

Kent Park and Recreation Commission  
Minutes, Monthly Meeting  
March 20, 2017

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2017 MAR 23 A 11:37  
BY *D. Bailey*  
TOWN CLERK

Present: Jerry Decker, John Grant, James Mauri, Glen Nielsen, director Lesly Ferris.

Public and Invited Guests: Katie Nordland

Chairman Jerry Decker called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Alternates: Mr. Nielsen made a motion to elevate alternates John Grant and James Mauri. Mr. Decker seconded the motion, and the motion was approved.

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

Minutes: Mr. Grant made a motion to approve the minutes of the Feb. 27, 2107 monthly meeting. Mr. Nielsen seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Correspondence: Mrs. Ferris shared an email from Christopher Kiely regarding a proposal to offer a Qigong Class through Kent Park and Recreation (attached). Mr. Decker suggested advertising the class to gauge interest in the community. Mr. Grant made a motion to accept Chris Kiely's proposal for a Qigong Class as proposed, subject to favorable reference check. Mr. Nielsen seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Public and Invited Guests: Katie Nordland, one of the coaches of the Northwest Rec League 5/6 basketball team, thanked the commission for putting forth this team, saying it was a great experience for the players. The team did very well for its first year in the league, she added, saying she hopes this travel program will grow to include a girls' team and 7/8 boys' team. The commission discussed recognition for the team. Mr. Decker said team members got second place tournament trophies. Mrs. Ferris said the first selectman plans to congratulate the team in the Town monthly newsletter. Mr. Mauri suggested having the first selectman invite the team to his office to congratulate them and take a photo.

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

- The annual Easter Egg Hunt is April 8 with inclement weather date of April 15.
- Weekend ice skating at South Kent School ends March 26. Participation at the program has been very good.
- Lifeguard contracts are due April 1. The director has received inquiries about openings for lifeguards.
- Park and Recreation has received one application for volunteer camp counselor and two other inquiries.
- Walking Day will be observed April 5 at 10 a.m. at Kent Common Park. The event will include participation by the New Milford VNA and Marvelwood School students. Mrs. Ferris hopes this will become a weekly walk and that Kent Center School students will join the walk some weeks before the end of the school year.

- Mrs. Ferris shared with the commission the October festival for the “Gilmore Girls.” She will plan to schedule any soccer games that day out of town.
- Mrs. Ferris reported Mr. Decker has spoken with the Amenia basketball coach and Sharon Rec Director Matt Andrulis Mette about the possibility of flag football program for the fall. Mr. Decker noted NFL 60 pays for equipment, and only the flags have to be returned. Mrs. Ferris said she would discuss this with the other rec directors at their April meeting.

Old Business: After-School Program: Mrs. Ferris reported the program met only two days last week due to weather and a scheduled professional development day when there was no school. Mrs. Ferris said she has a meeting scheduled Thursday with a representative from the Office of Early Childhood to inspect the After-School Program because it receives Care4Kids funding. Mrs. Ferris will let the commission know the results of the visit. She suggested compliance issues may cost more than the reimbursement received from Care4Kids.

Parks: Emery Park rail work; stone for path: Mrs. Ferris let Mr. Grant know that Park and Recreation would need an Inland Wetlands permit to put stone or other materials on the pathway on the other side of the stream that leads to the field at Emery Park because it falls within the regulated area. Mrs. Ferris recommended getting a permit to enable the commission to install the stone and to take care of maintenance work in the park near the stream. Mr. Grant noted there is an abundance of invasive species that should be addressed. Mrs. Ferris said she believes the permit would be good for several years.

Emery Park tree/brush clearing: Mr. Grant said the spreading of the wood chips has been postponed until the snow melts. He has spoken with the private schools. Mrs. Ferris noted she sent a letter to the boy scouts regarding the volunteer work and sleep-over at Emery Park. Mr. Grant questioned if the upper field at Emery Park could be rented. Mrs. Ferris said residents sometime use the park for birthday parties or family gatherings and purchase a park pass. She added she has not received a request for rental of the field. The commission agrees this would be considered on a case-by-case situation.

20116-17 Budget: Mrs. Ferris said there is no new report.

Five-Year Capital Plan: Mrs. Ferris reported the cost of the second playground proposal is approximately the same as the price received already or about \$110,000. The selectmen have divided the capital request for the Kent Common Park playground over two years so it would be six years before the funds potentially would be available.

Emery Park Swimming Area: open house follow-up: The commission continued discussion about a possible open house at Emery Park to showcase the recent work at the park. One suggestion is to have an unveiling via photographs on Facebook to create interest. Another idea is to have music as well as a cook out. Mrs. Ferris suggested hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, water and fruit and/or cookies. The commission discussed potential dates: June 18, June 24 or 25 and June 30. This would be a two-hour event and include a discounted price on purchase of a seasonal park pass that day. Mrs. Ferris will put this topic on the April meeting agenda for continued discussion.

Sports Programs follow-up: Mrs. Ferris said she is working on finalizing baseball registrations. The weather has impacted the start of the spring baseball programs. Try-outs for the “Major” Little League program would be the last week in March or the first week in April, weather permitting. There is a baseball league meeting March 28 at 6 p.m. in Lakeville. Mr. Decker noted the need for new home plates for playing fields B and C.

Summer Concert Series: Mrs. Ferris said the Board of Selectmen did not have a regular monthly meeting in March so the proposed dates have not been voted on yet. She noted that three of last year’s four bands are interested in returning. The commission discussed purchase of signs (posters) to put in the merchants’ windows in town to promote the concert series in addition to the lawn signs. Mr. Grant said he likes the Kathy Thompson Band out of those new bands who requested to play in the series.

2017-18 Budget: Mrs. Ferris reported the Selectmen continue to work on the budget draft. There was some discussion about health insurance benefits, but no action was taken to date.

New Business: Director PTO: Mrs. Ferris requested March 22, 2017 and April 10-13, 2017 as paid time off days. Mr. Grant made a motion to grant Mrs. Ferris PTO days March 22 and April 10-13, 2017. Mr. Nielsen seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

The next Park and Recreation Commission meeting is April 17, 2017 at 7 p.m. Mr. Grant made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 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.*

**Hello Leslie,**

**Well I've had an extremely busy past couple of weeks and had wanted to get this out to you sooner so we could address any potential questions before you met with your board tomorrow. But unfortunately this is the best I could do. Of course you could give me a call tomorrow if you have any questions.**

**Here's a basic blurb for the class:**

### **Qigong Class**

**Qigong is a classical method of self-healing rooted in the longevity traditions of old China. Combining gentle physical movement with calm meditative focus, qigong utilizes the principles of Chinese Medicine to bring a whole new dimension to the concept of "exercise." This class aims to provide an ample introduction to this rich and many-layered practice. Using the classical forms of the Eight-Piece Brocade, the Five Animal Frolics and some of the more basic movements of Tai Chi Chuan, this class aims to provide an ample introduction to this rich and many-layered practice. No experience is necessary. All are welcome.**

**9 classes for \$130. Pre-registration is required. Class will begin when registration is complete.**

**The instructor Christopher Kiely just recently moved to Kent from central Vermont where he has been practicing Chinese Medicine and running a Tai Chi Chuan school for the past 15 years.**

**I am looking to start up the class as soon as possible, but would need to get a minimum number of registrants first. I would say 9 people would be the minimum to start with. Class would be 1.5 hours long and the price I would suggest is \$130 for 9 classes. Wednesdays are probably the best days for me. Class could be either in the morning (9:00-10:30) or evening (6:00-7:30). I would be willing to build a roster for multiple classes if there was interest. Mostly I am interested in gauging interest and responding accordingly. In addition to whatever interest**

**your mailings and announcements generate I will be plying it around town myself as well.**

**Hopefully this is clear enough and you can get a pretty good idea of what I am offering. If you have any questions please feel free to give me a call. I will be on the road tomorrow morning driving back from Vermont so if you don't get me just leave a message and I'll call you back.**

**Thank you so much!**

**yours,  
Chris Kiely**

## **Park and Recreation Director's Report**

March 2017

From the February 2017 meeting:

- I emailed Randy O'Rourke the revised document regarding the scouts volunteering and camping out at Emery Park.
- I notified Jim Mauri of the commission's action to appoint him as an alternate on the commission. I also notified the Town Clerk of the filling of this vacancy.
- I have sent a memo to the Board of Selectmen on behalf of the commission, requesting permission to use Kent Town Hall lawn for the summer concert series. The selectmen have not met yet this month.
- I spoke and met again with the Kent Center School Principal regarding the additional early dismissal days in the 2017-18 school calendar and the question of child care on those days. The school has not budgeted funds for any of its staff members to oversee after-school child care. Our After-School Program director and I have not received any questions from parents or requests for care on those days.
- I sent the commission links for the various bands that have expressed interest in the summer concert series.

From the director:

**After-School Program:** The attendance continues to be consistent. We have several youngsters who are in next month's school play who come to the program after play rehearsal one or two days a week. The youngsters have been getting outside a bit more, and homework continues to be a priority. The youngsters are creating shamrock cards for St. Patrick's Day for the senior center luncheon and for those residents who receive meals on wheels. The program will not meet March 17, when school is closed, and March 29, an early dismissal day.

**Seniors:** This month's outing is to Woodbury Pewter Outlet Factory in Woodbury. The Friday Senior lunches resume March 31. There is a St. Patrick's Day luncheon on March 15. I am working with Kent Center School on scheduling additional student visits to the senior center and having students come to walk with residents on Wednesdays, starting in April.

**Budget:** The Board of Selectmen is expected to meet next week to work on the budget draft. I will update you as this develops.

**Parks:** I received an estimated final price on the other playground proposal yet. It is approximately the same total cost as the other proposal we received. The cost could be lowered if the Town supplies a dumpster or does the site work. The funding for the project has been split over two years and is now at least six years away. The contractor for the trail maintenance work has contacted the land use administrator to determine if an Inland Wetlands permit would be needed before doing the work on the trail. I did learn that Park and Recreation would need a permit to place any type of material on the pathway that is on the other side of the stream because it falls within the regulated area. I have put this on the agenda for discussion. Reminder – the commission will continue discussion of the proposed open house at Emery Park, including a date for the event.



**Fee Programs:** Figure Skating classes are finished for the winter season. Both sessions were well received this year. I did work with the other regional recreation directors who shared the registration flyer with their residents and this brought in several participants. Tang Soo Do class continues to meet Monday evenings. I received a phone call from a new Kent resident who was interested in learning if Tai Chi has been offered in Kent. I explained to him the structure of our fee program classes and the process to propose a program to the commission. He indicated that he probably would do something on his own and appreciated having the information.

**Basketball:** The NW Rec league team will be playing Saturday at 9 a.m. at Hotchkiss School gym (far court) in the league semi-finals. The finals are Sunday, also at 9 a.m. The team finished the regular season in third place which is a great accomplishment for the first year in the league. I anticipate we would be able to field a team again next year, and we also would offer a girls' team if there is interest in one.

**Regional Recreation Directors:** We met March 1 in Falls Village and discussed basketball, summer programs, regional senior luncheon, budgets.

**Spring Baseball:** I have sent out a reminder that the registration deadline is March 10. I have received only a few registrations to date. I am working with the Cornwall and Sharon rec directors on a co-op Little League "Majors" team (the try-out team). The instructional programs will begin after the April vacation.

**Summer Camp Programs:** I have posted information on the Park and Recreation website regarding summer camp programs as the information becomes available. Some of the programs are regional and come from other town rec departments. I have posted the Slamma-Jamma basketball camp information. I have sent a request to the Kent Community Fund for scholarship assistance for summer program costs, including the summer science camp for which they donated \$500 last year to help offset bus transportation costs. This summer the program will meet for four weeks, one week in each of the four towns that have summer camp programs. Kent will host one week at Emery Park. The youngsters again will pay any cost of the program, and bus transportation will be included. Our six Mondays at Club Getaway for the Camp Kent youngsters are confirmed. The cost remains \$10/camper. Club Getaway has some new offerings this summer which I have shared with the camp staff. Registration for Camp Kent opens May 17.

Looking ahead ...

- I will be out of the office March 17.

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BY *J. Bracey*  
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