

Town of Chester
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Minutes of the Meeting of the Chester Park and Recreation Commission

These minutes are subject to Commission approval.

Monday July 9, 2018
6:30pm
North Quarter Park

Call to Order

Chairman Mike Abramson called the meeting to order at time 6:33 PM. Ivey seconded the motion.

Members present:

Dawn Saunders, Michael Abramson, John Williams, Ivey Gianetti, Deron Grabel, John Saunders

Also in attendance:

Kenna Campbell, Elizabeth Netsch

Summer Employees

Danielle Netsch (Summer Camp Programming Director), Haddie Lary and Meghan Saunders (Waterfront Supervisors), Tyler Saunders (Sports Director), Randolph Netsch (Science and Nature Director)

Members Absent

Kurt Ziemann

Minutes of the Meeting on April 30, 2018

John Williams moved to accept the minutes. Ivey Gianetti seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Lake View Park Use:

Elizabeth Netsch started the discussion with kayaks and paddleboards use at Pelletier Park. She mentioned the policy that was previously stated that people can launch these crafts in this area. Currently in our guidelines that were written for the insurance company the lifeguards were responsible for making sure that everyone who uses a paddle board or kayak are considered sea worthy and containing proper safety protocol such as a flashlight, a visual aid, and a coast guard approved life jacket. Elizabeth mentioned that it is difficult to keep up with the swimmers in the water and the vessel users in the lake area. Last week, there were issues that came to our attention being that they were too close to the swim area, people were not listening to the lifeguards and



breaking rules set by the guards. The Committee discussed whether the lifeguards should be responsible for the boat users or not.

Ivey brought up the idea that everyone who wants to launch a boat during lifeguard season have to launch from another access point to the lake. She made the point that it is not considerate and is a safety issue when the beach is crowded and busy.

John Williams made the point that anything that is causing the lifeguards to avert their attention away from the lake and their responsibility to watching the people swimming should not be a priority. He says that he thinks that might be above and beyond the call of duty for the guards that we employ.

Michael turned to the Summer Camp Staff to see if people are being disobedient to the rules or if they are just ignorant.

Haddy mentioned that some people are being disrespectful and ignoring the rules being set forth by the guards.

Tyler mentioned that he thinks that the law enforcement and other citizens shouldn't handle it, he argued that it is not their responsibility and would not feel comfortable asking them to step in. Haddy mentioned that they have called Law Enforcement to come the past two Sundays, and no one showed. This caused some staff members to lose faith in the support.

Elizabeth mentioned that she approached some Chester Officers to show up during the weekends to help maintain some order with the lifeguards. She said she will bring it up again after the incident.

Randolph brought up that Pelletier Park was originally just a beach and swimming area. We are putting too much responsibility on the lifeguards to handle situations that they are not trained to do or not responsible for. The vessels are taking the lifeguard's attention away from their main responsibility which is at the beach and their swimmers.

John inquired about what is the percentage of people leaving from the park versus the boating area. Tyler said that he would say 70% are leaving from the park and 30% from the boating area coming to the park.

John suggested we change the rule to no vessels to be brought onto the beach or launched from the beach during operating hours.

Megan said that the rules for the vessels should be made very clear and be at the front desk area for people to see. John mentioned that there should be a sheet given to people who want to launch with the rules needed and areas to launch from without being on the property of Pelletier.

Michael asked if anyone would object to immediately changing the rules such that there are no watercrafts allowed at the park while lifeguards are on duty or are within operating hours. No one made an objection or stated an argument. John moved that we change the rules to prohibit watercraft launching or arrival at Pelletier Park.



Ivey seconded it. The motion to change this rule was voted unanimously. This will be put on the Town website, announced in the newsletter, and a posted on the beach.

Michael mentioned that we should talk to law enforcement, so they are aware of this new rule and help with enforcing it. It needs to be clear that no watercraft will be near the beach with a clear direction to other launch and arrival areas.

The topic of stickers attached to cars for local residents were brought up and the committee talked about sending an email out with the passes for residents to let them know they need a pass to park there.

Inflatable Use of Outside the Swimming Area at Pelletier Park:

This topic was combined with the discussion seen above.

Audience of Citizens

Margaret Schenk

Park Assessments:

Assessments of the park were discussed during North Quarter Park improvements.

North Quarter Park Improvements:

The plan for North Quarter Park was brought up to the Committee for approval or changes. The committee talked about the funding we have available including the Rotary who is interested in providing a grant to help build the boardwalk.

Our timeline is flexible except for the money that was given during the budget which must be spent by June 2019.

The Selectman requested that we address the playscape area first including the basketball court and disc golf court.

John Williams is wondering if it is a good idea to professionally lay out the area. Randy mentioned that the people who sell the playscape equipment do that for free within their prices.

One thing that was brought up last meeting was to have the visual appeal of the park improved. John mentioned that it could invite more people to invest in our projects to improve this area. John Saunders also mentioned that there needs to be some maintenance to improve the look and Elizabeth mentioned some stuff that has already been done.

Michael inquired about the timeline that Elizabeth has. She said she would start this Fall, starting with the basketball court first, but that might not be possible until next Spring. John Saunders mentioned that he thinks it should be taken care of in the Fall, September if possible, to gather attention of people in the area to the improvements being made. Elizabeth turned to the committee to make the layout for the playground

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as they can be more creative with it. John Williams volunteered to meet with Elizabeth to help make a plan to be presented at future meetings.

Elizabeth discussed the idea she has in her head at the moment. John Williams said he can do a Google Map print and an overlay to provide an image of what it can look like. Michael asked if anyone disagreed with this, and no one expressed a sentiment.

The committee took a walk to figure out where the disc golf will be set up. Discussion ensued. The committee then walked to the basketball court area and discussion ensued over that. Tyler mentioned that he thinks we should have running lights in the summer starting at 8pm and ending at 11pm to keep the court illuminated for those playing after hours.

Next Month:

The next meeting will be held on September 25, 2018.

Adjournment:

John Williams moved to adjourn. Deron seconded. Meeting adjourned at 7:34pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kenna M. Campbell
Secretary