TOWN OF SALEM
RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2022 – 7:00 P.M.
SALEM TOWN HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 1

PRESENT
Mary Jean Blezard
Stephen Buck
Debra Delorimiere
Mary Durkee
Eric McGlone

ABSENT
Alexandra Marsh

ALSO PRESENT
First Selectman Ed Chmielewski

1. **Call to Order**
The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

2. **Select a Temporary Chair**
Commissioner Buck volunteered to serve as the Temporary Chair of the Recreation Commission.

   **M/S/C:** Delorimiere/Blezard, to nominate and elect Commissioner Stephen Buck as the Temporary Chairperson of the Recreation Commission. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

3. **Select a Temporary Vice-Chair**
Commissioners Blezard and Durkee volunteered to serve as Temporary Co-Vice-Chairpersons of the Recreation Commission.

   **M/S/C:** McGlone/Delorimiere, to nominate and elect Commissioners Mary Jean (MJ) Blezard and Mary Durkee as the Temporary Co-Chairpersons of the Recreation Commission. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

4. **Welcome New Commissioners**
The Commissioners provided a brief introduction of themselves.

   Commissioner McGlone is a Physical Education/Health Teacher in Preston, where he also serves as the Athletic Director. He also coaches the NFA Football Team as well as Unified Basketball and Track & Field. Commissioner Durkee, a resident of Salem since 1993, has been a member of the Commission for over two years. Her four daughters grew up in Salem and attended Salem School/East Lyme High School. She was very active while her daughters were school-aged, including coaching girls’ softball, growing the league from one to three teams, and played an instrumental role in creating the current softball field. She also led the girls’ basketball team for several years. She owns a 26-year Consulting Firm with her husband. Commissioner Buck has been a resident of Salem since 1970 with his wife, Susan, who taught at Salem School for 38 years. He has a Master of Arts Degree in both Special and
General Education and retired from East Lyme where he started his career as a Title I Teacher and concluded as a Special Education Director. He has also served on the Board of Education as both a member and Chairman. He currently serves as the Commander of the town’s VFW (Veterans of Foreign Wars) and is working on home projects and continuing to enjoy his retirement. Commissioner Blezard, a Salem resident since 2006, has served on the Salem School PTO as both a member and Treasurer. Her son is currently a Salem School student who is heavily involved in sports, including track and field, soccer, and American Ninja Warriors. She currently works as a CT Scan Technician in the Emergency Room and is certified to work as an MRI and X-Ray Technician. Commissioner Delormiere grew up in Salem and was in the first Salem School graduating class to attend East Lyme High School. She formerly with Bank of America in their Information Technology department and is now spending her retirement working in Real Estate, volunteering, and taking care of her family.

5. Act on a Motion to Approve the Minutes of January 24, 2022  
   M/S/C: Durkee/Blezard, to approve the Recreation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of January 24, 2022. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

6. Adjustments to the Agenda – none

7. Public Comment/Guests/Correspondence
   Cindy Affinati, who lives in Salem for five months/year, is a pickleball player who has offered to provide lessens to the residents.

8. First Selectman’s Report
   a. ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Update
      First Selectman Chmielewski thanked the outgoing for their service to the town and for successfully providing activities for the community, young and old, and the new Commissioners for their willingness to take the time and energy to serve on the Commission. He also thanked Commissioners Blezard and Durkee for meeting with him and the staff to discuss enhancing the relationship between the Town and Commission.

9. Budget Update
   First Selectman Chmielewski announced that the Town Meeting regarding the FY2022/23 Budget will be held on Wednesday, May 4, at 7:00 p.m. at Salem School Multi-Purpose Room. The Budget Referendum will be held on Wednesday, May 11, from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Salem Town Hall.

   He expressed his support for the Recreation Commission and its efforts to address and improve the safety of the Disc Golf Course. The ARPA Committee has approved the allocation of $22,000.00 for trail upgrades, which can be utilized for the Disc Golf Course as well as general trail upgrades. The Committee also allocated $19,000.00 for Recreation programs.
6. **Recreation Program Coordinator’s Report: Agnes Miyuki**

The Commission reviewed and discussed the list of the Spring and Summer Recreation Camps, Events, and Activities that have been scheduled to date. The Tai Chi and Yoga classes are awaiting start dates from the instructors.

Anne Santoro will be teaching her *Adult Tennis* classes on Thursday mornings, beginning May 5. Her sessions consist of five classes, held weekly. The classes are held in the Spring, Summer, and Fall months.

The *For the Love of the Game* Baseball Camp will be held during the week of June 27.

The possibility of charging an additional fee for residents was introduced. Currently, most of the activities are offered at cost. Non-Residents are charged an additional $5.00. The revenue received from programs is deposited into the town’s General Fund. Most of the camps provide the necessary equipment. Non-resident participation is minimal. Salem programs are often posted on the neighboring towns’ Facebook pages to engage participants outside of town. Discussion ensued regarding the relationship between Salem and East Lyme Recreation and CIAC (Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference) guidelines as well as Salem Recreation and Salem School.

The difficulties in engaging volunteers to spearhead programs, including youth soccer and basketball, were also discussed. Salem Recreation utilizes the Salem School facilities when it is not being used by the School. Commissioner McGlone stated that, based on his experience, the highest participation is gained when activities occur after school. The Commissioners agreed that it would be beneficial for the Commission to investigate the possibility of running afterschool programs, including and especially on half-days.

The possibility of offering a Track & Field program during the summer months was raised, including a Weekly Summer Fun Run.

Possible future bus trips, including a trip to a Major League Baseball game and a Winter trip to New York for a Broadway show, will be investigated.

Porta-potties have been ordered and are scheduled to be placed on Tuesday, April 26. Two porta-potties (one ADA, one Deluxe) will be placed near the baseball fields by the main parking lot and one Deluxe porta-potty will be placed near the playground at the Round Hill Road Fields. One deluxe porta-potty will be placed at the Forsyth Road Field. Two porta-potties (one ADA, one Deluxe) are currently placed at the Pavilion. All of the porta-potties will have hand sanitizers. An additional porta-potty will be ordered for the concerts, along with a hand-wash station.

**Medallions – The Red House** will be contacted regarding their interest in continuing the Find Your Footprint Project.
Site Meeting – The possibility of meeting at the town’s fields, trails, and facilities was briefly discussed.

7. Public Works Report
First Selectman Chmielewski reported that Foreman Tony Gallicchio, Commissioners Blezard and Durkee, and himself have met to discuss Recreation matters. Both the Foreman and First Selectman are open to meeting regularly during work hours. Foreman Gallicchio has extensive experience working with Recreation Departments.

8. Unfinished Business
a. Dog Park
Commissioner Delorimiere, who was spearheading the Dog Park Committee, reported that the Committee met, but had issues reaching a quorum.

M/S/C: Delorimiere/Durkee, to postpone the Dog Park Project. Discussion: The idea behind the Dog Park was to create a fenced-in area for dogs to roam freely together. The Dog Park was to be organized and maintained by an organized group of individuals. The back of the Zemko property was being investigated as a possible location. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

b. Ice Rink
M/S/C: Durkee/Blezard, to postpone the Ice Rink Project. Discussion:
Commissioner Durkee stated that the Ice Rink was discussed and no definite location was determined. The plan was to create a Winter Ice Rink that would transform into a beach volleyball court in the Spring/Summer. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

c. Volleyball
Commissioner Durkee reported that the Commission’s initial plans were to install a beach volleyball court for the Spring/Summer months and Ice Rink for the Winter months. A Volleyball system with posts that could be inserted into sleeves that are installed into the ground was purchased. Their next step was to discuss the location of the volleyball court with the Public Works Foreman.

d. Trails & Kiosk/Info Center – Emergency Trail Markers (ARPA?)
First Selectman Chmielweski stated that one of the items discussed in relation to the Disc Golf Course was the installation of Emergency Trail Markers and a kiosk or Informational Center. The Markers would include signage that designates locations to help emergency responders pinpoint the locations when responding to calls. The Kiosk/Informational Center would include the safety rules and regulations and announcements. He is awaiting the input of the Resident State Troopers and the Firefighters regarding signage.
ARPA Funds may be utilized for the project. The trail markers would also be placed on the Multi-Purpose/Harris Brook Trail.

It was noted that a kiosk similar to that which is located outside of Town Hall is available for use.

e. Disc Golf Safety Enhancements
First Selectman Chmielewski reported that the Disc Golf Course has been closed for safety enhancements, including signage, line of sight issues, etc. Various town departments have reviewed and provided reports of their findings. He expressed his and the Town’s full support for the Course and their goals to reopen the Course to the public. A Disc Golf company has also reviewed the course and has expressed an interest in working with the town to address the issues.

M/S/C: Blezard/Durkee, to create a Disc Golf Subcommittee, comprised of Commissioners Buck, Blezard, and Durkee, to oversee the safety enhancements for the Disc Golf Course. Discussion: First Selectman Chmielewski expressed the support of the Town to help re-open the Course. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

f. Forsyth Volunteer Pavilion
   1) Bob Appleby Memorial
Bob Appleby, a former Recreation Commissioner who passed away last November, played a key role in spearheading a group of volunteers to help create the fields at Forsyth Road. Former Recreation Commissioners David Kennedy and Sue Spang proposed the possibility of dedicating and naming the fields after him. The Commissioners reviewed and discussed the proposed signage, created by the Former Commissioners. Former Commissioner Appleby’s widow, Judy, is in agreement with naming the fields, Bob Appleby Fields.

M/S/C: Durkee/Delorimiere, to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the Town of Salem Soccer Fields at Volunteer Park on Forsyth Road be dedicated to Salem Volunteer Soccer Coach and Former Recreation Commissioner Bob Appleby and named the Bob Appleby Field(s). Discussion: It was noted that one of the corners on the Volunteer Park sign has been broken off and is in need of repair. The proposed sign will contain white lettering on a green background to match the existing sign. The Commissioners agreed to exclude the verbiage, “A True Volunteer”. Voice vote, 6-0, all in favor.

g. Pickleball Court Repainting
Currently, one of the tennis courts has two pickleball courts painted on either side of and perpendicular to the tennis court. Pickleball court lines were mistakenly painted on the other court, which was to be maintained as a tennis court only. Discussion ensued
regarding which and how the court(s) should be repainted. Because a device would be
needed to lower the tennis net for pickleball, it was agreed to have the court repainted and
maintained as a “pure” tennis court. The company has agreed to repaint the court for
material costs only. The Commission previously voted to approve the allocation of
$2,000.00 to repaint the court. Public Works Foreman Gallicchio will work with the
company and ensure that the job is done correctly.

**M/S/C:** Blezard/Durkee, to allocate up to $2,500.00 to repaint Tennis/Pickleball
Court #1. Tennis/Pickleball Court #2 will be maintained as is. The motion
will supersede all previous motions regarding the repainting of the court.

**Discussion:** None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

Discussion ensued regarding the location of the equipment and its accessibility to the
public. The Town currently owns two (2) pickleball sets. It was agreed to assemble the
nets and place them at the courts for public use.

**h. Round Hill Recreation Complex**

1. Harris Brook Trail & Bridge (ARPA?)

   Co-Vice-Chairperson Blezard reported on two areas along the trail that require
   attention: a trail bridge that was recently washed out and a bridge that is slippery
   when wet. The project(s) will be discussed with the Public Works Foreman and the
   process will be followed to ensure that the project is completed by the Fall.

**i. Adult Kickball – Summer Session**

**M/S/C:** Delorimiere/Durkee, to postpone Adult Kickball. Discussion: The
individual who was to spearhead the activity is no longer in doing so. Voice
vote, 5-0, all in favor.

**j. May Concert**

The Spring Concert will be held on May 7. A promotional sign has been placed at the
Pavilion and additional signs and posters were distributed to the Commissioners for
placement throughout the town. More posters can be printed, if necessary.

The band will be The Cartell’s and Par 4 Curbside Catering, Italian Ices of Connecticut,
and The Rolling Tomato food trucks will be selling food at the event. The concert will be
sponsored by Sid’s Auto Parts. Both the Salem and Gardner Lake Volunteer Fire
Companies will be present. The Salem and Gardner Lake Fire Police and, possibly, a
Lions Club member(s) will be helping with the parking. The concert is free of charge and
open to young and old. The arrangement will be the same as last year’s Summer Concert,
with the exception of the band, which will be facing the benches under the Pavilion and
the food trucks. Additional handicap spaces will be provided. Three porta-potties (two
deluxe and one ADA-accessible) and a handwashing station will be available. Various
groups and organizations have been contacted regarding any interest they have in hosting
a table or providing any promotional materials at the event. A request will be made to
Public Works to ensure that the grass is mowed and the possibility of moving picnic tables from under the Pavilion. No alcohol will be allowed.

The Summer Concert will be held on Thursday, August 25. The band will be *The Pop Rocks* and *Rustic Streats, Walsh’s Waffle Wagon*, and *Curb Your Appetite* food trucks will be present.

**k. Salem Basketball – MPR Backboard Renovation Delay**

M/S/C: Durkee/McGlone, to postpone the Salem School MPR (Multi-Purpose Room) Backboard Renovation. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

9. **New Business**

a. **Pavilion & Fields Rental**

First Selectman Chmielewski reported that, to the best of his knowledge, the Pavilion and fields have not been rented for two or more years. The Pavilion was rented in the past, hindering the residents from utilizing the facility when it is in use. The liability concerns and clean-up and maintenance costs were also factors in the decision.

While the Pavilion is not rented for exclusive use, residents are free to utilize the Pavilion for parties and events. The Pavilion may also be used for Town events and activities during which the facility is also open to the public. It was suggested that an online calendar be created allowing the public to be aware of any Town-related events and activities being held at the facilities. Chairman Buck suggested the possibility of obtaining a legal opinion and the proper verbiage to be utilized from the Town Attorney.

b. **Basketball Usage – Signs**

A sign stating the rules of the basketball/tennis courts was recently located and may be posted by the courts. As a result of a recent incident, the possibility of setting time limits for players should others be waiting to use the court(s) was discussed. The consensus of the Commission was that a 30-minute time limit should be sufficient.

10. **Adjournment**

M/C: Blezard/Delorimiere, to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 p.m. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Recording Secretary for the Town of Salem