

MINUTES
Wilton Parks & Recreation Commission
June 10, 2020
Virtual Meeting via Public Conference Call

Attendance:

- a. Commissioners: Bilella, Kendra, Guglielmo, Ring
- b. Director of P&R: Pierce
- c. Ex Officio: None
- d. Public: None

Absent:

- a. Commissioners: Macken

I. Bilella called the meeting to order at 7:34 pm.

II. Approval of Minutes for February 11, 2019 – Motion made by Kendra, seconded by Guglielmo; vote taken. **Approved 4-0-0** (Macken absent).

III. Correspondence – discussion and/or action

- Pierce received four correspondences: First correspondence dated April 30, 2020 from Jason Partenza of Wilton Soccer Association sharing an article relating to COVID-19 and youth sports. Second correspondence dated May 16, 2020 from Paula Casiraghi inquiring about the opening of Lilly Field. Third correspondence, May 16, 2020 from Jason Partenza of Wilton Soccer inquiring about a potential nonprofit sports working group formation for preparation of returning to the fields. Fourth correspondence dated June 3, 2020 from Jackie Algon requesting a status update on the potential wildflower meadow project at Allen's Meadow. Steve advised this project has been placed on hold, along with all other projects, in light of COVID-19.

IV. Pandemic Impact – discussion and/or action

- Pierce reported on staffing and additional efforts related to COVID-19. Staff at full capacity and one seasonal worker was hired prior to COVID-19 shutdown. No employees were furloughed. Grounds personnel have continued to work onsite with staggered start times, adhering to social distancing. Recreation personnel all moved to remote working on March 11, 2020 and returned to Comstock two weeks ago. Comstock remains closed to the public currently. Dial-a Ride restarting is TBD. Financial impact was low due to the closing of facilities. Fields look very good due to lack of wear and tear stemming from the closures.

V. P&R Budget Update – discussion and/or action

- Pierce updated the Commission on the P&R Department's -9.9% decrease year-over-year due to less operating capital expenditures and the closing of Merwin Meadows, which is a net savings of \$37K.

VI. Phase 1 and Phase 2 Opening Updates – discussion and/or action

- Pierce reported the department is using multiple levels of guidance as it proceeds with its phased opening, including the CDC, NRPA, and CRPA. For any activity or program that is

opened, review and approval is needed by the Town's leadership (EOC, First Selectwoman and Health Director). Use of P&R's e-trak system for all reservation of open facilities was intentional; P&R can track and trace everyone who used the facilities and report if necessary – thus no walk-ups allowed. Pierce stated that the process of reopening is extremely fluid as to what is required for Phase 1 and Phase 2 with guidance and requirements changing often. P&R created a plan for each facility that it opened, and monitors have been assigned to each open facility during Phase 1. With Phase 2 on June 17, 2020, the reopening for youth sports is starting. P&R plans to communicate and work with each group to offer guidance as the youth sports groups develop a plan to play, which will require review and approval from the Town - EOC, First Selectwoman, and Wilton's Health Director. Chairperson Bilella inquired about whether goals (soccer, field hockey, lacrosse) would be available on fields and Pierce advised no, none will be provided. Commissioner Ring asked if the various local towns are interacting and planning to maintain the same guidelines and requirements. Pierce reported that our town has been in communication with surrounding towns, but there is not standardization of process for towns. P&R summer camp will start on June 22, 2020 and run through August 14, 2020; this is a weekly camp. Wilton received a waiver from the State OEC to increase the total permissible campers/participants per day from 30 to 80 at Comstock. The layout of the Comstock facility was taken into consideration and the layout for each room has been defined to follow social distancing guidelines. There will be a nurse onsite at camp and designated sick rooms in case of any illnesses (COVID-19 and non-virus illnesses and injuries). Registration is open as of June 10, 2020 and response has been very good in just a few hours of opening with over 14 for Week 1, 12 for Week 2, and 9 for Week 3 already registered. A dog obedience class over the past week was the first class offered since the shutdown; it was well received and successful. P&R are now planning for tennis lessons as the next offering. Pierce also reported that additional activities are being reviewed and analyzed. Ring asked Pierce for more clarity and details on how and what programs P&R would potentially perform should Trakside not operate. Pierce advised that P&R would provide some programs if requested, but at this point no assistance has been required. Bilella advised that she sought clarification from the First Selectwoman on what was meant by the term 'programs' in the Town's budget comments section, and the First Selectwoman confirmed that programs meant various classes and activities, not the full operations of Trakside.

VII. Wilton Track – discussion and/or action

- Track Replacement Update – Pierce advised that it is on hold. Project will be addressed in November via a ballot vote at same time as Presidential election. Stantec design is in progress and will be done by end of August. Guglielmo inquired as to status of any necessary track repairs. Pierce reported that repairs have been made this and last year, and if additional repairs are needed, such repairs will be done.

VIII. Staff Reports – discussion and/or action

- Parks & Grounds Report – Pierce shared that the staff are getting ready for the June 13th WHS graduation procession through grounds work with additional attention to the processional route. Fields in great condition. There is some settling (from the gas lines installed near the facility) on the Merwin Meadows field that created a bump on the field, which will be addressed by P&R this summer.

- Recreation Report – Pierce reported that summer camp at Comstock starts June 22, 2020 and runs through August 14, 2020. A total of 80 campers is permitted. Dog obedience class was successful over the last week. Tennis lessons are next to be offered by P&R.

IX. On-going Business – discussion and/or action

- Wilton Athletic and Recreation Foundation Update – None
- Schenck’s Island Merwin Meadows Committee Update – None

X. Member Comment

- Guglielmo complimented the P&R team on a job well done during COVID-19.
- Kendra echoed Guglielmo’s applause and thanked Pierce and his Department for all their dedication and efforts during the pandemic.
- Bilella thanked Pierce for his long hours, dedication, and responsiveness during the shutdown.

XI. Public Comment – None.

XII. Adjourn – Motion made by Kendra to adjourn meeting at 8:43 pm, seconded by Ring; vote taken.
Approved 4-0-0 (Macken absent).