began July 13.

From the director:

After-School Program: I have reported to the town treasurer that there are three families who have accounts receivable due to the Town as of June 30, 2020 for the After-School Program. I continue to send statements to these families. Update: one family has begun making payments on its account. I have a meeting with the Kent

Center School principal this week to discuss the status of the After-School Program for the fall. I will report at the meeting.

Budget: The Town treasurer now is working on implementation of an online payment system wherein people would be able to register and pay for Town programs online. I will let you know more details as this develops and when Park and Recreation will move to this system.

Parks: John Grant and I have sprayed for bees at the Emery Park playground after reports of bees. The water has been very low in the stream but the recent rains have helped and the bit of water in the bottom of the swimming area is moving once again. I visited the parks to check on them and also to take some photos to use to post on Facebook as a reminder that the parks are open for passive recreation, including the trail and walking path, as well as tennis, and there are picnic areas available. The playgrounds are open and signs are posted with reminders about social distancing and recommendation to wash hands after use as the areas are not sanitized. I had the seasonal electrical service at Emery Park turned off since we are not using the park for anything that requires electrical service. The walking path at Kent Common Park needs some attention and I have asked Chris Dunn at Premier Turf if he could give Park and Rec a price on weeding and add some stone dust where needed. Update: John Grant addressed the weeds at Kent Common Park, thank you. Lynn reported the bee's nest at Emery Park is gone. The work to address the beaver lodge at Emery Park also is complete. One beaver was removed at a cost of \$500. Removal of the lodge would require an Inland Wetlands permit or the lodge could be left to disintegrate on its own.

Playing Field Subcommittee: I have asked Chris Dunn at Premier Turf to wait on work on the fields until the commission meets this month. There hasn't been any work done to the infields of the ballfields as of July 13 when I was at the fields although the commission had an agreement with Chris on this maintenance work.

Fee Programs: The dog obedience class is so popular that there are two classes that meet on Monday evenings at Kent Common Park with nine students per class. Instructor Lee Sohl is very pleased with the response. Update: the Tang Soo Do martial arts class has been meeting as a collaborative program with Kent, Warren and Washington on Wednesday evenings at Warren Woods in Warren. I attended the first session and provided the COVID-19 informed consent document, which parents signed. The first classes were offered to the communities at no cost to try the program while students already enrolled finished the current session which was interrupted in March. The start of the new session was delayed one week to August 12 due to the tropical storm.

Regional Recreation Directors: We continue to stay in contact and some discussion has begun about fall and what programs may look like at that time. Update: the Cornwall

Director's Report July/August 2020

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rec director reports her town's selectmen and safety committee do not want her to do any sports or group activities. I have asked the other recreation directors what their plans are.

Senior Activities: The senior center remains closed. Update: Goodspeed Opera House has canceled its third show.

Summer Concert Series: There wasn't a quorum for the special meeting July 13 so this will be discussed at the July 20 meeting. I have provided the commission the opinion from Town Attorney as well as the sector guidance. I have contacted the Sharon

Rec director to find out how that town is handling its concerns with regards to social distancing. Update: special meeting scheduled August 13 to continue discussion. I have left it on the meeting agenda, as well, for follow-up.

Work: I participate in the now bi-weekly Town Hall staff meetings (we had been meeting weekly). I have submitted information to the first selectman for Town newsletter which she plans to send out every two weeks. This will be another avenue to disseminate information. Region One has been a series of Zoom meetings regarding reopening plans for school and I plan to attend the ones that might help shed some guidance on what the After-School Program might look like. I propose the commission discuss fall programs at its August meeting as we should have more substantive information at that time on school opening and sports. I continue to attend the Board of Selectmen meetings. I have been working in the office, as well. Update: Town Hall was closed August 5-6 due to power outage and no internet. Town Hall also was closed August 11 due to the primary.

Looking ahead ...

- Town Hall remains closed to the public and is working toward a September 1 reopening.

Parks Master Plan Update

Kent's Park and Recreation Commission recognizes a need to review the existing resources and focus of its Town parks – Kent Common and Emery Park – and, therefore, created a Parks Master Plan subcommittee.

The subcommittee created and advertised a formal request for proposal (RFP) for a Parks Master Plan that encompasses a study of both parks. The Commission reviewed several submissions and voted to accept a proposal from Studio Park Ave, an Illinois-based firm specializing in landscape architecture consulting services. In their proposal, the organization's senior landscape architect, who resides in Kent, observed that "the Master Plan must strive to preserve Kent's cultural and historical identity while providing new uses and updating existing amenities and infrastructure to meet the needs of an evolving community."

The plan's three phases include site analysis, public input, and project approach.

As part of this process, the Park and Recreation Commission created a statement of mission and purpose, as follows:

The mission and purpose of the Kent Park and Recreation Commission is to provide safe places for residents and visitors to enjoy the flora, fauna and community of Kent through passive and active outdoor recreation; to engage, enrich, and improve the daily lives of our citizens and visitors through a diverse mix of educational, leisure, athletic, and entertainment programming; and to realize our ongoing mission through balanced, thoughtful, equitable stewardship and planning by highly-committed volunteers.

The Commission's next step will be to work with Kent's Board of Selectmen to identify funding for implementation of the Parks Master Plan.

Aug. 1, 2020

Dear P&R Commission,

I am writing to you today to express my interest in joining the Kent Park and Recreation Commission.

My family moved to Kent about four years ago from Dutchess County NY where I had lived since 1994 and where my husband I were married in 1997. Since moving to Kent I have grown very fond of the town and community and am looking for ways to become more actively involved.

I have a BA in Communication with a minor in Business and an MA in Information Systems. For many years I was very active volunteering in my children's schools, sports, and other activities and in caring for both of my parents who were ill for many years. Now that my youngest is off to college in the fall, I find myself with extra time that I would like to put to good use. I am currently volunteering at the food bank in Kent on Friday's and find it very rewarding.

I use the park and recreation areas around Kent on a regular basis, especially the Commons as it is right in my backyard. I enjoy the outdoors. I run almost every day and enjoy walking and hiking with my dog on River Rd and the Appalachian Trail. I also enjoy biking and photography is a favorite hobby of mine. I believe that becoming involved with the P&R Commission in Kent would be a good fit for me. I would be interested in the one year term and possibly longer should there be a spot available in the future. Please let me know if you have any questions or there is anything else you'd like to know about me. Thank you for considering me for this spot.

Best Regards,
Diane Impastato

July 17, 2020

Dear Lesly,

Thank you for considering me for the Kent Park and Recreation Commission. I have been interested in becoming involved in our town for a while now, but was unsure of how to start. I was so grateful yesterday, when John asked if I would be interested. Yes, absolutely.

My parents (Jim and Maggie Stearns) moved to Kent from Fairfield, CT, back in 1992, so I have been around in one form or another since then. My husband, Toby, and I built our house on South Spectacle Lake in 2005. Our primary residence was New York City up until 2016, when Toby moved his work to London. We now both live here full time with our three boys, Jack (21), Jimmy (18), and Charlie (16). Jack attends University of St. Andrews in Scotland, Jimmy will attend Brown University in the fall, and Charlie attends Taft School in Watertown.

Except for a brief foray into the music industry, my career has been in schools. Over the years I have taught 3, 4, 5 and 6 y/o's. For sixteen years I worked at St. Hilda's & St. Hugh's School on the upper west side of Manhattan, first as a teacher, and eventually as the Director of Admission. Due to the various relocations of Toby's career, I haven't been working for a few years now.

We love the town of Kent and have a great deal of admiration for the people who work to keep it a happy, peaceful, and beautiful place to live and visit. Over the years my parents have had various levels of involvement with Kent School, Marvelwood, St. Andrews Church, and Kent Memorial Library, but especially enjoyed singing in the church choir and with the Kent Singers. My mother is currently on the board of the Kent Center School Scholarship Committee. I would love to begin doing my part for Kent.

Regarding which seat to fill, that's hard for me to say. Maybe you and I could talk about which would be best at this point. I am happy to help in whatever capacity makes most sense.

Again, thank you very much for considering me for the Kent Park and Recreation Commission and thank you to John for thinking of me.

Sincerely,
Kate Symonds

Safe and Sound Plan for Restarting the Annual Summer Concert Series

Prepared by: Kent Parks and Recreation Commissioners

Concert series could restart as soon as the week of August 24th if the Parks and Recreation Commission is able to:

- align on plan
- decide to move forward with hosting a concert series
- gain approval from the Board of Selectmen (BoS) at their Aug 18th meeting and,
- line up bands.

Prior to submitting our plan to BoS, the Parks and Recreation Commissioners will hold a *Special Meeting* to review the Plan and decide whether to restart the Concert Series. It is the expectation of the commission that Parks and Recreation Director, Lesly Ferris will participate in this meeting and share her notes on the Plan with the commission. *The date for said Special Meeting has not been scheduled. Lynn could you please spearhead scheduling?*

If the commission decides to move forward with hosting a concert series, we expect the concerts will run through the end of September. Dates are TBD.

To host a safe open-air Concert Series the Parks and Recreation Commission proposing the following *"Safe and Sound Plan"*:

Pre-Registration: participants will be asked to register ahead of time and sign a waiver at the time of registration. See Rules and Regulations, below.

Commented [1]: "Online pre-registration" ?

Designated "Sick Area": there will be a sick area with a pop-up tent, cooler with water bottles, portable seating, and will be supported by one (1) member of Kent Volunteer Fire Department

Social Distancing: outlined in the field where patrons will park their cars will be spaces for fifty (50) vehicles with 15' between each space. It will be expected that patrons can enjoy the music from inside or outside their vehicle so long as they stay within the limits of their assigned "box".

Bathrooms: there will be no bathroom facilities at the event

Volunteers: to realize this plan we will need the support of BoS, Kent Land Trust, Kent Lions Club, Park and Recreation Commissioners, State Police, Kent CERT, paid town employees, and Kent Volunteer Fire Department. Below are our specific volunteer needs:

- **REGISTRATION LOGISTICS 1-2 volunteers**
 - To set up digital registration form
 - Field questions
 - Print list of registered patrons for day of event check in
- **PRE WORK, 5-6 volunteers**
Kent Land Trust (4 ppl) and one (1) Parks & Recreation Commissioner (possibly Abigail Smith Hanby)

- job is to set up requirements outlining areas for handicapped to the left and right of the stage then proceed to mark spaces (using templates) for cars up to two rows, then same for trucks
- task will be performed 1 day before the event (weather permitting)
- Mark out containment area for potential sick people
- John Grant will share pre-made templates
- **who supplies the material for spraying?**
- **AT THE EVENT, ~13 volunteers**
Volunteers must be willing to stay through the end of the concert and will be expected to show-up 20 minutes ahead of time for situational training, led by CERT.
 - General Support
 - 2 traffic control
 - 2 at the crossover to check-in patrons
 - 2-3 to observe and support setting up "Sick Area"
 - Lions Club
 - P&R Commission
 - Specific Support
 - State Police (traffic control/being a "presence")
 - CERT (training volunteers)
 - 2-3 paid employees of the town
 - if person-to-person engagement is needed
 - will communicate to Lesly Ferris via text on whether the band should be asked to stop playing
 - fire dept volunteer (to support "Sick Area")

Role of P&R Director: Lesly Ferris will attend the concert to

- Introduce band
- Give a reminder of Kent P&R's Safe and Sound Plan
- Share that the commission adopted the original plan so that concert goers could better enjoy the event and feel safe.
- Remind participants that they signed a disclaimer
- If safety becomes an issue the band will be asked to stop playing.
- Lesly will be the point person for engaging with band
- There will be two warnings, and then the concert will end.

Rules and Regulations

Everyone who is attending the concert shares responsibility for the safety of others and of the event

- Register and sign disclaimer (will be signed when registering digitally, **I believe we are using google docs for this -- fellow commissioners please confirm**)
- The town takes no responsibility if people get sick (This language will be part of

Commented [2]: suggest deleting

Commented [3]: Google Forms:

Pros - Simple, Can collect a variety of information, Can explicitly state the waiver/attendee requirements and ask for digital signature/consent

Cons - Have to manually cap the number of registrations, does not provide a ticket/receipt of registration to the attendee

Eventbrite:

Pros - Free to use for free events, can cap the number of registration/tickets available, provides "ticket" for the attendees to bring to event

Cons - Not as customizable in regards to pre-event questions:

- Will not be able to collect details on vehicle type, number of passengers

- We can put the waiver language on the eventbrite registration, but will have to make it clear that by registering for the event the attendee is agreeing to the waiver language. It is not possible to add a digital signature or checkbox to confirm agreement of waiver.

Commented [4]: Yes, I think we settled on that unless Mike's research reveals a better/easier format

the waiver)

- Practice social distancing of 6' apart and wear a mask
- Encourage fellow concert goers to do the same
- Stay in the allocated sprayed box with your party and car; don't cross the field to visit with friends, walk the dog, etc.
- If you are moving between squares, social distancing and the wearing of a mask is required
- The band will stop playing if patrons are not adhering to the rules

Commented [5]: your?

July 30, 2020

The Kent Pumpkin Run committee is planning to hold a virtual race this year to celebrate the event's 45th anniversary. The way it works is that participants have three days Oct.23-25 to run five miles, time themselves and send in the results. We would tabulate the results and then issue awards.

I was wondering if Park and Rec would still want to be a sponsor even if it's at a lower financial level.

Stay Safe

Dave Dunleavy

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BY *D. Dunleavy*
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