

Kent Park and Recreation Commission  
Minutes, Monthly Meeting  
June 12, 2017

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KENT TOWN CLERK  
2017 JUN 14 P 2:34  
BY *Donna Dracy*  
TOWN CLERK

Members Present: Jerry Decker, John Grant, Lynn Harrington, Jim Mauri, Glen Nielsen, Jesse Randall, director Lesly Ferris.

Public and Invited Guests: None.

Park and Recreation Commission chairman Jerry Decker called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Alternates: Mrs. Rundall made a motion to elevate alternates John Grant and Jim Mauri. Mrs. Harrington seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda: Mr. Grant made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Mr. Nielsen seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Minutes: Mr. Grant noted the minutes of the May 15, 2017 meeting should read the Emery Park Open House is from 4-6 p.m. Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve the minutes as corrected. Mr. Mauri seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Correspondence: Mrs. Ferris said the commission received a letter of approval from the Inland Wetland Commission regarding its application for cleaning of the Emery Park swimming area.

Public and Invited Guests: There was no one present.

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

- She visited Tang Soo Do class this evening where it is grading night, including four students who are testing to go to pre-testing for their black belts.
- The regional senior luncheon was attended by some 75 people, including several from Kent. It was a nice afternoon.
- The Camp Kent youngsters will visit South Kent School's "farm" July 14 in the morning.
- The office will be closed June 15, reopening the afternoon of June 23.

Old Business: After-School Program: Mrs. Ferris said the program's last day is Thursday, and parties are planned Wednesday and Thursday. She will have a final financial report and total participation numbers at the July meeting. The director stated she is very pleased with the program this school year, and attendance overall has been on par with the prior school year.

Parks: Emery Park trail work; stone for path: Park and Recreation needs to provide the Inland Wetland Commission a map for the application to put processed stone on the path at Emery Park. Mrs. Ferris met with surveyor Gary Hock this afternoon, and he will be working on this. The map likely would not be ready until the July meeting.

Emery Park tree/brush clearing: Mr. Grant said the brush clearing project is about 70% complete and he expects to have it finished in time for the open house. He recommended purchasing from Mike VanValkenburg new guard rail sections (the ones at the Kent Welcome Center) at a cost of \$70/section to replace the split rail fence at Emery Park. Mrs. Harrington made a motion to approve expenditure of guard rails at \$70/section from Mike VanValkenburg for Emery Park parking lot. Mrs. Rundall seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Grant said he has been working with the Town crew on some playground maintenance issues. Mrs. Ferris reported beach sand will be delivered this week, and safety fabric for the playgrounds will be installed the following week.

2016-17 Budget: There was no new report.

Five-Year Capital Plan: There was no new report.

Emery Park Swimming Area: Open House follow-up: Mrs. Ferris has sent out a flyer and press release to the media. Mr. Grant said Bartlett Tree will be handing out tree saplings at the open house. Mrs. Ferris said she would be at the event and welcomes help from commissioners.

Sports Programs follow-up: Mrs. Ferris reported the region's towns are working cooperatively on summer colonial baseball team and summer little league team for players who would be age eligible to play little league next year. Mr. Decker noted Field C needs a need pitching rubber. Mrs. Ferris will speak with the first selectman about this.

Summer Concert Series Update: Mrs. Ferris reported the Chamber of Commerce is interested in holding the concerts at the new welcome center. Due to time constraints, Mrs. Ferris sent a memo to the Board of Selectmen, requesting use of the welcome center for the summer concerts. The board June 6 voted to deny Park and Recreation's requested use of that site due to concerns about the impact of people on the new lawn which is just coming in. Mrs. Ferris that evening following the meeting called chamber president Tim Good to let him know the Selectmen's ruling and he was going to inform his board. Mrs. Ferris reported the chamber's interest in the welcome center is visibility to Main Street, use of bathroom facility, intimacy for the concert goers. The site would involve use of adjoining property owners' property for which the commission would have needed written permission and would have supplied insurance waivers, Mrs. Ferris said, adding that she had spoken with CIRMA, the town's insurance carrier. The commission recommended creating a survey to give to those who come to the concerts this summer to gather feedback about the site, bands, dates, times, etc. Mrs. Ferris will create a draft survey to send to the commission.

2017-18 Budget: There was no new report.

KCS PTO Halloween Event at Emery Park: The PTO has agreed not to offer hay rides at the Halloween Event at Emery Park. Mrs. Ferris will email the PTO president to remind her about the need for an insurance certificate and ask the PTO to include Park and Recreation in its publicity for the event.

Irish Dance Class: There was some interest in a class in Kent this summer but that interest has changed. Mrs. Ferris had no other new information to report.

New Business: After-School Program 2017-18 Staff: Mrs. Ferris recommended the hiring of Megan Leach as counselor/substitute After-School Program director for the 2017-18 school year. Mrs. Harrington made a motion to hire Megan Leach as counselor/substitute After-School Program director for the 2017-18 school year, effective Aug. 26, 2017, at an hourly rate of \$14. Mr. Grant seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Emery Park Lifeguard staff recommendation: Mrs. Ferris said she hoped to have a recommendation for a lifeguard hire but does not at this time. There is an opening for one guard for this summer.

Mr. Grant made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lesly Ferris".

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**

### **June 2017**

From the May 2017 meeting:

- I have contacted Heather Strid and confirmed that she and Tobias will play at the Emery Park open house and at the summer concert series.
- I have updated the literature for the After-School Program and Camp Kent to reflect the new policy that Kent Park and Recreation does not participate in the Care4Kids program.
- I provided Susan Vizzari a contract as After-School Program director for the 2017-18 school year which she has signed and returned to me.
- I created a flyer for the June 30 Emery Park Open House and have begun to distribute it and advertise the event.
- Fall travel soccer registration has been sent out and is posted on the website.
- I mailed contracts to lifeguards Sadie Grusauski and Clelia Tufts. Sadie has signed and returned her contract, and Clelia has let me know earlier this week that she has accepted a job elsewhere. I do have another application for the commission's consideration and have placed this on the agenda.
- I learned from Dave Dunleavy that the chamber has agreed to fund the summer concert series and would like them to be held at the new Kent Welcome Center. I met with Chamber president Tim Good to get the information about this proposal so I can share it with you at the meeting. I also have scheduled a site visit at the center so the commission can see the space being proposed. I also spoke with CIRMA about insurance requirements because one aspect of the proposal involving using privately-owned properties that abut the town's parcel.
- I sent contracts to Sadie Grusauski and Clelia Tufts. I have received Sadie's signed contract; Clelia, however, emailed to let me know she has accepted a job closer to her home.

From the director:

**After-School Program:** The May invoices have gone out and include another reminder that June 15 is the last day the program will meet for the current school year. The program resumes August 28, the first day of the new school year. I have asked families to pay balances due by June 29 to coincide with the close of the fiscal year. I send hand-written thank you notes to the Kent School student volunteers who spent time at the program throughout the year. This was a helpful, polite and engaging group of young people who bonded and worked well with our youngsters. Megan Leach is interested in returning to work at the After-School Program next year. She would be available to act as the director in Tanta Sue's absence and would be a counselor at other times. I have put this on the agenda.

**Seniors:** The Friday senior lunches ended May 26 for this school year. The regional senior luncheon is June 9 at The Grove in Lakeville. The trip to the Carousel Museum in Bristol was very fascinating. Our tour guide explained how the carousel horses (and other animals) are constructed, and the museum has pieces that date back to the late 1890s. The tour ended with a ride on the museum's carousel. The June trip is next week to Silverman's Farm in Easton. I have not heard yet about the status of the funding for these trips after June 30.



**Budget:** The voters approved the 2017-18 budget May 17. I anticipate spending most of the budget in the current fiscal year and will be ordering beach sand and the stone for the pathway at Emery Park.

**Parks:** The Wetlands application for the cleaning of the pool was approved. We need to provide a detailed map (with elevations) for the area where we propose placing the rock on the path. I have contracted surveyor Gary Hock about doing this work.

**Fee Programs:** There are 12 people enrolled in the Qigong class that held its third session this week. The participants appear very pleased with the class, and the space is working very well. Dog obedience class began this week. The Irish Dance class program is on the agenda because the program instructor has let me know she has a group of young people interested in taking her class this summer.

**Regional Recreation Directors:** We continue to work on the regional senior luncheon which is June 9 in Lakeville. We are working on the buffet menu with Hotchkiss School. We will be meeting next week to discuss summer programs, end of baseball season and fall soccer.

**Camp Kent:** In-person registration took place May 17. There were some families who came that evening to register and others who called, emailed or stopped by the office in the days following. Each week of camp is at least half full with some weeks busier. I met with the camp staff May 24. I asked them each to share their thoughts about what they most look forward to at the start of camp, what they would like to change about themselves this year at camp, what they like least about camp. We then shared what we each said and agreed to revisit them at the end of the summer. This exercise confirmed for me that the staff is in sync with the campers being the most important part of their jobs and that the end of summer is the least favorite thing for most.

I met with Allie Gennings at South Kent's School Center for Innovation (the "Farm") at the site of the former Arno farm on South Kent Road. We discussed options for Camp Kent youngsters to visit the farm this summer, activities the youngsters could do (milking cow, goat yoga, collecting eggs, observing bees, planting of herbs/flowers). I have contacted All Star Transportation and learned the cost of the bus for transportation to and from camp to the farm (\$70/hour with a two hour minimum) which I think would be affordable. I now am working with Allie to identify a date or two this summer that we could visit. This should be another fun and new aspect for camp.

**Lifeguards:** I met with the lifeguard staff May 31. We reviewed policies, procedures, hours, park pass sales. The guards are working on the schedule and are targeting June 18-19 as opening day. We have opening for one more full-time guard. I have put this item on the agenda in hopes I may have a recommendation in time for the meeting.

Looking ahead ...

- I will be out of the office June 15-22, returning the afternoon of the 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- Camp Kent opens June 26.
- Emery Park open house is June 30, 5-6 p.m.

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