



# Gates Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting October 13, 2020



**Those in attendance:**

|                     |                |              |                |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------|
| Commissioners:      | Rhoda Ride     | Rob Keister  | John Unson     |
|                     | Eileen Andrews | Steve Murphy | Greg Westbrook |
| Director:           | Dan Hoock      |              |                |
| Town Board Liaison: | Chris DiPonzio |              |                |
| Absent:             | Brom Bianchi   |              |                |

The meeting was called to order promptly at 6:32 PM by Rhoda Ride. This meeting was held at the Westgate Park shelter. Rhoda Ride thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

The minutes from the September meeting were reviewed. No changes were noted, A motion was made by Eileen Andrews and seconded by Greg Westbrook, to accept the September meeting minutes. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes.

**Financial Report:**

The financial report was reviewed. Rhoda Ride asked a question about what will happen to the remaining funds in the 2020 department budget? Dan Hoock explained there will still be monies spent related to purchases needed for future programming, etc., but with whatever was left, it would be rolled back to the town. He also explained that due to the COVID-19 impact, the department did not bring in the usual amount of revenue. This was due to cancellation of the summer camp program, the STAR program and many class offerings. Also, the GAP program is only partially filled. Discussion followed on the implications and impact this has had. Greg Westbrook suggested that a “reserve fund” be set up where a portion of these currently budgeted monies could be set aside to be spent at a later date for some of the larger purchases made by the department. Extensive discussion followed. Dan Hoock and Chris DiPonzio will follow up with town officials to see if this is something that could be a consideration. All felt it was a fiscally responsible idea. Following this discussion, a motion was made by Greg Westbrook and seconded by Steve Murphy to accept the financial report as presented. The vote was unanimous to accept the financial report.

**Correspondence:**

There was not correspondence to share.

**Evaluation of Past Programs:**

Dan Hoock shared the following information with the Commission:

- \* Wegman Rd. park should have its new sign installed by the end of this week.
- \* The community project done at the Wegman Rd. park was successful with approximately 50+ people in attendance. This project included the development of a “Kindness Rock” garden where rocks were painted with encouraging and positive words on them, and then placed around the walkway at this park. People are encouraged to take a rock, and leave a rock, much like the premise of the Little Free Libraries appearing around the town.
- \* There is now a story walk around the park also.
- \* Dan reported that every effort was made to have sanitary options available for everyone in attendance (soap, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- \* Also, it was noted that activity at the Westgate Rd. park has been brisk all season long with many in the community using the playground, going on the story walk and also playing basketball, etc. Behavior there has been exemplary.
- \* Although the original date for the outside concert/food truck event had to be cancelled due to weather, it was rescheduled and took place. A small group of people came, and the entertainment was enjoyable.

**Programs in Progress:**

No report was given.

**Old Business:**

Dan Hoock shared the following information with the Commission pertaining to Old Business:

- \* The 2020 Halloween Party will occur at Memorial Park on Friday, October 23 from 6PM - 8PM.
- \* Approximately 9-10 community groups will be participating in this activity
- \* There will be several activities for children to participate in, along with sweet treats, etc.
- \* Everyone will have to sign in (family name, address, phone, etc.) for contact tracing purposes
- \* This activity will be for Gates residents only.
- \* The department will be distributing fabric tote bags for families to take around to the various areas to collect treats, etc.
- \* Costumes are optional, but hopefully most participants will wear them.

- \* A question was raised about bathroom availability for this event? Dan will make every effort to have the current facility options as clean as possible for public use. Chris DiPonzio suggested more frequent and thorough cleanings should be done by the crew that is responsible for that. A brief discussion followed. Dan will follow up to encourage this to happen.
- \* Dan shared although most of the parks remain open year round (First Responders Park is not,) the bathroom facilities are closed for the season when the weather changes, usually in mid-November.

### **New Business:**

Dan Hoock shared the following information with the Commission pertaining to New Business:

- \* Plans are being discussed related to upcoming class options that comply with NYS/CDC regulations.
- \* Consideration of more virtual classes will be considered.
- \* Outside groups still cannot meet at that town hall facility, but small groups have been given permission (e.g. - Tai Chi, Yoga, etc.)
- \* The Veteran's Day ceremony will be held outside at Memorial Park by the flag pole.
- \* Thanksgiving Day the Gobble Wobble walk/run will take place
- \* The Christmas Tree Lighting event is a "work in progress" at the moment. Consideration of what options would fall within the guidelines we need to follow have to be part of the scenario. Nothing is finalized at this point. Input is welcomed.
- \* The camp kits were successful over the summer for the youth, so consideration is now being done to do a similar project over the winter season with the focus on the mature members of our community. These kits could include: deck of cards, snacks/tea/cocoa mix, updated TV listings for movies, books, crafts, games, coloring books, crosswords, word jumbles, word searches, department recipe book, exercise options, dice games, popcorn, etc. There is a box of red fabric totes from the Friends group that would work for putting these items in for distribution. All thought this was a good idea.
- \* The upcoming brochure will be an in-house publication to save money on printing and mailing. It will be posted on line and copies will be available for pick up at the department office.
- \* The possibility of a Breakfast with Santa is being considered. To be compliant, things such as prepackaged foods and gifts would be considered, pre-registration done, tables distanced, etc. More discussion on the consideration of this event needs to happen.
- \* Rhoda Ride suggested that a community holiday house lights decorating contest be considered with awards given. Consideration will be given to this idea.
- \* Chris DiPonzio suggested a possible end-of-year celebration (outside?) with fireworks, outside activities, etc. be considered for a seasonal event. Consideration will be given to this idea also.
- \* Greg Westbrook shared a news article from 10/22/64 related to the rededication of the public library at that time to be renamed the Colonel Robert Abbott Memorial Library. This occurred when the library was still housed at the Grange Hall. Discussion followed on this. Since the library moved from the Grange Hall to the Town Hall, and now to its own free standing building, the question was raised as to why the name didn't follow it. Chris DiPonzio was asked to follow up on this question and have an answer at our next meeting.
- \* Rob Keister raised a concern about the Scout groups currently using the park facilities for their meetings through the fall season. He wanted to know if this will continue throughout the winter. Dan Hoock explained these groups are cleared to meet in these facilities for the time frame they requested. If they request to continue to use them, the request would more than likely be granted.
- \* Rhoda Ride asked that Dan Hoock update the website with the current minutes of the July and September meetings. This will be done.
- \* Steve Murphy inquired about the status of the testing of the carpeting in the Department. Dan reported the testings came back clear.

### **Good of the Order:**

Greg Westbrook: Wished everyone a Happy Halloween and fall season.

Chris DiPonzio: Will follow up on the question raised about the naming of the public library

John Unson: Shared that teaching today is very challenging, but they're doing OK

Steve Murphy: Wished everyone a Happy Halloween.

Rhoda Ride: Nothing at this time

Valerie Young: Gave a brief update on the status of her grandson Alex's health and thanked everyone for their support and prayers

Eileen Andrews: Nothing at this time

Rob Keister: Nothing at this time

Dan Hoock: Nothing at this time

Chris DiPonzio: Shared the Town's appreciation of the volunteer hours the Commission member put in, and distributed thermal lunch bags to each member as a "thank you" for all their efforts and dedication. Everyone was surprised and pleased.

A motion was made by John Unson and seconded by Eileen Andrews that the meeting be adjourned.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 10 at 6:30 PM. The meeting is scheduled to meet at Town Hall annex.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Valerie Young - Secretary