

TOWN OF BERLIN
Parks and Recreation Commission
230 Kensington Road • Berlin, CT 06037

Thursday, October 12, 2023
6:00 p.m.
Hubbard School Library
MEETING

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present: Donna Bovee- Chairwoman, Greg Starr, Lucas Van Zandt, Tony Butrimas, Don Dellaquila, Joe Pulcini via Zoom

Staff Present:

Jen Ochoa, Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services
Debbie Dennis, Superintendent of Recreation
Steve Wood, Superintendent of Parks & Grounds

Chairwoman Donna Bovee called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Audience of Citizens

Faye Gordon, 87 Mattabassett St., is focused on the East Berlin swimming pool. She has enjoyed it in the past and thinks each year there has been a significant change. This year she had to utilize the main pool at Percival. She enjoyed the staff and convenience of the East Berlin pool. She is a teacher and used it for exercise and found it therapeutic. She is willing to help with any issues. She would also like the pool closing date to be extended an extra week.

Kerin Heemsota, 3 Watch Hill, would like a Splash Pad added to the town pool. She brought a document titled "Splash Pad & Town Pools Near Berlin" and would like to advocate for a Splash Pad in town. Moms from town are frustrated that they have to travel to other towns for services. She would like to see updates to Little People's Playground. She also would like the town to work more collaboratively with Moms in town. She would like to help get grant funding and make our playground comparable to other towns.

Carol Courtney, 51 Sterling Dr., is part of the Kensington Garden Club, which proposed to add shrubs, perennials, and a pollinator pathway to the Little People's Playground. They wish

to beautify the area. They want to help the town and can give a presentation on Pollinator Pathways as well.

Danielle Morrise-Corsetti, 75 Cottage St., strongly supports keeping East Berlin pool open. This summer her kids did not get to go to the pool because Percival is too far. She sees East Berlin pool as a community builder. It is helpful to have open for this side of town and believes there is value in having it. She would like to help support it.

Robyn Cop, 65 Division St., has supported the East Berlin pool since she was a child. She grew up with the pool. It gives children in the East Berlin area somewhere safe to go. Lessons used to be a big thing at this pool and now there isn't much to do in East Berlin otherwise. Remembered field trips to the pool in the past and suggested bringing those back again in order to increase attention and attendance at East Berlin pool. Would like to see a focus on marketing and upping enrollment.

Samantha Sullivan, 18 Garden Dr., thinks the pool could be fixed. If it's a fix that can last she feels it would be worth the money to fix it since there seems to be a great need for it. She mainly wanted to discuss the need for a skate park in town. She has asked children of the community and they mostly want a skate park, biking clubs, drama clubs and more arts in the town. She would be willing to help with fundraising and development of these ideas.

Crystal & Hudson VanGarter, 28 Glenbrook Rd., would like updates to the playground, for example a better firefighter pole and a softer landing area. They also support a splash pad being put in.

Amy Balko, 7 Redwood Ln., was raised in Berlin and feels everyone benefits from the East Berlin pool. She feels the elderly utilize the pool often and that the pool's programming has been put on autopilot the last few years. She was told that staffing was an issue but believes the town staff can do better on this. She also said there is nothing to do in East Berlin for kids to do.

Kyleigh Stiefel, 103 South Slope Dr., would appreciate something different in Berlin. She travels outside of town a lot for parks and playgrounds. She wants something in comparison to "Jonathan's Dream" or New Britain's new playground. She suggested the parks can have individual themes to them to make them exciting, ex., firetruck themes.

Elaine Matulis, 260 Beckley Rd., is the President of the Kensington Garden Club. She stated there is a big national push to install Pollinator Pathways into towns. She would like the club to take on this project and beautify the town. These pathways are seen at the volunteer park and want to see more areas kept up with in town.

Ted Johnson, Wildscape Artisans in Wethersfield, has a company that designs Pollinator Pathways, they have installed some in Glastonbury, Matson Hill, and Ferry Landing. They are areas that are used by people regularly and actively and there haven't been any issues with them such as bees. This project is being done in many areas of Connecticut.

Todd Helming, 931 Norton Rd., has always chosen the East Berlin pool for lessons. Lessons were full and always being utilized at both pools in town. We need adequate facilities to support our town's youth. The wading pools in other towns have been developed into Splash Pads. Would be a wonderful addition to town.

Chairwoman Bovee suggests people attend meetings regularly, they could offer constructive ideas. She wants town members to stay involved and even attend Town Council meetings. The Commission presents budgets, capital improvements, which are then sent to the Town Council. They pushed for Little People's playground to get funding. It is a long process and people need to advocate for their needs in Town meetings. Chairwoman Bovee reminded everyone that they are a recommending commission. They send information through the proper channels and want to assure citizens they do forward their concerns and recommendations. He wants to reiterate we have an excellent Park & Recreation staff and it is a very small staff compared to surrounding towns. They work hard to maintain activities within the town.

To address East Berlin pool and why it was closed this past year, Debbie Dennis, Superintendent of Recreation, had closed the pool due to Covid and they had lost their chain of development for lifeguards to supervisors. The town has marketed to outside areas to recruit staffing, and other towns that maintain staffing usually have indoor pools. Chairwoman Bovee mentioned the Department offered lifeguard training, which requires a minimum of 5 sign ups and they only had 2. Another issue mentioned by Chairwoman Bovee is the significant repairs needed to the pool, all of these are on the Capital Budget list and they have tried for years to get things fixed. Attendance is also an issue, it has been declining each year. Some days there were zero attendee's and an average of 19 attendees.

2. Approval of Minutes

September 14, 2023

Commissioner Starr moved to approve the September 14, 2023 meeting minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr,

Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Joe Pulcini,

Those abstained: Commissioner Don Delaquila, Commissioner Tony Butrimas

Vote being: 4-0-2 (MOTION CARRIED)

Edits to be corrected on section 5d., enter a new paragraph after the sentence, "She was requesting them to come to a meeting and speak about the policy if they have questions' ". Also, The Town Council tables the Little People's funding and asks Steve Wood and Donna Bovee to come back and present to the Council the cost, types, possible locations, etc. of a splash pad .

3. Consent Agenda
No Consent Agenda.

Motion to add Park and Recreation Commission member nomination for Plan of Conservation and Development Committee to agenda

Commissioner Delaquilla moved to add to the agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr, Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Joe Pulcini, Commissioner Don Delaquila, Commissioner Tony Butrimas

Vote being: 6-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

Park and Recreation Commission nominates Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt to represent Parks and Recreation Commission on Plan of Conservation and Development Committee
Commissioner Delaquilla moved to nominate Lucas Van Zandt.

Seconded by Commissioner Starr.

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr, Commissioner Joe Pulcini, Commissioner Don Delaquila, Commissioner Tony Butrimas

Those Abstained: Commissioner Van Zandt

Vote being: 5-0-1 (MOTION CARRIED)

4. Parks and Recreation

- a. Monthly Report, Commissioner Starr asked where parking would be for the Trunk or Treat and Debbie Dennis, Superintendent of Recreation stated that they chose the Berlin Community Center so it would be closer to the center of town and if we have to adjust due to weather, instead of canceling we can move inside. They have new community members doing Trunks for it this year.

Commissioner Butrimas asked if there is an increase of staffing that can be supervisors. Debbie Dennis, Superintendent of Recreation shared that she doesn't have 6 current staff to make supervisors. Supervising staff is needed during emergencies. She has had swim coaches tell their students to become certified. New Britain and Newington pools all closed at the same time as Berlin this year.

5. Parks & Grounds

- a. Monthly Report, Steve Wood, Superintendent of Parks & Grounds noted that all the rain has been hammering the fields. The litter at the High School has only improved on days that school is in session. When there is a long weekend or vacation, the parking lot gets messy again. They continue to clean it as much as

they are able. Still are working on a potential plan of closing gates to the parking lot.

Little People's playground was approved by the Board of Finance, it has gone to the Town Council and they have not approved it yet. 200k will be contributed to fencing, equipment, etc. There are many different companies they can use and explained that other playgrounds have used different brands.

Commissioners discussed the Kensington Garden Club's request to put in a pollinator pathway near the playground. They have in the past received complaints of bees, and a pollinator pathway will potentially bring bees to the area. These bees are a safety concern for the children. Steve Wood, Superintendent of Parks & Grounds will do research on areas that have these pathways.

Steve Wood, Superintendent of Parks & Grounds, has submitted a feasibility study for the East Berlin pool area, this includes tennis courts, splash pad addition, pool upgrades, upgrades to pool house, and pickleball courts. He will have to check in other towns to see their parking situations because there are only 21 spots in that location now, wants to know if that would be adequate parking. The biggest challenge is that there still needs to be upgrades done to the pool and they aren't able to get adequate staffing to open. There is a large list of things that need to be upgraded and fixed.

b. State of CT Grant Update

Jen Ochoa, Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services, said Biscoglio is looking great. The colors on the field are vibrant. The project is moving along but is not complete yet, so the field is not open for use yet. Percival is coming along too. They will be adding temporary lights to Biscoglio to give adequate lighting for practices.

6. Adjournment

Commissioner Starr motioned to adjourn at 8:11 pm.

Seconded by Commissioner Delaquilla

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr, Commissioner Joe Pulcini, Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Don Delaquilla, Commissioner Tony Butrimas

Vote being: 6-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by,
Tiffany Trowbridge-Bernard
Recording Secretary

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
BERLIN TOWN CLERK

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly J. Gault". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "K".

10/25/2023, 2:47:57 PM

TOWN OF BERLIN
Parks and Recreation Commission
230 Kensington Road • Berlin, CT 06037

Thursday, October 12, 2023
6:00 p.m.
139 Grove Street, East Berlin, CT 06023
MEETING

Join Zoom meeting

<https://berlinc-t-gov.zoom.us/j/89194491241?pwd=Dozs2QZuzHZEE5842UknXqPWF8WbG9.1>

Meeting ID: 891 9449 1241

Meeting Passcode: 904990

By Phone (tolls may apply): +1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

Meeting Agenda

1. Audience of Citizens
2. Approval of Minutes
 - a. September 14, 2023
3. Consent Agenda
4. Parks and Recreation
 - a. Monthly Report
5. Parks & Grounds
 - a. Monthly Report
 - b. State of CT Grant Update
6. Adjournment

TOWN OF BERLIN
Parks and Recreation Commission
230 Kensington Road • Berlin, CT 06037

Thursday, September 14, 2023
6:00 p.m.
238 Kensington Road
MEETING

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present: Donna Bovee - Chairwoman, Greg Starr, Lucas Van Zandt, Joe Pulcini
via Zoom

Commissioners Absent: Don Dellaquila, Tony Butrimas

Staff Present:

Jen Ochoa, Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services
Debbie Dennis, Superintendent of Recreation

Chairwoman Donna Bovee called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Audience of Citizens

2. Approval of Minutes July 13, 2023

Commissioner Starr moved to approve the July 13, 2023 meeting minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr,

Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Joe Pulcini

Vote being: 4-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Request by Berlin Volunteer Fire Department for permission to consume alcoholic beverages (BYOB beer and wine) at Pistol Creek for their annual family picnic on Saturday, October 7, 2023 from 2:00PM - 9:00PM. There will be 70 people in attendance, food will be served sit down style and there will be no entertainment. TULIP insurance will be obtained if permission is granted.

- b. Request acceptance of a donation of a maximum of 10 straw/hay bales, valued at approximately \$90 to be used for our Scarecrow Contest for the 2023 Scarecrow Feestival.
- c. Request by Ron Bosco of Berlin Lions Charities to be able to sell luminaries at Berlin High School home football games on October 20, 2023 and November 10, 2023. Funds raised will go towards local Veterans in need.

Commissioner Starr moved to accept consent agenda a - c.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr,

Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Joe Pulcini

Vote being: 4-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

Discussion on item c, Commissioner Van Zandt wanted clarification on what type of luminaries they are selling. They are battery operated and not with fire.

- d. Request by CCC (Central CT Conference) to charge a fee of \$5 for adults, \$3 for students/seniors for a tournament to take place at Scalise Field, Sage Park on November 1, 2023 and November 3, 2023 from 3:30PM - 8:30PM.

Commissioner Starr moved to accept consent agenda d.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr,

Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Joe Pulcini

Vote being: 4-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

- e. Request by CCC (Central CT Conference) to have field usage fees and light fees, not to exceed an amount of \$1,090 waived for the CCC Tournament taking place at Scalise Field, Sage Park on November 1, 2023 and November 3, 2023.

Commissioner Starr moved to accept consent agenda d.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr,

Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Joe Pulcini

Vote being: 4-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

Discussion on item e, Commissioner Starr was curious if concessions will still be opened and they will. The groups working the concessions will still keep the funds earned.

4. Parks and Recreation

- a. Monthly Report, Debbie Dennis, Superintendent of Recreation, stated that they had increased the maximum registered at The Creek Summer Program in 2022 but decided it was too many so they went back to the previous maximum. The money is higher because of this difference. There was a great response in 2023 with the added senior and caregiver passes for Percival.

- b. Summer Wrap Up, In regard to the swim team, the numbers were good. Swim lessons were successful, despite the rain they were able to hold lessons. She is still looking for a Director for the other Summer Program site. Prefers they are a teacher or have teaching experience because they will have the ability to run the camp. Chairwoman Bovee suggested programming with UpBeat. There was discussion on the lifeguard training and that other towns offer it full year. They encourage people to attend meetings and town council meetings if they want to advocate for anything in town.
- c. October Commission Meeting, will be at Hubbard School in the media center. We only have 25-30 spots for the audience of citizens. It is important to still maintain decorum during the meeting and allow citizens to reflect their ideas during the audience of citizens.

5. Parks & Grounds

- a. Monthly Report, no discussion on monthly report.
- b. Field/Facility Use Policy Discussion of Update, Jen Ochoa, Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services, mentioned the pieces highlighted are always highlighted because of their importance but they are looking to make changes to the highlighted portion regarding St. Paul's school. Chairwoman Bovee explained that each year their groups are exempt from paying fees, while St. Paul's school was previously not included. She would like them included for the future because it is a school organization in town. It is a non-public school and we historically waive the fee every year anyways.

Commissioner Starr motioned to accept the Field of Use policy as presented in section 1A.b that exempts St. Paul School from field rental fees.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr, Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt, Commissioner Joe Pulcini

Vote being: 4-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

- c. CCC event at Sage Park, no discussion.
- d. Discussion on Fields, Playground Tours, Chairwoman Bovee stated that there is an adult soccer league playing on the fields at Sage. Steve Wood, Superintendent of Parks and Grounds has added signage at Sage concerning parking areas. Commissioner Tony Butrimas saw them using the field. Chairwoman Bovee mentioned to the group there are fees and insurance required. She was unsure how many are from Berlin or outside towns, she did not recognise anyone. She was requesting them to come to a meeting and speak about the policy if they have questions. Discussion on playground updates, Little People's is in the budget for 200k and Steve Wood, Superintendent of Parks & Grounds, presented a conceptual plan to the Town Council. Chairwoman Bovee described what he presented to the Council. The Mayor did want to investigate putting in a Splash Pad and asked Steve Wood to present about that as well.
- e. State of CT Grant Update, Jen Ochoa, Director of Community, Recreation and Park Services, said Biscoglio is running behind because of the rain we have gotten.

Percival is on time and on budget, looking great. CIAC reached out to Jen Ochoa and Steve Wood asking to use the fields for hosting soccer playoff games, November 14-16th. They would pay the fees. But Berlin Youth Football Championship will be on the 19th and would like them to have first right in the schedule and usage. Chairwoman Bovee wanted to ask about the Scoreboard and mention that people do not know how to use the Scoreboard. They are trained and allowed to use it only with Nick Smith. Jen Ochoa, reached out to youth groups that they cannot use it for ads, highlight videos, etc. this year. Only High School athletics can use it while everyone is getting acclimated to using it. It is only being run by Board of Education personnel. The Plan of Conservation and Development had asked the Commission for things they would want included into the plan. They have decided to create a committee, including a Park and Recreation representative, to develop and implement the Plan of Conservation.

6. Adjournment

Commissioner Starr motioned to adjourn at 7:20 pm.

Seconded by Commissioner Van Zandt

Those voting in favor: Chairwoman Donna Bovee, Commissioner Greg Starr,
Commissioner Joe Pulcini, Commissioner Lucas Van Zandt

Vote being: 4-0 (MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by,
Tiffany Trowbridge-Bernard
Recording Secretary

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
BERLIN TOWN CLERK



9/21/2023, 4:27:48 PM



Town of Berlin
Parks and Recreation Department
230 Kensington Road • Berlin, CT 06037
Office (860) 828-7056 • Fax (860) 828-1627
E-mail ddennis@berlinct.gov

Debra S. Dennis, CPRP
Superintendent of Recreation

Parks and Recreation monthly report for October

1. Fall programs are ongoing; we have several dance and movement classes, a class for 0-6 month olds and their parent, dog obedience class, in-person yoga class for adults, tennis lessons, virtual classes through Personal Euphoria and painting classes.
2. Winter basketball registration started September 25. Registration is good with 108 registered as of Tuesday, October 10.
3. I will be contacted basketball staff from last year, to see who is not returning to determine number of new staff to hire. I am anticipating a few staff will need to be hired. I will post on the Town website, Facebook page and announcements will be made at BHS. Kaitlin Starr will be the boys 5-8 coordinator and Mike Buchholz, a former coach, will be the girls coordinator and oversee the boys 3&4 grade games.
4. The Scarecrow Contest this year will have the scarecrows on display as you drive into the Arthur B. Powers Municipal complex, starting October 13. People can vote for the Berlin's Best Scarecrow, starting October 17 through October 27. Voting slips will be available at Town Hall, Berlin Peck Memorial Library, the Berlin Senior Center and the Parks and Recreation Department/Community Center. Winner will be announced on October 31.

We are doing a traditional Trunk or Treat event at the Berlin Community Center on Saturday, October 28, from 6-7 p.m. People must register ahead of time and we will have people handing out candy/goodies at their "trunk". We currently have 15 people decorating trunks. New this year we will also have people vote for their favorite trunk and give the winner a \$20 gift card.

5. Started to work on the Tinsel Fun Run and registration will start soon. Race will be held at Berlin High School on Saturday, December 2.

Debbie



Town of Berlin
Parks and Grounds
15 Town Farm Lane - Berlin CT
Office 860-828-7025
Fax 860-828-7124
E-mail swood@berlinct.gov

Steven T. Wood
Superintendent Parks and Grounds

Parks and Grounds September report

News:

- Paint parking lots, no parking and handicap spots
- Setup light towers for BYS & BYF
- Decorated front of buildings for fall at the Art Powers Complex
- Scarify ballfields

Daily

- Water and deadhead flower
- Groom and line ballfields
- Mow grass including Pistol Creek

Weekly

- Garbage & litter
- Wash and clean trucks
- Paint athletic lines

Miscellaneous

- Service equipment
- Repair tables and benches
- Cleanup flower beds
- Cleaned and organized our green building at Sage