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By Darlene Brady at 2:03 pm, Mar 29, 2021

Kent Park and Recreation
Special Meeting Minutes March 26, 2021

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

Public and Invited Guests: Benjamin Ferris, Donna Hayes, Ed Matson, Jean Speck.

Chairman Lynn Harrington said she has a family emergency and has to leave the meeting but hopes to be able to return.

Commissioner John Grant called the special meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. via Zoom.

Elevation of Alternates: Mrs. Everett made a motion to elevate alternates Diane Impastato and Julia Neff. Mr. Perkins seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Lauren Caramanica resignation letter: Mr. Perkins made a motion to accept Lauren Caramanica's resignation letter from the After-School Program (attached). Mrs. Everett seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion and Coverage for ASP, possible action: Mrs. Everett recommended Toni Presti to work at the program. Ms. Presti is available Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons. Mrs. Everett may have another person whom she is finding out if this person is interested in pursuing the job. Mrs. Speck said the Town treasurer would be setting up electronic time cards for the ASP. Mrs. Speck offered the assistance of her office to get snacks to the school for the program. Ms. Neff said she could be an alternate to fill-in. Mrs. Everett volunteered to reach out to the headmasters of the other two private schools to ask if any employees would be interested in the job, noting these candidates already would have background checks, experience working with children and have received their COVID vaccine. Mrs. Everett made a motion to hire Toni Presti as co-director of the After-School Program at \$19.50/hour. Mr. Perkins seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. Ms. Symonds volunteered to be an emergency back-up after April 13.

Ms. Harrington joined the meeting at 7:14 p.m.

Discussion of hiring process and moving forward regarding new Park and Rec director: Selectman Ed Matson noted there was a special Board of Selectmen meeting earlier today that included discussion of the Park and Rec director's position. Mr. Matson asked the commission if the Towns need a full-time director and do we need an interim director? First Selectman Jean Speck noted the director and Mrs. Harrington noted a lot of duties that still need to move forward during the process time of hiring a new director. An interim director could work on a part-time, hourly basis. Upcoming programs include the ASP, summer baseball, summer concerts. Ms. Speck added that the Selectmen created a five-person subcommittee that would include three Park and Recreation Commissioners. The Board of Selectmen still needs to have a more specific charge for this subcommittee. There would need to be a job description for an interim person. There was discussion about the role of a new director. Ms. Ferris noted the current job

description was updated by the commission but not adopted by the selectmen. Ms. Smith Hanby suggested the selectmen might want to aggregate a list of questions for the commission to answer which would be beneficial for defining the new director's role. Mrs. Everett voiced support for hiring an interim director. Mr. Matson said he agrees and offered to help with any park maintenance at no charge. Ms. Ferris said an emergency contact person also needs to be designated. There was consensus to hire an interim Park and Recreation coordinator. Ms. Smith Hanby made a motion to create a position for Interim Parks and Rec Spring-Summer Coordinator. Mr. Grant seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. The search committee also could serve as search committee for the interim director. This search committee would make a recommendation to the selectmen, the hiring body. Ms. Smith Hanby asked what the process would be to decide who from the commission would serve on the search committee. Mrs. Harrington and Mr. Grant expressed interest in serving. Park and Rec also will work on identifying a member at large. Ms. Ferris volunteered to contact the regional recreation directors with whom she works closely to ask if one of them would be interested in serving on the search committee. The commission agreed to meet April 1 at 7 p.m. Ms. Ferris said she could work on the agenda with Mrs. Harrington and set-up the Zoom meeting. She is not available to take minutes. Agenda items would include:

- Search committee appointments
- Interim director job description
- Update on ASP staffing
- Discuss member at large to serve on search committee
- Discuss specific tasks the commission can take on

Mrs. Everett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 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.

Lauren Caramanica

Mar 23, 2021, 6:52 PM (19
hours ago)

to Kent

Dear Lesly,

I am sending you my two weeks notice from the after school program. Thank you for such an amazing opportunity. Such a fantastic program. I will miss the kids so much (and of course you). Please accept this letter of resignation. I am moving forward with my relocation otherwise I would stay forever. Thanks so much! Lauren Caramanica