

**WASON POND CONSERVATION & RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**May 13, 2020**  
**Virtual Meeting**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**6:00 PM**

**Present were:**

Chris Hadik, Chair  
Corinna Reishus, Vice-Chair  
Leslie Hammond, Recreation Rep.  
Kathleen Neff Ragsdale, Conservation Rep.  
Kristina Snyder, Conservation Rep.  
Darrell Quinn, Alternate  
John Dalrymple, Alternate  
Chairman Chuck Myette, Selectman Liaison

**Absent were:**

**Staff Present:**

Ranger John Wright

**1. Open Meeting**

Chair Hadik called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM and noted alternates John Dalrymple and Darrell Quinn would be active.

- a. Decision on whether or not to recommend to the BOS to reopen part or all of the WP parking lot.

Mr. Quinn noted closing the beach would cut down on the influx. Ms. Hammond noted a lot of places are opening at percentage of capacity. Mrs. Reishus added that the state parks are requiring reservations. Mr. Hadik indicated reservations could be difficult to manage. Ranger Wright indicated he could see the main beach becoming a problem, the parking lot, the rope swing and could use some extra help, especially to cover his day's off. Mrs. Reishus noted she was working with the employees for the summer program but they would need additional training to do what Ranger Wright is doing, their role could be to report to him or call suspicious activity to the police and be an extra set of eyes, remind about social distancing.

Ms. Hammond asked if the loop could remain open for drop off to come in and unload? Mr. Hadik noted drop offs could already be done on 102 on the pond side. Mr. Hadik noted he would sooner get the cars off (parking) on Route 102, get the no parking signs up and make it safer.

Ranger Wright noted with the tree removal going on an extra week wouldn't hurt and recommended 15-20 cars.

Ms. Snyder noted everything needs to be in place and the information provided before re-opening any area. There need to be more signs, signs for the beach closing.

Mrs. Reishus noted Memorial Day weekend could be insane and it would be better not to advertise.

Mr. Quinn asked if swimming should be closed? Mrs. Reishus noted other non-beach areas could get

worse, many will use the dog beach and that may need to be closed also. It is tough to enforce. The CDC advised the virus is not transmissible by water. Ms. Hammond agreed congregating is an issue, but kayaking is not. Mr. Quinn agreed kayaking is not a problem. Mr. Hadik noted the potential was there for congregating in the water. It depends on how serious, if the rules are obeyed. Mrs. Reishus noted Phase I only allows for single use passive activities. Mrs. Reishus recommended closing the beach and roping off the sand area.

Mr. Hadik recommended roping off a narrow area that kayaks could use. Ranger Wright indicated half a dozen or so use the “dog beach” (which isn’t a dog beach) on the side nearest the playground, with fishing, some with blankets. Mr. Hadik noted there are plenty of other places to fish.

Mr. Quinn indicated it sounds like Phase I would be closing beaches and opening the parking by the fields only. Mr. Hadik indicated the Commission needs cooperation with the BOS to have signs put up, physically close the beach and trying to deter tight group settings.

Ranger Wright noted there was not much use today, one woman with two pit bulls, who let one go. There is no posting to keep dogs off.

Chair Hadik summarized the Commission’s recommendations which he will put into a letter and then the Commission can vote on those at a later date.

Phase I – with an opening date of the 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Friday before Memorial Day.

Beach closed sign, potentially the electronic signs if they are available.

No parking signs.

Striping the parking spaces on the field, limit 20 cars

Rope off the beach and “dog beach” areas

Signs for social distancing

Mrs. Reishus asked Mr. Dalrymple if he thought maintenance could help with some of the items. Mr. Dalrymple noted maintenance could do the painting and tape the beach areas. Signs would take about a week to order. There is a couple hundred dollars in the RC budget and WPC&RC has a small amount in their budget as well. Mr. Dalrymple indicated signs would cost approximately \$35 each if ordered from the prison.

Mrs. Reishus questioned what the signs should say and if the reasons should be specified. Mr. Quinn noted they could be stored and re-used if the signs were kept simple. “Beach Closed.” Mr. Hadik noted the electronic signs could specify that it was COVID related. Mrs. Reishus noted there were signs for physical distancing with pictures. Ms. Hammond noted it was important to clarify the reason for the closure and what the state is doing to encourage social distancing for the duration of COVID-19.

Selectman Myette departed the meeting at 6:45 PM to attend the Planning Board meeting.

***Mrs. Reishus motioned to immediately, due to COVID-19, close the beach area at Wason Pond including the small area near the playground side. Mrs. Neff Ragsdale seconded the motion.***

The Commission discussed the time period “until further notice.” Ms. Hammond noted she would like to tie it to something, to indicate it was not forever, perhaps further guidance from the CDC. Mrs. Neff Ragsdale noted she was not in favor of taking someone else’s guidance and being iron bound to some other government decision. Mrs. Reishus noted the Town has the right to limit or close the area, so long as it is equal and for all. Mr. Quinn noted he would like to see more parking open up, some, not all. Ms. Snyder indicated Friday is too soon, less people equals less enforcement needed.

Mrs. Reishus will post the temporary beach closure due to COVID-19.

*A roll call vote was taken Dalrymple – yes, Hammond – yes, Reishus – yes, Neff Ragsdale – yes, Snyder – yes, Quinn – yes, Hadik – abstain. The motion passed 6-0-1.*

Mr. Hadik will let Selectman Myette know the beach is closed and what the Commission is leaning toward, and the Commission can vote by next Friday.

b. Discussion on crowding solutions if time allows.

Mrs. Reishus reviewed the state park opening guidance documents and they recommend handwashing stations mandatory, bringing your own sanitizer, no portables, that all picnic tables be removed unless 10' apart, all water bubblers be shut off, no lids on trash cans. The CDC recommends closing playgrounds and playing fields. Mrs. Neff Ragsdale agreed it is important the public understand the regulations.

Mrs. Reishus could talk to ABI about the trash cans. Mr. Quinn noted the lids could be flipped over and strapped to stay open.

Mr. Quinn noted having benches are installed and can't be flipped over but he would not like to see those taken away, people need a place to sit and rest.

Mrs. Reishus asked about the recommendation for athletic fields. There should be no group programs or activities, but no one is monitoring a frisbee being thrown. Mrs. Reishus noted guidance states no more than ten people gathering and social distance. There is still a stay at home order. Mr. Hadik noted he was not in favor of opening the fields. Mrs. Reishus noted that could be Phase II tied to June 1<sup>st</sup> with additional parking opened up. Mr. Hadik agreed if it got too crowded, to shut it down again.

Mrs. Reishus noted it could be discussed later but the kiosk proposed could be allowed. Ms. Hammond questioned whether handicapped spots could be charged any fee? Mr. Quinn indicated the Town did not want to lose its immunity by charging. Mrs. Reishus noted a day pass could be issued by reservation and not associated with a fee.

Mr. Quinn asked about whether the Commission should require masks. Ms. Hammond noted it could be a recommendation but would be difficult for Ranger Wright to enforce. Mrs. Reishus noted CDC guidance asks for protective masks in public, physical distancing, no gathering of more than ten people.

## **2. Adjournment and set date for next meeting (June 1 or 2, 2020 depending on BOS).**

**Next Meeting Date: May 18, 2020 at 6 PM/with Commission to attend BOS Meeting at 7 PM?**

*Mrs. Reishus motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 PM. Mrs. Neff Ragsdale seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, all were in favor, so moved.*

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Daniel Hoiyer, Recording Secretary**