Sherman Park and Recreation Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
June 8, 2020

Present:
Fran Frattini-Chairman
Stan Greenbaum
Kris Fazzone
John Wrenn-Director
T.J. Fazzone
Rachel Booth
Denise DePalma
Karen Kellett

Absent:
No one absent

Guests: Don Lowe, Muriel Grabe, Ali Moravsky, Samantha Celio, and a few other members of the public.

Call to order:
Chairman Fran Frattini called the June 8, 2020 Regular Meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 7:15pm. *Meeting was held online via ZOOM*

Pavilion and Facilities Applications
There were no applications that needed to come before the Commission.

Minutes from May 11, 2020 Regular Meeting:
*A motion to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2020 Sherman Park and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting was made by Kris Fazzone, seconded by Rachel Booth and voted with all in favor. Motion carried and minutes accepted as written.*

Public Comment:
Muriel Grabe presented a proposal for the creation of a labyrinth at one of Park and Recreation properties. Photos were shared along with details of what materials might be used for the project. The labyrinth would be a meditation space that meanders in a purposeful way in and out; not like a maze where one could get lost. There was a discussion, including possible locations, size, parking, installation, maintenance and the ease of social distancing. Somewhere along the trail between the Town Park and Colonial Field was explored as a possible location.
The Commission will consider the proposal and get back to Ms. Grabe.

Fran Frattini asked former Camp Directors Ali Moravsky and Samantha Celio for their opinion on the possibility of running summer camps this year. The Camp Directors described their opinions on running camps considering safety issues and the strict guidelines from the state and the CDC. Social distancing, hand washing, swimming, group size, staffing concerns, masks, appropriate activities, field trips and age range for camps were discussed. The Camp Directors felt there were more cons than pros relating to having camps this summer. There was a discussion, including result of a recent survey that showed about 15-20 children might attend summer camp. Area towns’ summer camp plans were discussed, as well as staff-to-child ratios, preferred age group for camps, suggestions for activities, staff recruitment, daycare concerns for parents and the need to follow the science. Waivers were discussed, as were necessary supplies like masks and hand sanitizer.

The Camp Directors were asked to think about developing a possible hybrid of the traditional Junior and Senior Camps that would involve fewer hours and fewer children and where they could possibly be co-directors. John Wrenn asked the Directors to get back to him by Saturday.

**Correspondence:**
1. Don Lowe described a dog problem on Colonial field and he had asked for “No Dogs Allowed” signs to be placed at the field. Mr. Lowe had received numerous complaints about dog waste on Colonial Field. He noted that it may be due largely to non-residents who stop to use the port-a-pot and also let their dogs out. There was a short discussion.
2. It was noted that the Dog Park Exploratory Subcommittee will be meeting on June 22 at 6:30pm at the Town Park Pavilion. No dogs are allowed at the meeting. The subcommittee will make recommendations and Denise DePalma will bring them back to the Commission.

**Maintenance and Repair:**
1. John Wrenn noted that the water testing at the pavilion at the Town Park was complete and it can now be used.
2. The windscreen for the tennis courts will be put up soon.
3. The beach is due to be opening on Saturday, June 20. The logistics of social distancing were discussed.
4. There are a reasonable amount of lifeguards and gate-guards hired but Mr. Wrenn will continue to accept applications.
5. It was noted that the bench at the basketball court needs to be repaired.
6. Multiple repairs needed to the Veterans Field playground were discussed. It was noted that the playground is closed to the public at this time.

**Facility Report:**
a. Official department wearing apparel for the beach staff was discussed, as was the placement of picnic tables at the town park for better social distancing. There was a discussion about placing a picnic table at the Community Garden as well as the need to find and return the bench to the garden area. Don Lowe noted that it would not be appropriate to encourage congregating by placing a table at the gardens. Visitors drinking alcohol at the Town Park was discussed. It was noted the state trooper does random drive-by inspections of the park. Tennis nets are up and courts are available for play.
b. Swimming lessons were discussed, including the difficulty in following COVID-19 guidelines during lessons and the lack of properly certified lifeguards on staff. The consensus of the Commission was that swim lessons would not be offered this summer. It was noted that swim lessons are a budget item but as there will be no income but there will also be no expenses and it will be a wash.

Keeping close track of guards’ hours was discussed. Once the beach is officially open, lifeguards may have gate guarding as part of their regular rotation.

Tennis lessons were discussed including recruiting efforts for instructors, a recently offered tennis ladder and tennis as possible part of summer camp.

Kris Fazzone made a motion to explore the option of offering some version of summer camp and to ask Camp Supervisors to develop a plan based on current COVID-19 guidelines from the state, CDC, ACA (American Camping Association) and OEC (Office of Early Childhood). Denise DePalma seconded.

There was a discussion, including ACA resources, state guidelines, group sizes, methods of choosing groups, supplies needed, supervision, hours of camp, length of camp season, maximum and minimum enrollments, payment options use of the Town Park, school fields and other areas. It was noted that length of camp day, ages of campers, duration of camp season and overall supervision could be modified to provide the safest possible environment.

The motion was voted upon with 4 in favor, Karen Kellett opposed and Stan Greenbaum abstained. The motion was carried.

John Wrenn will ask the Camp Supervisors to create a proposal for summer camp adhering to official guidelines. There was further discussion about having one camp with co-directors from 9am-12pm for 4 weeks starting after the 4th of July at the Town Park for children ages 7-12. Also discussed were staff training, appropriate activities, visits to various local (in Town) points of interest, bringing programs to camp, staff comfort level with guidelines and involving the health department in orientation.

Summer concert series was discussed. It was noted that perhaps four concerts might be offered. Mr. Wrenn has received some inquiries already and additional bands will be contacted soon.

Old Business/New Business:

a. It was noted again that the Exploratory Dog Park Sub-Committee will meet on June 22 at 6:30 at the Town Park Pavilion. The agenda will be developed and distributed by Subcommittee Chair Denise DePalma.

b. Maintenance person was discussed. An advertisement has been posted with a June 23rd deadline for applications.

c. There was a clarification concerning last month’s minutes and a 2020-21 capital budget item for $75,000 for improvements to upper portion of Veterans Field. The item funding actually needs to be approved by a Town meeting. It was also noted that if approved, specifications for the bidding process will need to be developed and be ready for the fall so that the work could be done in the spring. The area could rest over the summer and potentially be ready for use in fall 2021.
There was additional discussion about the proposed labyrinth project, including community groups that might be willing to help in its creation and maintenance. Possible locations were discussed. Using materials like rocks or indigenous plants was discussed. A site visit was suggested.

_A motion was made by Stan Greenbaum to move forward with exploring the possibility of creating a labyrinth between Colonial Field and the Town Park. Denise DePalma seconded. The motion was voted with all in favor._

**Director’s Report:**

a. Mr. Wrenn noted that there was no activity in May in the checking account however the phone and email activity at the office has been intense.
b. Resident versus non-resident access to the Town Park was discussed. Currently residents are not charged for beach passes. Issues with non-resident use of the Town Park were discussed, along with nearby towns’ beach pass policies. Beach pass policy will be looked at next year.
c. Almost all of the boat slips have been rented with the last available slip’s rental pending. It was noted that boat slips must be re-applied for each year. September is the month for boat slip applications. If there are more applications than there are boat slips by the end of September then a lottery is held in early October.
d. Compliments were given to the job done by the gate guards at the Town Park giving out beach passes.
f. Connecticut’s minimum wage increase on September 1, 2020 to $12.00/hour was discussed.

_Stan Greenbaum made a motion to adjourn the June 8, 2020 Park and Recreation Regular meeting. The motion was seconded by Karen Kellett and passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 9:07pm._

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Kellett
Park and Recreation Secretary

Mary Jo Dix
Recording Secretary

_The next regular meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission is Monday July 13, 2020_

_These minutes are not considered official until they have been approved at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Park and Recreation Commission_