

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

Thursday, December 10, 2020

6:00 p.m.

Berlin Community Center

VIRTUAL

Link to video meeting –

<https://townofberlin.my.webex.com/townofberlin.my/j.php?MTID=md5b05be41f0f2b5c3c64b5b26ea40852>

Meeting Number: 132 627 4186

Password:

5QmY43vJuKM (57694385 from phones and video systems)

Call-In Information:

1-408-418-9388 United States Toll

Access code: 132 627 4186

Meeting Agenda

1. **Audience of Citizens**
2. **Approval of Minutes**
November 12, 2020
3. **Consent Agenda**
4. **Parks & Grounds**
 - a. Monthly Report
 - b. Sage 1 Update
 - c. Field Closure Dates 2021
5. **Parks and Recreation**
 - a. Monthly Report
 - b. Community/Senior Center Update
6. **Adjournment**

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

Thursday, November 12, 2020
6:00 p.m.
Berlin Community Center
VIRTUAL

ATTENDANCE:

Commissioners Present: Donna Bovee - Chairwoman, Tony Butrimas, Don Dellaquila, Steve Hinchliffe, Andrew Legnani (joined 6:02 p.m.), Dinesh Patel, Joe Pulcini

Staff Present:

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

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

1. Audience of Citizens

- a. Patrick Fisher, Nutmeg Games – Mr. Fisher stated that Nutmeg Games requests a waiver of field rental fees for Lacrosse, Baseball and Boys / Girls Soccer for its 2021 tournament. He explained that while the group requests a waiver of field rental fees, it does pay for Berlin on-site staff throughout the event. In return for field use, Nutmeg Games proposes to showcase Berlin as a sponsor on its programs, flyers, tee shirts and in a New Britain Herald advertisement. Mr. Fisher also worked with Berlin Economic Development Director Chris Edge to create a map of local restaurants for event attendees. He noted that from 2022 – 2026, Nutmeg Games is partnering with the City of Middletown and may not seek to host any events in Berlin during that time period.

2. Approval of Minutes

October 8, 2020

Commissioner Dellaquila moved to approve the October 8, 2020 meeting minutes.

Seconded by Commissioner Butrimas.

Vote being 7-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Request by Connecticut Sports Management Group for the 2021 Nutmeg Games to sell food items, beverages and merchandise at the Games, July 15, 2021 – July 25, 2021.
- b. Request by the Connecticut Sports Management Group to have estimated field usage fees, not to exceed an amount of \$5,980 waived for the 2021 Nutmeg Games to be held July 15, 2021 – July 25, 2021.
- c. Approve meeting dates of 2021 and January 2022.

Commissioner Pulcini moved to approve Consent Agenda items a (permission to sell food, beverages and merchandise from July 15, 2021 – July 25, 2021) and b (waiver of field use fees not to exceed \$5,980 from July 15, 2021 – July 25, 2021).

Seconded by Commissioner Hinchliffe.

Director Ochoa indicated that she discussed the possibility of COVID-19 continuing to limit public gatherings approaching the 2021 tournament, and they are in agreement that public safety may dictate cancellation of the event. Additionally, Nutmeg Games does not typically use all of the field time it requests, so the actual waived fees will be less than estimated. (At its last tournament, Nutmeg Games only utilized about 50% of the requested field times.)

Vote being 7-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

Commissioner Dellaquila moved to approve Consent Agenda item c as presented.

Seconded by Commissioner Legnani.

Vote being 7-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

4. Parks & Grounds

a. Monthly Report (see attached) –

- Scalise lights – Besides one pole damaged by a recent storm, all other poles were tested and determined to be fine. The damaged light pole will be repositioned, secured and installed at a cost of about \$22,200 (\$7,200 for site work and \$15,000 for crane use), and should be ready for use by January 1, 2021. Superintendent Wood noted that the temporary lights utilized on site minimized the impact to field users.
- Baretta Field – After an extensive renovation to Baretta Field 3 years ago, it is in poor condition currently. The maintenance crew closed the field and locked the gate after recent work to repair damage to the field (including laying of sod, filling in large divot by pitcher's mound) but people continue to hop the fence and use the field, as well as dragging equipment onto it. Superintendent Wood has tried to communicate with Berlin Little League to utilize mats in front of the pitcher's mound and lock up screens when practice is over. He will continue to work toward cooperation with the youth groups and will notify the Commission if its intervention is required.
- Garrity Field – some repairs were done to improve the field, including some resodding. More work is required long-term but with the recent repairs the field should be safely playable for Spring.
- Pulcini Field – more significant work is needed to get the field safe for play. There is no money in the budget to subcontract the work and Mr. Wood is not sure if there will be enough staff to accomplish repairs to a 6" – 8" lip at the infield before the season opens.
- Dennehy Field – the field was closed ahead of schedule to level a sinkhole, but it is now in good condition and should be fine for next soccer season.

- ##### b. Fee Discussion –
- Director Ochoa notified the Commission that the proposed increases to fees are in keeping with neighboring communities. Chairwoman Bovee asked Director Ochoa to put together a spreadsheet comparison of Berlin's different Parks and Recreation fees versus all neighboring communities for future use when considering rates.

2020-11-12 Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

- c. **Sage 1 Update** – New wiring to the lights has been installed, sod has been laid and the scoreboard is in place. Work will continue on the infield and should be finished by Thanksgiving. The building construction should be completed sometime in December 2020.
- d. **Pickleball Update** – The pickleball courts have been completed are in use by residents who have been bringing their portable nets. A Pickleball professional will has expressed interest in utilizing the court and offering training.
- e. **BHS Courts** – In keeping with the usual schedule, the outdoor lights will be turned off for the winter season prior to the end of November. The group discussed the possibility of hiring a part-time staff person to deter inappropriate behavior and littering at the courts. Chairwoman Bovee acknowledged the Town has union contract obligations but hopes that the union would be amenable to making an exception for a part-time seasonal position in this type of situation (similar to a concession made at Timberlin Golf Course for seasonal staff).
- f. **Banners Update** – Several unauthorized banners have been placed at Sage Park. Director Ochoa, Superintendent Wood and Commissioner Butrimas inquired but were unable to discover who they belong to. The unauthorized banners have been removed and are being stored by the Town. If the owner claims them, Director Ochoa will be happy to return the banners and explain the Commission's banner review and approval policy.

5. Parks and Recreation

- a. **Monthly Report** (see attached) Superintendent Dennis reported that despite limited program offerings, she remains busy continuing attempts to coordinate programs (like basketball, painting, dance), Community Center meetings, monitoring of changing COVID stats and protocols and facilitating contact tracing / notification of positive COVID case situations. Director Ochoa added that the drive-thru Trunk or Treat was a success. Recreation staff volunteers handed out candy and the event was appreciated by the 150+ attendees.
- b. **Fee Schedule Discussion -**
- c. **Community/Senior Center Update** – The design firm QA&M plans to hold two outreach forums (about 20 attendees in each) in November / December 2020.

6. Adjournment

Commissioner Hinchliffe moved to adjourn at 7:13 p.m.

Seconded by Commissioner Dellaquila.

Vote being 7-0. (MOTION CARRIED)

Submitted by,

Dana Borges

2020-11-12 Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

Parks and Grounds November report

Daily

- Groom and line fields
- Mow and weed-whack town properties
- Groom and line fields
- leaves

Weekly

- Garbage
- Paint athletic lines
- Assisted with moving food for the food pantry

Miscellaneous

- Update
 - Scalise Lights
 - Temporary lights Scalise
- Service equipment
- Trench Sage 1
- Installed granite posts at East Berlin Memorial
- Removed all dead flowers around town
- Resod front of the mound and added 60 tons of infield material at Berretta Infield
- Resod low spot centerline at Dennehy Soccer
- Painting of the pickleball court is completed
- Mulched and dressed up Veterans Park

Parks and Recreation monthly report for November

1. Winter basketball and other winter programs held in the schools continue to be on hold as the Superintendent's office is not comfortable making a decision on outside groups using the schools, due to recent increases in COVID-19 numbers. I will contact his office weekly for updates to see if we are able to move forward with any of the programs.
2. Scarecrow Festival was held virtually this year with 24 scarecrows entered. Voting took place on-line and there was a tie for Berlin's Best. Both winners received a gift card.

Our first Drive-thru Trunk or Treat event was held on Friday, October 23 at Sage Park. We had 165 kids registered. We had 15 trunks decorated and all 4 volunteer Fire Departments were represented. It was a great night and people were very happy and appreciative.

We had eleven pumpkins register for the Pumpkin Decorating contest. We posted all Pumpkins on Facebook and the pumpkin with the most likes, was named the People's Choice. The winner will have their name engraved on the plaque in the Parks and Recreation office. All participants were sent a \$5 gift card to Pralines.

3. I have been in contact with my colleague at the YMCA and we have decided to make the Tinsel Fun Run a virtual run this year. We are working with the timing company to get information out to hold the event. It was a difficult decision but we feel it is the best decision at this time.
4. We continue to have groups meet at the Community Center, even with the new COVID guidelines in place. Things have been going well so far. We had a blood drive in October and the Red Cross has reached out to offer another one in January. We have been able to hold dance and painting classes in person. I was notified by Personal Euphoria, the company that we work with for our current yoga classes, that they are going totally virtual for the winter. We will be offering three classes this winter – Barre, Tighten & Tone and Core Strength.
5. We have decided due to COVID-19 that we will not be having our annual Santa's Parlor this year.
6. I have completed my recommendations for next year's budget. I am again asking for a part-time Recreation Supervisor position and have included new pay rates, based on scheduled minimum wage increases.

RECEIVED FOR RECORD
BERLIN TOWN CLERK

2020 NOV 19 AM 10:32

Kathryn Hesse

BERLIN, CT.



Town of Berlin

Parks and Grounds

15 Town Farm Lane - Berlin CT

Office 860-828-7025

Fax 860-828-7124

E-mail swood@town.berlin.ct.us

Steven T. Wood
Superintendent Parks and Grounds

Parks and Grounds November report

Daily

- Groom and line fields
- Mow and weed-whack town properties
- Groom and line ballfields
- leaves

Weekly

- Garbage
- Paint athletic lines
- Assisted with moving food for the food pantry

Miscellaneous

- Update
 - Scalise Light
- Put up Christmas lights
- Service equipment
- Removed all dead flowers around town
- Resod front of the mound added 80 tons of infield material at Garrity and Pulcini Infield
- Drained and washed and refilled both pools
- Blew out irrigation lines through town

Storm Damage

- Tree crushed fence at the following location
 - Barretta Field
 - Hubbard School Playground
-



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

Debra S. Dennis, CPRP
Superintendent of Recreation

Parks and Recreation monthly report for December

1. Winter dance and Painting w/Peggy classes are on hold. We will not be offering dog obedience classes this winter. We are waiting until after January 19 to see if we are able to hold women's volleyball and men's basketball.
2. After a conversation with Charlie Brown, Director of Health, we decided the Community Center would be closed through January 31. We will still hold the last two yoga classes and Painting w/Peggy classes, with strict guidelines in place. The only event we will be hosting at the Center is a blood drive on January 5. We will re-evaluate things to see when it will be safe for us to re-open for groups and offer programs.
3. We offered a Holiday House Decorating Contest. We have 52 houses registered. I will be judging with two other staff, on Thursday, December 10.

The Tinsel Run started virtually on December 5 and will go until December 26. People can register at any time, up to December 26, to participate.

4. As you know, we made the difficult decision to cancel the youth basketball programs this winter. The Directive from Governor Lamont pausing sports until January 19 and still no approval from the Board of Education to use the schools made it impossible to try and get the season going.
5. Over the next few weeks, I will be contacting summer staff, who worked the last two summers, to see who will be returning. I anticipate, around the end of the month, I will begin advertising for open positions. While we still do not know what type of programs we will be able to run, I want to get ahead of things in anticipation we will open at least one, if not both pools and have some form of our Summer Fun program.

Debbie