



TOWN OF LEDYARD

Parks, Recreation & Senior Citizens Commission

Meeting Minutes - Final

12 Van Tassel Drive
Gales Ferry, Connecticut 06339

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

7:00 PM

Parks & Recreation/Senior Citizens
Center

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Kenneth DiRico called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. at the Ledyard Senior Center.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner Lucrezia Finegan
Commissioner Jessica Cobb
Commissioner Loretta Kent
Chairman Kenneth J. DiRico
Commissioner Jessica Buhle

Excused Commissioner Thomas Olsen
Commissioner Shaileen C. English
Commissioner Charles Gallagher
Commissioner Deondre Bransford

In addition, the following were present:

Betsy Graham
Jean Pillo

III. RESIDENTS & PROPERTY OWNERS COMMENTS

None

IV. PRESENTATIONS / INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

V. MEMBER COMMENTS

None

VI. REPORTS

1. Directors Report

*PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
Director's Report May 2023*

Please note this update for your review.

1. Commission Meeting:

The regular meeting of the Commission is scheduled for Tuesday, May 15th, 2023, at 7:00 PM, in the Ledyard Senior Center. Please contact the office immediately if you will not be able to attend.

2. Youth Leagues:

Little League and Soccer have started their spring seasons. The leagues have seen an increase in participation and soccer requested more fields this spring than they typically do in the fall.

3. Summer Camp:

We have interviewed and hired staff for camp this summer. The coordinators have started planning trips and in-house activities.

4. Bathrooms:

The bathrooms and mobile restroom have been opened for the season and porta potties delivered to the parks.

5. Parks & Rec Truck:

The new Parks & Rec truck had now been fully outfitted with liftgate, toolbox, seat covers, floormats, and logo. We are in the process of getting ready to sell the old truck.

6. GFCC Playscape:

The new playscape behind the Gales Ferry Community Center has been installed and the safety surface has been poured.

7. Middle School Field Lights:

The middle school field light project has begun. There was an issue with the lift that caused a one-day delay, but the contractor was able to get a new lift delivered the next day and resume work.

8. Judge Crandall Flagpole:

Ordered a new flagpole halyard rope for Judge Crandall Field. Talked to

the contractor installing the middle school lights and they agreed to install the new rope while we have the lift on site.

9. Bridges at Sawmill Park:

Received a call from a resident regarding the very steep step up to the bridges at Sawmill Park. There are some stone slabs at the Nathan Lester house from an old foundation. I talked to Vin at the Historical Society about repurposing some of those stone slabs as steps for the bridges at Sawmill.

10. Clarks Water Main Repairs:

There was a water main break on Clarks field that required Groton Utilities to dig up a portion of the field. In addition to the hole there were also ruts caused by the machine used to dig the hole that had to be repaired. Everything has been filled, top dressed, rolled, and hydroseeded. GU covered the cost of the repairs.

11. Regatta Day:

We will be holding the second annual Regatta Day festival at sweet hill Farms in Gales Ferry. We have set up an account under Parks & Rec to house the funds for this event.

12. Lantern Hill Valley Park:

Demolition work that was done on the property spread around some Japanese knot weed and mugwort. The invasives were spot sprayed to prevent them from taking the property over before the land can be developed into a park. We are also looking into laying down some black plastic in some areas to suffocate the invasives.

13. Events:

- **Regatta Day:** June 10th

VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. MOTION to approve the Parks and Recreation regular meeting minutes of 03-21-2023.

Moved by Ms. Cobb, seconded by Ms. Buhle

VOTE: 5 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Cobb

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE 5 Finegan Cobb Kent DiRico Buhle

EXCUSED 4 Olsen English Gallagher Bransford

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Boy Scout Skate Park Project Proposal

No representatives present.

RESULT: NO ACTION

2. Pollinator Garden Discussion

MOTION to approve the installation of four rain gardens and one riparian buffer in named parks as follows:

- Sawmill Park - Iron Street
- Lantern Hill Valley - Long Cove Road
- Highlands Park -Shewville Road
- Erickson Park - Miliary Highway.

Moved by Ms. Buhle, seconded by Ms. Cobb

Discussion - Jean Pillo and Betsy Graham - presented the benefits of planting pollinator gardens and the impact on the native food supply. Proposed project includes rain water gardens, which purifies storm water. First step is approval by the Commission, then ECCD would need to be contacted, and Call Before You Dig to check for utilities. Gardens would be installed by volunteers, including digging. Project would need to be completed by August and would be covered by grant funding. After installation, the maintenance and upkeep of the gardens would be the responsibility of the town, no estimate of cost is available, but should be limited to the first year and will be supported by multiple town organizations.

VOTE: 5 - 0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Jessica Buhle

SECONDER: Jessica Cobb

AYE 5 Finegan Cobb Kent DiRico Buhle

EXCUSED 4 Olsen English Gallagher Bransford

3. Discussion regarding recreation space within subdivisions

The town departments will be reviewing properties to understand needs and practicality. Director Johnson will be reviewing properties under Parks & Recreation jurisdiction and trying to calculate maintenance costs per acreage.

RESULT: CONTINUE

4. Parks & Rec / Senior Center Merger

Chairman DiRico would ask which Commissioners were interested in continuing to serve on the new combined Commission; and the Senior Commission would need to do the same. The timeline still needed to be finalized, but could be effective within the next month or two.

RESULT: CONTINUE

5. Any Old Business proper to come before the Commission
None

XI. NEW BUSINESS

1. MOTION to plant a tree at Highlands Lake for Jane Perry's husband next to Jane's tree.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Lucrezia Finegan

SECONDER: Jessica Buhle

AYE 5 Finegan Cobb Kent DiRico Buhle

EXCUSED 4 Olsen English Gallagher Bransford

2. Discussion and possible motion to schedule a park tour

The Commission agreed to defer the Park Tour until the new combined Commission was seated.

RESULT: CONTINUE

3. MOTION to name the parklet at the Town Green in honor of Mary McGrattan.

Moved by Ms. Finegan, seconded by Ms. Cobb

Discussion: It was noted that Ms. McGrattan was a public servant for many years and it was fitting that the parklet be named in her honor.

VOTE: 5-0 Approved and so declared

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Lucrezia Finegan

SECONDER: Jessica Cobb

AYE 5 Finegan Cobb Kent DiRico Buhle

EXCUSED 4 Olsen English Gallagher Bransford

4. Any New Business proper to come before the Commission

This was Approved and so declared.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

5. Ribbon Cuttings

Ribbon cutting planned for the new playground at Gales Ferry Community Center.

RESULT: DISCUSSED

6. Walkway proposal at Clark & Purdy Field.

The Commission discussed the possibility of adding a walking path around Clark and Purdy Field, and remove the old baseball backstop. These will be considered for future Capital Improvement Projects (CIP).

RESULT: DISCUSSED

X. **ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Cobb moved the meeting be adjourned, seconded by Ms. Buhle.

VOTE: 5 - 0 Approved and so declared, the meeting was adjourned at 8:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth DiRico
Chairman

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.