

Somers Parks & Recreation Board

PO Box 46 Somers, New York 10589

OFF: (914)-232-8441

FAX: (914)-232-8548

Kevin Westerman
Chairman



MEETING MINUTES **July 23, 2025**

Chairman Westerman opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m.

The members present were: Jim Boniello; Chris McCormack; John Papalia; Don Penzine; Janelle Robbins; Michele Sanz; and Kevin Westerman.

Stephen Krug and John Zattola were absent.

Parks and Recreation Superintendent Steve Ralston and Councilman Richard Clinchy were also present.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Penzine to approve the minutes of the June 25, 2025, meeting as submitted. Mr. McCormack seconded the motion. All were in favor.

MR. RALSTON'S REPORT

Mr. Ralston has been busy providing the data needed for the grant writers to apply for a matching grant to complete what is needed to be done at the Reynolds House so it can finally be opened to the public. Roughly \$120,000 will be needed.

NEW BUSINESS:

2026 Proposed Budget

Mr. Ralston will begin working on the proposed 2026 department budget. If anyone has any suggestions, concerns, etc., please let him know. It was suggested by Councilman Clinchy that a list of top priorities be provided with the proposed budget. Mr. Ralston expressed the need for a full-time office person as the staff has to take a lot of time out of their day to handle administrative tasks since there is only a part-timer in the office now and a full-time maintenance worker as the responsibilities of Angle Fly Preserve that now fall under his jurisdiction take a lot of time to complete. Mr. Westerman will meet with him to discuss this further and include it in the 2026 proposed department budget.

Mr. Ralston reminded the Board that as the Reis Park Expansion progresses and if the donation of a community center comes to fruition, it will have a major impact on the Parks Department budget. In addition, there will come a time when adult age staff will have to be

hired as counselors for camp. Each year they are dealing with more and more disciplinary behavior from the campers which the average teenage counselor is not qualified to handle.

OLD BUSINESS:

Day Camp/Programs Update

Day Camp is in week four and the daily attendance continues to be high. Although it has been hot, the rain site only needed to be used once. The majority of the campers are having a good time and enjoying the special events. The demographics of some of the campers are changing and it seems that many would prefer to be idle rather than active. Mr. Ralston said that the Library Director has been absolutely spectacular in accommodating the campers, especially on the hot days.

Registration continues for the specialty camps held in conjunction with the Recreation Services Agreement.

Three summer concerts remain and Mr. Ralston is working with the Somers Chamber of Commerce to show a movie in Reis Park on August 13th.

Unfortunately, there were thunderstorms after the start of the Independence Day Celebration which forced the cancellation of some of the planned activities. Thankfully it stopped raining in time for the fireworks which were well attended. This event will be held on July 2nd next year.

The schedule of fall programs is a work in progress.

SYSO has been given their fall permits and field allocations.

Reis Park Expansion Update

The Town applied for a grant with the new grant writers that can be used toward the Reis Park Expansion project. Awards will be made late summer, early fall. In the meantime, the Highway Department cut an emergency access egress road from behind the tennis courts to Plum Brook Road. It is the sincere hope of the Board that the Reis Park Expansion Committee will reconvene over the summer to talk about further details of the expansion. Ideally the Committee needs a Chairperson to keep things organized and moving forward. In addition, now that there are new grant writers, it would be important for them to know the projects included in each phase of the expansion so they can explore funding opportunities.

MR. RALSTON'S COMMENTS

Mr. Ralston had no additional comments.

BOARD MEMBER'S COMMENTS

Mr. Papalia is disappointed that the concerts are once again not well attended. Mr. Ralston said that all the advertising that was able to be done was. Although some have expressed the benefits of a Town or Parks Department Facebook page, it is not permitted. Some ideas for next year were to get community group sponsorship for the concerts which may result in better attendance, as they may come with a built-in audience and can advertise the events through their groups. Consider offering only one or two concerts, which could run as much as \$5,000 each and that budget line would have to be increased, which is a gamble if the attendance is low. Mr. Ralston is not sure what the resolution is but appreciates any and all suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 p.m. The Board will meet next on September 24th at 6:30 p.m. in the Recreation Center in Van Tassell Park. There will not be a meeting in August.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise Schirmer, Secretary
Parks and Recreation Board

cc: Parks and Recreation Board
Superintendent of Parks and Recreation
Town Board
Town Clerk