

Somers Parks & Recreation Board

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Kevin Westerman
Chairman



MEETING MINUTES **July 24, 2019**

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

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

Stephen Krug, John Papalia 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 present.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mrs. Werney to approve the minutes of the June 26, 2019 meeting. Mr. McCormack seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MR. RALSTON'S REPORT

Mr. Penzine asked if there has been a financial report issued for the Independence Day Celebration event. Mr. Ralston hasn't received anything. Mr. Garrity relayed to everyone that positive feedback and appreciation was received from the veterans in attendance. As in the past, the event will be held at the old PepsiCo site on the 4th Saturday in June. The Independence Day Committee asked the Supervisor to see if the old IBM site would be made available next year, so the event could be expanded upon.

There was an incident between a resident who rented the pavilion in Reis Park for a party and the SYSO Baseball Director who threw an end-of-season party at the same time on the stage across from it. Though Somers Baseball knew that it had no permit or permission for a party, it scheduled one anyway, and included a DJ. With both noise and people, the baseball party infringed upon the authorized party in the pavilion. Perhaps worse, it was reported that the Baseball Director was discourteous to the resident when they were asked to stay away from the pavilion and turn down the music. Mr. Westerman asked if there has been a resolution to the issue. Unfortunately, there has not, as the President of SYSO was contacted and spoke with the Baseball Director who, far from apologizing, he defiantly asserted that he did nothing wrong. Mr. Ralston did refund the fee paid to rent the pavilion to the resident. The Parks and Rec Board members were not happy to hear about this situation. SYSO is given the right of first refusal access to the Town fields with the understanding that it will manage and maintain

order. The Parks and Recreation Board relies on the SYSO leaders to maintain control, and it is unacceptable for a SYSO leader to be the source of a problem. Using Reis Park is a privilege and inappropriate behavior is not tolerated. The rules and regulations have to be reviewed with this person and they need to know that there will be repercussions if an incident happens again. Mr. Ralston will ask the President and the Baseball Director to attend the next Parks and Recreation Board meeting to discuss this issue and the Board's expectations of SYSO.

Mr. Westerman asked about the shared maintenance laborer. They work 3 hours per day at the water department and 4 hours per day at parks. The water department reimburses the parks budget based on the hourly wage paid.

NEW BUSINESS

Lending Library Proposal – A resident has offered to build, install and maintain a free lending library in Reis Park. A lengthy discussion ensued. Although each of the members like the concept, and greatly appreciate the offer, they feel as though Reis Park is not the best location for a lending library. This is for multiple reasons, including the concern that having a separate independent receptacle for a lending library at Reis Park would create confusion to the residents using the Somers Library, located at the same property.

OLD BUSINESS

Parks Master Plan Update – Last month, Mr. Boniello, Mr. Penzine and Mr. Westerman met with architect Joe Pajonas at Bailey Park to discuss improvement possibilities that would invite and attract the community to Bailey Park. Mr. Pajonas had a several good seemingly workable ideas which he will put in the form of a proposal and send to Mr. Ralston. The proposal has not yet been received. Mr. Penzine will follow up.

2020 Budget Update – Mr. Ralston is in the process of preparing the draft of the 2020 departmental budget. Only increases that are absolutely necessary will be included, one of which will have to be an increase in salaries for the Tusker Trax program so that older staff can be hired to deal with the difficulties faced in managing the majority of this age group (youngsters entering 7th, 8th and 9th grade). Mrs. Werney asked if there will be a plan to make improvements as proposed by Dura Edge to the baseball fields in Reis Park next year. A discussion ensued, and all agreed that the fields have been consistently maintained, which has resulted in them being safe and playable. While there are benefits to upgrading the infields and pitching mounds, given the cost and the limits to the budget, such an upgrade is not a priority at this time.

Angle Fly Preserve Conservation Easement Modification Update – Supervisor Morrissey reported on June 26th that DEC's Bill Rudge told him that the land swap was to be published in the DEC Environmental News Bulletin in early June for public comment for 30 days. After that point, the modification can take effect. He will follow up with him for an update.

MR. RALSTON'S COMMENTS

Mr. Ralston had no comments.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Boniello asked if there are any plans to construct a pickle ball court as it has become a popular activity. The camp has a portable set that they use on the tennis courts. The concept was received positively, and the Board determined that the ideal time to further consider this is when the Conservation Easement Modification comes to fruition.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m. and the next meeting will take place on Wednesday, September 4th 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