



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK  
**Parks & Recreation Commission**

*Susan Esty, Chairman  
Kevin Lane, Vice Chair  
Jim Henderson, Secretary*

[www.oldsaybrookct.gov](http://www.oldsaybrookct.gov)

*Star Rueckert  
Bror Ashe  
Nancy Gatta  
Steven Pernal*

**OLD SAYBROOK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING**

**Wednesday, April 21, 2021; 6:30 PM**  
Meeting Held Via Web Access/Dial In

**MINUTES**

1. **Call Meeting to Order** – Chair Susan Esty called the meeting to order at 6:35p.m.  
**Present were:** Director Ray Allen, Susan Esty, Jim Henderson, Steven Pernal, Kevin Lane, Nancy Gatta and Star Rueckert @ 6:38pm  
**Absent:** Bror Ashe  
**Also present:** Jona Paradis, Ass't Director & Tina Antolino, Recording Clerk
2. **Approval of March 10, 2021 Meeting Minutes** – MOTION to accept the March 10, 2021 minutes as presented made by Jim Henderson, seconded by Steven Pernal and unanimously approved.
3. **Recognition of Guests** – Francisco Gomes, FitzGerald & Halliday and 13 members of the public.
4. **Correspondence** – Letters received from: Sharon Tiezzi, President of the Old Saybrook Lions Club and Foundation regarding use of the gazebo. The following letters were sent regarding “Smoke on the Water”: Kathy Connolly, Wayne & Barbara Harms, William Childress & Vivian Hudson. Emails from: Jeannie Abrahamson and John Aldi & Diane Aldi DePaola and Camille & Anthony Brodeur.
5. **Review of Bills** – The Commission reviewed bills for the month of March in the amount of \$4,299.26.
6. **Public Comments-** Town Green pavilion comments: Sharon Tiezzi, President of Old Saybrook Lions Club expressed concern about replacing the Town Green gazebo and the club would like to raise funds to have the gazebo repaired or refurbished. “Smoke on the Water” comments: David & Earla Frisbe, 42 Cromwell Place, stated a fair market offer has been made to the owner to purchase the land and the land will then be donated. Michael Weiner, 184 North Cove Rd, is concerned about spoiling the natural area of the Point with this project.
7. **New Business**
  - A. **Strategic Plan of Parks Final Plans Review** – Kevin Lane highlighted the need to refurbish our older parks while being fiscally responsible. When compared to similar communities in the Northeast, Old Saybrook Parks and Rec generated 42% more revenue per capita, its operating costs are 44% below average and its capital expenditures are 75% below the 5 year spending average. He introduced Francisco Gomes who gave an overview of the plan’s final draft. Commissioners should send any final feedback regarding the plan to Kevin Lane and Ray Allen.
  - B. **“Smoke of the Water” Site Plan Recommendation Letter Review** – Susan Esty reviewed a draft letter to the Zoning Commission stating the P&R Commission’s comments on the project’s site plan. She would like to add that the project’s lighting should try and match the adjacent park’s lighting and would like to see water runoff issues addressed. She stated the

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Commission has similar concerns as those expressed by property owners. Jim Henderson stated his main issues are music and noise and determining tolerable levels. He expressed concern over the use of paper products, potential littering in an ocean environment and the nuisance and health concerns of sea gull droppings. Should there be rules about feeding sea gulls? Kevin Lane spoke of concerns of restricting public access, specifically sidewalks and public parking. Susan Esty questions the clash of styles and volume in respect to the proposed music. Nancy Gatta is worried about the contrast of the family oriented park and the proposed facility with open-air alcohol and music. Star Rueckert stated her concerns about parking and the impact on open space. Susan Esty stressed the importance of maintaining a good working relationship with the private property owner. Susan Esty will draft a final letter and delivery it to the Zoning Commission.

**C. Review of Possible New Pavilion for Town Green-** The First Selectmen was given a \$7,000 - \$8,000 quote on the proposed pavilion structure and offered it to the Parks and Rec department. The structure is 16' x 24' and doesn't have electricity. Kevin Lane wasn't aware of the historical aspect of the current Town Green gazebo. Jona Paradise stated he liked the open concept of the proposed pavilion. Nancy Gatta asked if the current gazebo could be moved to another location. MOTION to recommend to the Board of Selectmen to acquire the contemporary pavilion for future use at one of our park and recreation facilities made by Star Rueckert seconded by Susan Esty and unanimously approved.

**D. Any Other Business Regarding Programs, Facilities or Personnel –** Jona Paradis reported TBall is popular this year and games begin May 1<sup>st</sup>. Summer camp registration is May 3<sup>rd</sup>. Registration for golf and tennis lessons sold out. The Fishing Derby is this Saturday with 65 participants. The summer concerts and movies sponsorships are sold out thanks to the help of the Chamber of Commerce. The Clark Park trail run is set for August and should sell out.

### 8. Old Business

**A. All Parks Review –** Ray Allen reported mini golf opens May 1<sup>st</sup>. The Covid testing site will be moved to the middle parking area at Saybrook Point and will still be open 7 days until mid-May when it will transition to only Monday-Friday. The one-way traffic pattern in the parking area will start in May. Beaches will be full capacity this summer and open Memorial Day. Staff is hired, utilities are on and fields are ready. Beach passes are available online.

**B. Preserve Update-** Ray Allen reported the parking lot bid has been awarded and work will be completed in about two months. An invasive weed cutting project on the blue trail was undertaken. Work into the red and blue trail system needs to be done and fixing the frog bridge. Bill Moorehead's botanical study is done! Now a more permanent trail structure can be planned.

**C. Any other Business regarding Programs, Facilities or Personnel-** Susan Esty asked about any response from the Board of Selectmen about obtaining a sinking fund. There has been no response.

### 9. Reports

**A. Chairman's Report –** Susan Esty reported she went to the CMC meeting March 12th, Preserve ad hoc March 25<sup>th</sup> and met with Ray about the site plan for 145 College St.

**B. Director's Report –** Ray Allen reported he is hiring new staff and waiting clarification from the Health Department to open the rec center full time.

**C. Liaison Reports –** None

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MOTION to adjourn at 8:24p.m. made by Kevin Lane seconded by Jim Henderson and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tina Antolino  
Recording Clerk

**\*NEXT MEETING MAY 12, 2021\***