



Gates Recreation and Parks Commission Meeting July 13, 2021



Those in attendance:

Commissioners:	Rhoda Ride	Rob Keister	Greg Westbrook
	Eileen Andrews	Steve Murphy	
Director:	Dan Hoock		
Town Board Liaison:	Chris DiPonzio		
Not in Attendance:	Brom Bianchi	John Unson	

The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM by Rhoda Ride.

The minutes of the June 8, 2021 meeting were reviewed. A motion was made by Greg Westbrook and seconded by Eileen Andrews to accept the June minutes as written. The vote was unanimous to accept the minutes.

Due to another commitment, Chris DiPonzio needed to leave the meeting early, and requested to give his follow-up information report before he left. All agreed this would be fine. The following information was shared:

- * Chris reported the Highway Dept. is out assessing the pothole repairs needed throughout the town and will be prioritizing which roads are patched first. A brief discussion followed.
- * The Town Board is investigating a new website format that is more user friendly, readable and attractive. The suggestion that this new website be maintained professionally was made. This should be a consideration if it is not cost prohibitive.
- * The suggestion to do a Town newsletter that would include reports from all the departments, and also include the program offerings of the department, is being done. Dan Hoock will be coordinating this effort.
- * Chris shared an informational booklet that is currently sent to new residents by the Town. Everyone had an opportunity to review it. This booklet includes a listing of Town officials, basic department(s) information, a map of Gates, etc.
- * Chris met with Town Supervisor Cosmo Gunta concerning park maintenance projects. Currently, the parks are not being as well maintained as they could be. Discussion followed on the concerns the Commission have shared at previous meetings.
- * Chris reported that bids for the pavilion replacement at Wegman Rd Park are still being solicited. He also mentioned that bids on other park projects have also been put out. As they are received back, he will update the Commission. Discussion followed related to concerns about escalating costs of building supplies and park projects should be done as quickly as possible while prices are lower.
- * A discussion of park safety concerns occurred. Several concerns were raised related to specific parks (Memorial, Westgate & Lions.) Discussion followed, and Dan Hoock mentioned the Gates police were involved with park safety concerns, but he would follow up to confirm the specific ones mentioned during the discussion time.

Following this report, Chris DiPonzio left the meeting.

Rhoda Ride brought up the topic of the mid-month update report sent to the Commissioners. Valerie Young will do this report, and will meet with Dan Hoock two weeks after the regular Commission meeting to get current information to share. The mid-month report will be sent out electronically to all the Commissioners highlighting current programming, events, concerns, etc. The goal will be to have this out approximately two weeks after the regular meeting.

Rhoda Ride and Dan Hoock will be looking for information to get new light weight jackets for the Commissioners. This will probably occur in September.

Rhoda Ride shared that she and Dan Hoock had met, and they are proposing that at two upcoming functions, the Commission will sponsor a collection in support of two non-profits. A collection will be taken for Lollypop Farm at the Halloween party, and at the "Gobble Wobble" 5K run, a collection will be taken for Golisano Children's Hospital. Rhoda will get the "wish lists" from each of these groups and share them at the next meeting. She also mentioned that volunteers will be needed to do this. A brief discussion followed. The Halloween party will be at Memorial Park on Friday, October 22 from 6PM-8PM, and the "Gobble Wobble" will be November 25 (Thanksgiving Day) from 8AM-10AM. Plans for these events will be finalized at the September Commission meeting. The advertising for these events will include information about the donation collections.

Rhoda Ride, Greg Westbrook and Dan Hoock met to discuss the budget for the Department, and also several other items. The following are highlights of their discussion:

- * Add monies to the 2022 budget in support of creating a new full-time position in the Department with flexible hours. The person filling this position would be cross trained to cover a variety of responsibilities in the department (e.g. - GAP, office responsibilities, etc.)
- * If this position comes to fruition, the Commission would like input on a job description specific for this job. Although they wouldn't be part of the interview process, they would like to be actively involved with the overall process.
- * Rhoda suggested that at least one day a week, every member of the staff should spend a full day working in the office. Again, this would allow for cross training on other jobs.
- * Focus on offering more adult programming options. A brief discussion followed on this suggestion and options to be considered.
- * Rhoda would like to invite the Town Board members to the October Commission meeting. This would be a casual meeting (possibly with refreshments.) All thought this was a good idea. More discussion and finalizing plans will be made at the next Commission meeting.

Dan Hoock shared concerns about the audio AV system currently being used in the Annex. It needs to be upgraded as it is not meeting the needs of the groups that meet there. Discussion followed on what this might involve. Currently there are three bids related to upgrading the system, and discussion of sharing the financial support for these upgrades are being discussed (e.g. - Police, GRP Dept., Town, etc.) All agreed this project should be done. Dan will report at our next meeting what the status of this project is.

Dan Hoock shared a listing of names of the employees hired for the summer camp program. There are fewer hires this summer due to the requirements needed at each site. Due to NYS COVID-19 restrictions when planning was done, and not knowing exactly what they would be at the actual time for camp, the plans for the summer camp program were scaled back. Most of the camp sites are operating at approximately 85% capacity, which is working well. The weather has required more inside activities this year, but it all seems to be going well. Free lunch is being offered too.

Dan Hoock shared information about the "The Great Gates Campout" coming up at First Responders Park on July 23-25.

Dan Hoock gave a brief overview of the status of the Summer Celebration. The musical entertainment, the fireworks, the food trucks, the community groups, the stage & AV equipment and the bathrooms have all be confirmed. Parking passes will be distributed to the Commissioners, and the final layout placement map will be completed soon.

Dan Hoock shared an update about the "Little Food Pantry." This included the following:

- * The community member who is coordinating this project has purchased a sturdy cabinet to house the food.
- * The above mentioned volunteer will be checking dates on the donated items to make sure they are all current.
- * All items in this cabinet will be non-perishable canned foods and other food selections in boxes or sealed wrappers
- * The placement of this cabinet will be in the hallway by the Dept. offices, under the coat racks.
- * The "Little Free Library" also will be moved next to this cabinet, so hopefully people will utilize both of these community offerings.

Dan Hoock reported the story walk at Wegman Rd. Park is in place, and the book being shared now is "*Pete the Cat*." This will be changed on a regular basis. He also mentioned the sand box has been upgraded (Eagle Scout project) and a new sand will be placed in it soon. The old pavilion has been removed and the refurbishing of the concrete slab will be happening very soon. A brief discussion took place related to the construction of a new pavilion; the style it could be; the placement of it in the park; the rental possibilities, and whether or not it will have electric. Following this discussion, the Commission suggested that no electricity be placed in the new pavilion. This suggestion will be noted in the final planning.

Rob Keister raised a question concerning "friending" on the Department's Facebook page. Dan Hoock will verify the Department's page is a public page without having the "friend" option necessary and report back at the next meeting.

A topic of discussion that was tabled from last month was, "*Are we serving our community the best way we can?*" and "*What is the present and the future of the Department?*" A discussion took place and highlights included the following:

- * What are the age demographics of the groups we were trying to reach out too?
- * What are the socio-economic demographics of the community we are trying to reach?
- * What are the requests of the community related to our programming? Are the requests we currently doing meeting those needs?
- * Should a survey be done asking for community input? (all agreed this was a good idea. Dan will put survey questions together for the Sept. mtg.)
- * Reviewing past/current program offerings to see what was successful and what has not.

Following this discussion, it was decided this would be a continuing topic of discussion.

Good of the Order:

Steve Murphy: Thank you for the treats shared at tonight's meeting.

Valerie Young: Thanked everyone for their continued support of her family related to her grandson's recent medical challenges.

Rhoda Ride: Thank you for coming tonight, see you all at our next meeting.

Dan Hoock: Hope to see everyone at the Summer Celebration in August.

Rob Keister: Shared he recently was told he qualifies for consideration of getting a cochlear implant. He'll keep us posted.

Greg Westbrook: Enjoy the rest of your summer.

Chris DiPonzio: Left the meeting early.

Eileen Andrews: Left the meeting early.

A motion was made by Steve Murphy and seconded by Rob Keister the meeting be adjourned. Motion was unanimous and the meeting adjourned at 8:50PM.

The next meeting is scheduled for 6:30PM on Monday, September 20, 2021. The meeting will be held at the conference room at the rec. center.

Respectfully Submitted,
Valerie Young - Secretary