

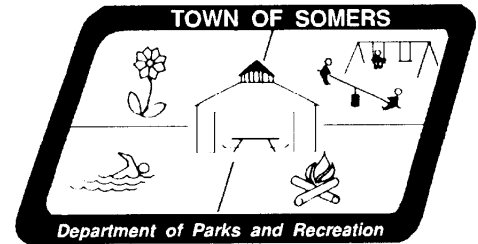
Somers Parks & Recreation Board

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Kevin Westerman
Chairman



MEETING MINUTES

July 25, 2018

Chairman Westerman opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

The members present were: Jim Boniello, John Papalia, Don Penzine, Michele Werney, Kevin Westerman, and John Zattola.

Michael Papa, Stephen Krug, and Michele Sanz were absent.

Parks and Recreation Superintendent, Steve Ralston, as well as Town Councilman Tom Garrity, were also present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Zattola to approve the minutes of the June 27, 2018 meeting. Mrs. Werney seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MR. RALSTON'S REPORT

Mrs. Werney was delighted with the final registration number for Day Camp, 443 this year, compared to 372 in 2017 and 361 in 2016. There was some traffic confusion the first week but was resolved quickly. Councilman Garrity said his daughter attends the Camp and is having a wonderful time, even on rainy days when the program is held at the Somers Middle School.

NEW BUSINESS

Athletic Center – Councilman Garrity asked if the Parks and Recreation Board has reviewed the concept sketch for the athletic center facility proposed for a portion of the Somers Manor property. They have not. He will follow up and get the information to the Board, as he feels their input is important.

Koegel and Reynolds House – Mrs. Werney asked about the Koegel and Reynolds Houses. The new Park Foreman is now living in the Koegel House and does have some responsibilities that go along with the lease. Last week the septic was installed at the Reynolds House and this week the plumbing, to be followed by the electric shortly thereafter. It should be completed in the spring and will be used as a caretaker's residence. The Town Board will decide who that person will be, as well as the tasks

that will have to be completed by them.

OLD BUSINESS

Water Park Update – Councilman Garrity asked if there was any update on the creation of a water park, the concept of which was brought to the Board last year. The location is contingent upon the land swap (Plum Brook Road by Somers Manor to behind the tennis courts) as there is no place to put it in Reis Park. Repeated requests of the status of the land swap have been made to the Town Planner. Hopefully an update will be available soon. Councilman Garrity will follow up as well.

Parks Rules Discussion – Last month the Parks and Recreation Board discussed a complaint received by the Parks and Recreation Department about people smoking in Reis Park. Currently, while the Code of the Town of Somers prohibits smoking in Town buildings, there are no official rules prohibiting smoking in the Town parks, except in the Dog Park.

The Board reviewed information provided by Mr. Ralston, including Parks Rules and Regulations, Section 128-2. Section 128-2(l) provides, “Behavior which causes public nuisances, annoyance or harm regarding the enjoyment of park and recreation facilities and otherwise affects the health, and safety and welfare of those using the park is prohibited.” All agreed that vaping and smoking of tobacco products are plainly covered under the authority of this existing code.

Accordingly, the Board members present unanimously agreed by a motion made by Mr. Penzine and seconded by Mrs. Werney to propose that this provision be amended to add the language “such as smoking and/or vaping”. This would serve to clarify and eliminate any confusion whether these activities are allowed. If such an amendment to the existing rule is not feasible, then the Board would request that the Code be changed prohibiting smoking and/or vaping in all Town parks.

Parks Master Plan Update – Currently, the focus is on Bailey and Van Tassell Parks with regard to the Parks Master Plan. A Somers company Landscape Concepts re-landscaped the front of the Somers Town House. Since Bailey Park is across the street, Mr. Ralston feels as though it makes sense to contact them with regard to the landscaping needs at that Park. All agreed that was an excellent idea. Arrangements will be for Mr. Boniello and Mr. Ralston to meet with them. Councilman Garrity would like to join them as well if he is available.

Mr. Papalia and Mr. Ralston met at Van Tassell Park and will continue to come up with a plan. There is an area behind the flagpole going toward the soccer field that would be ideal for a picnic area. There is plenty of shade and a stone wall. No trees would have to be removed, only brush. The stone wall would have to be cleared. Once the work is completed, the area would be easy to maintain. This would be an ideal Eagle Scout Project.

2019 Budget – Mr. Ralston has begun working on the 2019 budget and will send the draft to the members. If any of the Board members would like any budget items to be added or changed, they should contact him. All were encouraged to think about one-time projects or infrastructure needs. Mr. Ralston noted that all of the split rail fencing in Reis Park needs to be replaced. The vote on the budget will take place at the next meeting on September 6th.

MR. RALSTON'S COMMENTS

Mr. Ralston didn't have any additional comments.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mrs. Werney expressed discouragement that nothing has been done in terms of developing the Zappi Property on Route 6. This property has been donated to the Town, but remains completely undeveloped. The developer of Hidden Meadows offered to bring the utilities to the edge of the property and there is an easement for access. A couple years prior, however, the Parks and Recreation Board decided that, given the limited funds available, clearing and developing that property was a lower priority than improving and/or developing other Town park properties.

Mrs. Werney also asked what one has to do if they want to teach programs for the Parks and Recreation Department. Outside organizations and companies can enter into a Recreation Services Agreement, which involves, among other requirements, giving to the Town 20% of their gross fees collected for the activities at the park, or an individual can be paid directly by the Department for their offering.

Mr. Papalia would like to see the letterhead logo updated as it has a picture of a swimmer and a campfire neither of which are offered in the parks. The Board members will consider options.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. and the next meeting will take place on Thursday, September 6th at 6:30 p.m. in the Recreation Center in Van Tassell Park.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Parks & Recreation Board

cc: Parks & Recreation Board
Superintendent of Parks & Recreation
Town Board
Town Clerk