

To: All members of the Parks and Recreation Committee

From: John Wapner and Kevin Weldon

Regarding: Status of Committee Meetings and Parks and Recreation Agenda

We will be posting our e-mails on the Web Page until normal town communication resumes.

We wanted to communicate with everyone summarizing the April 21 board meeting and where we go from here. The board meeting before, April 16, concluded that a decision about closing camp should be made sooner rather than later so that families and staff could develop alternative summer plans for child care and jobs. The discussion ended in a way that a resolution to close would be discussed at the April 21 meeting. During the time between the meetings Mike would reach out to families and get a sense of where they are about this issue. Mike reached 40 or so families and reported back that in general families are aware of the problem, many would send their children if camp was open and hoped the town would wait until making the final decision. The board then decided to accept Mike's advice that we wait until May 15 but not longer.

Kevin and I along with Mike offered three other issues that the board would need to consider: 1. Many families in the Chatham community depend on summer camp as a program offering their children both a positive and often memorable summer experience and for affordable childcare. 2. Given this, the town can try to meet this need by developing an Alternative Camp program with the goal of trying to meet some of the need that cancelling traditional summer camp would create. 3. Because of the rapid recession that arrived soon after the stay at home order was issued by the governor the Town of Chatham entered a period of financial decline. (definition: a local recession) For all municipalities the depth and length of this problem remains unclear. Although it was not clearly stated as a consensus during the discussion, and is strictly our opinion; when the board considers how to meet this challenge the plan will be fiscally conservative and have components designed to meet a worse- case scenario. That stated, item 4 is this: The board ask if C.A.R.P. would consider a more active role in fundraising for the 2020 summer camp. Hopefully, C.A.R.P would be able to fundraise to replace the town funds that the board may decide to cut for this year.

The town board also set a goal for a virtual park and recreation committee meeting for the first week of May. Donal advised the board that the technology for committee chairs to host a meeting will be ready by then. If not we may ask the board to consider an alternative like Zoom. However, we need to start the meeting now in a way and begin working on ideas for an "alternative summer camp." Please e-mail to everyone on the committee ideas for camp activities that provide social distancing and small groups of campers. Also, I spoke to Sal DeAngelo, Chatham Central School Superintendent about this problem. He said that Mike and perhaps others may be able to reach campers through their advanced and well equipped tech center. So include ideas about virtual camp. If any of you know educational resources Mike can research for ideas include those in your return e-mail. If we do this now we will be more prepared to use our early May meeting productively.

Stay well and thank you

John and Kevin