

**RECEIVED**

*By Darlene Brady at 3:20 pm, Feb 25, 2021*

Kent Park and Recreation  
Minutes Feb. 22, 2021 Meeting

Present: Blythe Everett, Lynn Harrington, Diane Impastato, Julia Neff, Michael Perkins, Abigail Smith Hanby, Kate Symonds, director Lesly Ferris.

Public & Invited Guests: None present.

Chairman Lynn Harrington called the monthly meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. via Zoom.

The commission held a moment of silence in honor and remembrance of Town highway employee John Lindsay. Ms. Ferris remarked on the many things John did for Park and Recreation.

Elevation of Alternates: Ms. Smith Hanby made a motion to elevate alternates Diane Impastato and Julia Neff. Ms. Symonds seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

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

Acceptance of Minutes of January 25, 2021 monthly meeting: Ms. Smith Hanby clarified that her nay on the proposed budget increase is not tied to the director's performance. Mrs. Everett made a motion to approve the minutes as clarified. Mr. Perkins made a motion to second the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Correspondence: Ms. Ferris shared with the commission via email a letter of resignation from After-School Program co-leader Susan Vizzari. Mr. Perkins made a motion to accept the resignation of Susan Vizzari with regret. Ms. Neff seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. Ms. Ferris will send Mrs. Vizzari a note of thanks on behalf of the commission for her many, many years of service. The current staff is sufficient to run the program at this time, Ms. Ferris said.

Public and Invited Guests: There was no one present.

Director's Report: In addition to the written report provided prior to the meeting (attached), Ms. Ferris reported:

- Slamma-Jamma Basketball is interested in holding summer basketball camp in Kent. Ms. Ferris has contacted Kent Center School, and the gym would not be available this summer due to a construction project. There was discussion about indoor versus outdoor facilities to hold this camp, as well as the need for shade and a place to shelter in case of weather.
- Mr. Perkins asked about a tennis camp and asked to speak this week with the director about this program.

Old Business: After-School Program: age eligibility: Ms. Ferris reported on her conversation with the KCS principal regarding the question about Pre-K students to attending the ASP. Ms. Ferris reported the pre-K program has separate morning and afternoon sessions. There are about

5 students in one class and 7 in the other. They are 3 and 4-year olds. Mrs. Harrington agrees with Ms. Ferris that they are too young for the ASP. The consensus is to leave the topic on the agenda for continued discussion. Commissioners should send specific questions to the director.

Ms. Ferris said she thinks the present staff at ASP is adequate to run the current program. Ms. Ferris noted the creativity of the youngsters at “free” craft time, noting each child has their own craft bag with supplies.

Parks: projects, seasonal worker: Commissioner John Grant provided a job description for the proposed part-time season worker. Ms. Ferris reminded the commission that the person’s hours need to be a maximum of 25/week. The person would be entitled to benefits if they worked 30 or more hours/week. The director questioned if the commission should consider hiring a subcontractor to do the work. Ms. Neff said she is curious about what the other regional programs do. Ms. Ferris will touch base with her counterparts in Region One. Ms. Ferris shared that Mr. Grant suggested putting a plaque on the bench at Kent Common Park where John Lindsay liked to sit. Ms. Impastato wondered if there should be a subcommittee to raise money to fund the purchase of a nice tree with a garden around to plant at Kent Common Park. Ms. Smith Hanby suggested inviting the community to participate in such a project. Mrs. Harrington suggested the Lions Club and the fire department might want to join. Ms. Ferris will check with Town to ask what is being planned and let the commission know.

Parks’ Master Plan: Ms. Ferris reported on her research of Park and Recreation’s Five-Year Capital Plan. There is \$150,000 earmarked for repairs of the Emery Park swimming area floor that is unspent along with a small amount remaining from the tennis court project. The director reported that the Town treasurer said these funds could be reallocated for other Park and Rec capital projects and would need to be approved by the Board of Finance and a vote of the townspeople. The commission discussed several uses for these capital funds. Ms. Smith Hanby questioned how is Park and Recreation going to prioritize the list of needed maintenance items, adding she doesn’t feel there is any criteria to make any of these decisions. Ms. Smith Hanby explained the work of the playing field subcommittee and the separate distinctions the committee made for the two parks (Emery Park was envisioned as more passive while Kent Common would be an active recreation area). Ms. Ferris asked how a decision about the status of the swimming area would be made. The commission consensus is to come up with a list of pointed questions about swimming in Kent and send that out a survey to the community. Ms. Ferris will send out potential dates for a meeting to create these questions.

Sports Programs: Ms. Ferris reported on the two Zoom meetings about the regional, charter Little League team and when/if that could start this spring. The directors are speaking with their local officials and school principals. Ms. Smith Hanby said she personally feels any athletic program in the summer should be outside.

2020-21 Monthly Budget Report: No report was received.

2021-22 Budget Proposal: KCS Ballfield Maintenance: Ms. Ferris shared with the commission a memo about the proposed expenditure for the ballfields that she emailed the playing field subcommittee. The infield maintenance and the fertilization program would be the same cost in the new fiscal year that it is currently. There was some discussion about prioritizing field usage and who has oversight of the playground area. Ms. Neff made a motion to approve \$8,750.00 for the KCS Ballfield Maintenance Line contingent upon who has priority for field use. Mrs. Everett seconded the motion. Ms. Smith Hanby asked what benefit Park and Rec gets for managing the fields, saying she would like a better understanding of what the commission is managing. Mrs. Everett made a motion to void the prior motion about the ballfield funding. Ms. Neff seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Symonds said she feels the commission needs to approve the maintenance money and then could have some future conversations to clarify the oversight of the fields. Ms. Smith Hanby made a motion to approve an allocation of \$8,750.00 in the proposed 2021-22 budget draft, Kent Center School Playing Field maintenance line. Ms. Symonds seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. Ms. Ferris will provide an updated report on the ballfields.

Easter Event Update: Ms. Ferris provided a written update of the Easter subcommittee's meetings to date (attached). Ms. Impastato said the subcommittee members thought it would be a better idea to do a rock theme as a spring scene. She shared the prize basket that she put together which also would contain a gift certificate to a local business. Ms. Ferris said the event still needs a name, and she asked for direction on how many goody bags to create. Ms. Smith Hanby said she likes the contest as being more a spring thing. Ms. Neff agrees, saying she feels it opens more opportunity for creativity. One name suggestion was Kent Park and Rock Contest; another was Spring Parks and Rocks. Mrs. Harrington voiced support for keeping the event as an Easter Egg event in place of the traditional egg hunt. Ms. Smith Hanby said maybe the commission wants to make the event more inclusive in considering a change. The subcommittee will meet to finalize event details, including the contest name.

2021 Concert Series: Ms. Ferris sent the list of questions to be considered about the concert series following the January meeting (attached). Mr. Perkins offered to put the questions in a google doc and send out to the commission to populate their answers. The consensus is to continue the concert series discussion at the March meeting.

New Business: There was no discussion.

The next Park and Recreation Commission meeting is March 22, 2021 at 7 p.m. Mrs. Harrington made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:42 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**

### **February 2021**

#### *From the January 2021 meeting:*

- I sent Miranda Lovato a letter to inform her that the commission has appointed her to serve on the Playing Field Subcommittee.
- I made the revisions to the FY2021-22 budget draft and forwarded it to the town treasurer.
- I emailed the commission a list of questions that need to be considered about the summer concert series. This is on the agenda.
- I spoke with Kent Center School Principal Michelle Mott regarding allowing pre-K youngsters to attend the After-School Program. This program meets as a split session (morning class and afternoon class), There currently are five in one class and seven students in the other. Mrs. Mott has concerns about opening the program to pre-schoolers.

#### *From the director:*

**After-School Program:** I am attaching correspondence from Susan Vizzari, who has resigned her position at the program. Meanwhile, I have been working at the program with Lauren and Elle. The attendance numbers fluctuate between 4 and 7. We did, however, receive two new registrations (a brother and sister) who are registered to attend at least two days a week. The program youngsters made Valentines for Vets which I mailed to Newington VA Voluntary Services. We also celebrated the Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day with craft projects and treat bags to take home. The program this week meets only Thursday and Friday due to scheduled holiday and early dismissal for professional development day. I am attaching the monthly report.

**Budgets:** I do not have anything new to report.

**Five-Year Capital Plan:** Park and Recreation does have \$150,000 in Five-Year Capital Plan for repairs to the Emery Park pool floor plus the \$975.05 remaining in the tennis court project. This money could be reallocated for other capital projects and first would have to be approved by the Board of Finance and Town Meeting. Reminder please to let me know if you have suggestions for projects to include in the capital plan so we would be ready for the next budget season. Also, remember that projects take at least five years to be fully funded after the initial request.

**Parks:** I will draft a job description for the seasonal worker person that Park and Recreation requested in its budget draft. Some things to keep in mind: who is overseeing this worker; how are we prioritizing the work; the person cannot work more than 25/hours in a week; otherwise, the position would be considered full-time and would require health benefits. I did not specify in the budget draft the number of hours; just the hourly rate and \$7,000 total request. Also, where are we getting equipment from?

**Playing Field Subcommittee:** I emailed the subcommittee with the proposed rates for 2021-22 from New England Turf Management and Premier Turf. Both rates are the same as the current budget (minus the clay for the infields). I submitted a budget request of \$8,750 with a consensus from the subcommittee. The commission should vote on this for the record.

**Fee Programs:** We still are in a holding pattern until an indoor space opens or spring weather arrives.

**Easter Event:** the subcommittee has met three times to discuss ideas, narrow the list down to one idea and, at the same time, work out what the logistics would look like. The subcommittee will have a report at the meeting. I am attaching an overview of the subcommittee's work. Most importantly, the event needs a name so please be thinking about this.

**Regional Recreation Directors:** We continue to stay in contact through Zoom meetings, email and phone calls. We have a second meeting scheduled this week to discuss the regional Major League Baseball team that we first fielded last year. We did not make any decision about rec baseball programs yet.

**Summer Camps:** I do not have anything new to report. I continue to read the latest COVID-19 updates and the information that CRPA distributes.

I would like to include Johnny "the Mayor" Lindsay, 2-16-56 – 2-9-21, in my report. He was an advocate for the parks and a consistent source of help, especially when the seasons changed and equipment needed to be moved. I shall miss working with him and thank him for his support and care.

**Looking ahead ...**

- April 2<sup>nd</sup> is a holiday and Town Hall offices will be closed.

# Kent Park and Recreation

Lesly Ferris, Director  
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www.kentctparkandrecreation.com

To: Park and Recreation Commission

From: Lesly Ferris

Date: Jan. 27, 2021

Re: Concert Series

Per discussion at Monday's commission meeting, here are questions to consider for this year's concert series:

Does Park and Recreation wish to partner with the Kent Land Trust?

How would the partnership be structured?

Would we want to hold the series at Town Hall or Land Trust field?

Do we want to offer a summer or fall series?

Do we want Thursday evening or a Sunday afternoon or a different day/time?

Do we want to offer six concerts again?

Do we want to offer dates to the same bands as last year – each are excited to return.

Would we consider asking for sponsors?

Would we still offer \$500?

Please email me if you have other questions to add to the list. This will be an agenda item for the February meeting.

Susan Vizzari  
P. O. Box 643 / Kent, CT 06757  
(860) 488-0912

Kent Park & Rec Commission  
c/o Lesly Ferris

Feb. 02, 2021

To the Board,

It is with Heartfelt emotion that I feel I need to resign my position as Co-Director of the After School Program.

This Covid-19 virus has increasingly made me worried about contracting it at school and bringing it home to my Mother, who now lives with us.

I have loved working with Lesly and the rest of the staff over the last several years. The children have always brought me great joy!

Please accept my resignation. Thank you for your understanding.

Fondly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Susan Vizzari", is written over a horizontal line.

## Kent Park and Recreation

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### KCS Ballfield Maintenance Line 046-000

Turf Management	\$3,850.00
Ballfields' Infield Maintenance	\$4,900.00
Total request	\$8,750.00

Please note these are the same costs the Town paid in FY2020-21.



## **Park and Recreation Easter Subcommittee**

**Synopsis of the subcommittee's special meetings:**

**Idea: decorate a rock to look like an Easter Egg or spring scene, using any medium (paint, markers, stickers)**

**Age categories: 5 and under; 6 to 10; 11-15; 16 and up**

**Contest announced and submissions accepted on March 1**

**Submissions due by March 20**

**Voting open March 22-27 and closes March 27 at 7 p.m.**

**Submission would be emailed to a new email address created for this event**

**Voting also would take place via this email.**

**Winners announced March 29**

**The top vote getter in each age category would receive a prize basket that would include a gift certificate to a local merchant.**

**Each participant would receive a good bag (incentive to enter)**

**The event still needs a name!**

# 2020-2021 After-School Program

Week of	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	wk/mth total	2019-20	IGA bill	cost pp
9/7-9/11	H	ED	6	7	6	19			
9/14-9/18	7	7	7	8	6	35			
9/21-9/25	7	7	ED	6	5	25			
9/28-10/2	5	7	6	7	5	30			
Total	19	21	13	28	22	109	215	\$ 50.49	\$ 0.46
10/5-10/9	7	8	6	8	7	36			
10/12-10/16	H	6	7	9	4	26			
10/19-10/23	8	8	5	9	5	35			
10/26-10/30	7	8	ED	ED	8	23			
Total	22	30	18	26	24	120	184	\$ 36.77	\$ 0.31
11/2-11/6	8	6	9	8	9	40			
11/9-11/13	6	7	ED	9	7	29			
11/16-11/20	8	7	5	6	6	32			
11/23-11/27	6	6	NS	NS	NS	12			
Total	28	26	14	23	22	113	205	\$ 54.49	\$ 0.48
11/30-12/4	5	6	5	5	5	26			
12/7-12/11	4	4	ED	I	I	8			
12/14-12/18	I	I	I	I	I	0			
12/21-12/25	I	I	NS	NS	NS	0			
12/28-1/1	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	0			
Total	9	10	5	5	5	34	154	\$ 20.39	\$ 0.60
1/4-1/8	NS	7	5	7	4	23			
1/11-1/15	4	6	3	4	5	22			
1/18-1/22	H	6	ED	5	4	15			
1/25-1/29	7	WD	3	5	5	20			
Total	11	19	11	21	18	80	170	\$ 68.92	\$ 0.86
2/1-2/5	SD	RL	4	4	4	12			
2/8-2/12	5	SD	4	6	4	19			
2/15-2/19	NS	NS	ED	RL	RL	0			
2/22-2/26						0			
Total	5	0	8	10	8	31	173		
3/1-3/5						0			
3/8-3/12			ED			0			
3/15-3/19						0			
3/21-3/26			ED	ED		0			
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	102		
3/29-4/2					H	0			
4/5-4/9						0			
4/12-4/16	NS	NS	NS	NS	NS	0			
4/19-4/23						0			
4/26-4/30						0			
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
5/3-5/7				NS		0			
5/10-5/14			ED			0			
5/17-5/21						0			
5/24-5/28						0			
Total	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
5/31-6/4	H					0			
6/7-6/11						0			
Total		0	0	0		0	0	\$ 231.06	