

Kent Park and Recreation Commission
Minutes, Monthly Meeting
May 16, 2016

Present: Jerry Decker, Dave Dunleavy, John Grant, Mike Green, Lynn Harrington, Glen Nielsen, Jessie Rundall, Lesly Ferris, director.

Public and Invited Guests: Karen Casey.

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

Elevation of Alternates: Mrs. Harrington made a motion to elevate alternate John Grant. Mrs. Rundall seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Acceptance of Agenda: Mr. Green made a motion to accept the agenda. Mr. Nielsen seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Acceptance of Minutes: Mr. Green made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 21, 2015 and April 18, 2016 monthly meetings. Mr. Nielsen seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Correspondence: Mrs. Ferris noted Kent resident Matt Starr emailed his concern about the rock/dirt pile that is stock piled at Kent Common Park.

Public and Invited Guests: Karen Casey, who identified herself as a grandparent of a baseball player in Park and Recreation's kindergarten program, voiced concerns about the disorganization of the sports programs, the number of families going out of town for sports programs and lack of leadership, saying she hopes the commission can turn around the programs.

Director's Report: In addition to the written report sent to the commission prior to the meeting (attached), Mrs. Ferris noted Camp Kent registration opens May 18, 7-8 p.m. in the office. New programs this year at camp are Club Getaway days six times and opportunity to attend Summer Science Camp at the high school for an additional \$10/week. The Kent Community Fund has granted \$2,500 to Park and Recreation for bus transportation to the science camp (\$500) and summer camp scholarships (\$2,000). Dog obedience class begins May 26, and Tang Soo Do class participated in a grading session May 15. CRPA is offering opportunity to register for the annual conference at the 2015 price if paid before July 1. Mrs. Ferris said she is organizing the staff books for camp and lifeguards and has updated the protocol for lightning. This month's senior outing is May 17 to Wesleyan Potters and the seniors participated in this month's Senior Supper program at New Milford Hospital.

Old Business: After-School Program: Mrs. Ferris said the program will conclude June 9 for the current school year. She has sent notices to the program families of this date and will be sending them information about the payment due date for this school year in the May bills. Mrs. Ferris noted there was a fire department call on Elizabeth Street May 16 which resulted in the road being closed for a period of time. The director went to the scene to inquire if families of the

youngsters at the After-School Program would be able to access the school at about the same time the fire department reopened one lane of the roadway. This prompted a discussion about how/when the new access road alongside Kent Greenhouse would be put into use in the event of a longer duration incident on Elizabeth Street. Mrs. Ferris will contact the fire chief to have this discussion.

Parks: Mrs. Ferris reported the pool cleaning work is ongoing. There is additional work to clear the sludge and muck from the bottom of the pool. She is waiting for date confirmation for the tree cutting/trimming work at Emery Park. The brush trimming work is underway in the park. The playgrounds and pool slide were power washed May 8 at a cost of \$350.

2015-16/2016-17 Budgets: Mrs. Ferris noted the town budget vote is May 20 at 7 p.m. at Town Hall. The director reported there was only one question asked at the budget hearing and that was about the school budget plan.

Five-Year Capital Plan: There was no report.

Emery Park Swimming Area: public input: The commission reiterated its plan to gather input from the public over the summer and hold a public forum in the fall. The commissioners agree it would be good to have a ballpark figure to present to the public for a new pool. Mr. Decker will contact Matt Hannan again and Mrs. Ferris will speak with Harwinton Swim Pool Company which is cleaning the pool. Mrs. Ferris suggested setting a fall date at the next meeting.

Summer Employees: Mrs. Ferris reported there are interviews for summer camp counselor May 18 at 5:30 p.m. at Town Hall. The commission received seven applications. Mrs. Ferris asked to schedule a special commission meeting to discuss and hire an applicant. The commission agreed to schedule a special meeting May 23 at 5:30 p.m.

Summer Concerts: Mrs. Ferris showed the commissioners the signs for the concerts. The commission agreed to take signs at the June monthly meeting and put them out around town. Mrs. Harrington asked that the dates and bands be put on the Park and Recreation Facebook Page. Mrs. Ferris noted the Golden Falcon lot was offered as a possible site for the concerts, expressing concerns about parking and noise for merchants and people living in that area. Mrs. Ferris will confirm if the Community House would be available as a rainy-day site.

New Business: ASP director 2016-17: Mrs. Ferris reported director Susan Vizarri is interested in returning to the program next year. Mrs. Harrington made a motion to hire Susan Vizarri as After-School Program director for the 2016-17 school year, from August 29 to June 9, following the Kent Center School calendar, including days for preparation and snow days, at an hourly salary of \$16.30. Mrs. Rundall seconded the motion, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Summer Tennis Program: Mrs. Ferris asked the commission's feeling about using high school and/or college-age instructors who are experienced in tennis. The consensus is to bring a proposal to the commission for its consideration.

Mr. Green made a motion to add sports programs to the agenda. Mr. Dunleavy seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Sports Programs: The commission discussed the sports programs, coaches, identifying coaches and a need to bolster these programs. The commission asked the director for better communication, especially on status of coaches, even at the last minute. The commission agreed to offer a coach the coach program at the start of each season to engage volunteer parent coaches and to give them skills to run a practice. Mr. Green volunteered to help organize this for baseball. Mr. Decker and Mrs. Ferris have possible contacts to run a clinic for fall soccer coaches that would take place in late August. The commission agrees it wants to see sports programs better organized in terms of coaches and expressed a willingness to help with this. Mrs. Rundall volunteered to go to the Friday night kindergarten baseball practice. The commission asked to keep this item on the agenda. Mr. Decker said he would call Mrs. Casey to follow-up.

The next Park and Recreation Commission meeting is June 13, 2016 at 7 p.m. Mrs. Harrington 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.

Lesly Ferris, Director
Kent Park and Recreation

*Director's Report
May 2016*

From the April monthly meeting:

- There wasn't a meeting because of lack of a quorum.

From the director:

After-School Program: The April attendance exceeded the prior year's monthly total by 18. One of the two families for whom I suspended use of the program because of non-payment has paid their balance due in full. I have not heard from the other family. The program will not meet May 30 when Kent Center School is closed for Memorial Day. The last day of the program for the current school year is June 9. I have discussed this with the staff, notified the school and included a notice in the April bills that went out this week to participants. I kept ASP director 2016-17 on the agenda. Director Sue Vizzari is interested in returning next school year. The program resumes Aug. 31 for the 2016-17 school year.

Seniors: The May trip is to Wesleyan Potters in Middletown for a tour. I received positive feedback from the exercise program that is taking place Thursday mornings at the senior center. A diabetes education program began Monday at no cost to participants or the town. The Friday Senior Lunch appreciation BBQ is May 13 and the last Friday Senior Lunch of the school year is May 27. I have 10 signed up for the New Milford Hospital Senior Supper program this month.

Budget: The budget hearing was May 1. It was uneventful with only question from the public about the proposed education budget. The budget vote is May 15.

Parks: The pool cleaning work started last week. I anticipate the tree work at Emery Park in the near future. Sean McAvoy has been doing the clearing of brush behind the building at Emery. The port-o-lets are in place at the playing fields at Kent Center School and at Kent Common Park. I contacted a power washing company to clean the playgrounds at the two parks.

Fee Programs: The new session of Tang Soo Do class began, and dog obedience class is being advertised for a start May 26.

Regional Recreation directors: We met May 3 in Sharon. The tri-town Major Little League team is practicing two to three times a week and playing games twice a week. The team is working hard and players reportedly are very supportive of each other, especially the support for the younger players. We finalized the details of the June 3 regional senior luncheon. We are working cooperatively on summer camp programs, all of which are open to youngsters in the region.

Camp Kent: I met with camp director Kevin Kalach April 20. We confirmed the dates for summer camp, chose the weekly themes, confirmed the dates we will spend at Club Getaway and set date for interviews for summer camp counselor. I contacted the applicants for camp counselor in writing with the interview date and their respective interview time and have asked each to confirm their attendance. John Grant has expressed his interest in participating in the interviews. I have asked Kevin and camp counselor Megan Leach to participate, as well. We have a design for a camp T-shirt for campers to wear when we visit Club Getaway.

Baseball: The minor Little League and farm teams have started games and both programs are going well. We identified several parents to help with coaching of the farm team. Instructional programs for kindergarten and first grade also are meeting. The rainy weather has impacted the practice schedule but hopefully the weather will improve going forward with the season.

Summer Concert Series: The signs are made, and I hope to pick them up this week. There are 10 signs.

Looking ahead ...

- Summer camp registration opens May 18.
- Town Hall offices, including the Park and Recreation office, will be closed May 30.