

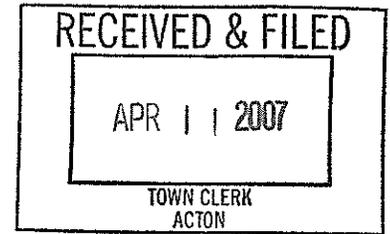


## RECREATION COMMISSION

### Minutes of Meeting

March 6, 2007 @ 7 PM

Acton Town Hall, Room 126



Recreation Commission members Mr. Ron Schlegel, Mr. Matthew Lundberg, Mr. Jon Benson and Ms. Karen Jarsky were present. Also present were Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director and Ms. Maura Haberman, Event Coordinator/Administrative Assistant. Ms. Alison Gallagher was not present.

Mr. Schlegel called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

#### **I. CITIZENS CONCERNS**

Acton resident, Mr. Bob Lessard, attended the meeting to express his dog concerns and also to follow-up on the status of the Recreation Commission's dog recommendation made to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Lessard felt the Board of Selectmen are being "criminal and bling negligent" due to lack of addressing a new leash law. He stated he was bit by a Jack Russell Terrier last summer at NARA Park and that the dog's owner "would have beat him within an inch of life." Mr. Lessard reported information he had obtained through internet research along with attorney inquiries about lawsuits, dogs, and dog interaction with children. He also addressed the issue of dog feces and water contamination at NARA Park. Mr. Lessard reported he spoke with Mr. Doug Halley, Director of Acton Board of Heath, about dog manure. Mr. Lessard also was concerned about inadequate water testing as he reported that NARA Park water is only tested once weekly in the summer. Ms. Fochtman corrected Mr. Lessard on the water testing policies and also informed him about preventative measures taken at NARA Park. These include:

- Doggie pickup bags are provided at NARA Park.
- A seasonal employee cleans up dog feces and also removes discarded dog bags. Ms. Fochtman said that not all dog owner's clean up after their dog.
- NARA summer employees rake the beach daily.
- The Acton Board of Health monitors the water testing which is done at a minimum of once weekly under normal conditions during the beach season.
- Additional testing is done after a heavy rain.
- Additional testing is done after a few days with temperature over 80 degrees--warmer weather increases bacterial growth.
- Should counts be above state mandated levels, the beach is closed, and is followed by daily testing until it returns to normal levels.

Both Mr. Lundberg and Mr. Schlegel reported that there have been several reports of dog issues at NARA Park and that Recreation Commission's recommendation of a dog leash policy had been sent to the Board of Selectmen and is now under advisement. The Recreation Commission only makes recommendations, and the Board of Selectmen institute new policy. Mr. Schlegel reported that dog problems and enforcement are overseen by the Acton Police Department and part-time animal control officer. Mr. Lundberg will follow-up on the status of the NARA leash recommendation as will Mr. Schlegel, and Ms. Fochtman. Mr. Lundberg also discussed the passion that people have for their dogs and a leash policy/law would be strongly argued against as it had been in the past, concluding the only way a new dog control policy could be put on the Town Warrant, would be with large public support and a citizen petition. Mr. Lessard thanked the Recreation Commission for their efforts and adjourned the meeting.

#### **II. CONSENT AGENDA**

A. Minutes for the February 7, 2007 were accepted as written.

#### **III. SPRING SUMMER PROGRAM**

Commission members were able to review the new program with a favorable response. Ms. Fochtman highlighted new programs and events.

#### **IV. REPORTS:**

**NARA SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAM:** A discussion about rain and lack of shelter issues were addressed after Jon inquired about the summer program in rainy weather. Ms. Haberman reported that counselors have "rainy day" plans and rain hasn't been a problem over the past couple of years. She informed the Commission that it had rained solid for a week a few years ago as told by Ms. McShea, former Recreation Director, and refunds were given if requested.

Ms. Fochtman informed the Commission that a custom weather curtain is currently being looked into to enclose the bathhouse area during rainy weather, along with draping for the amphitheatre. When thunderstorms are in the area, it is recommended that parents to pickup their children if possible. Ms. Fochtman reported that a covered pavilion is in the Capital Plan.

RELAY FOR LIFE: Ms. Fochtman reported that Relay for Life will take place at NARA and permit fees were waived by the Board of Selectmen. Plans are moving forward and the walking path for Relay will be around the pond.

GOLF TOURNAMENT: Ms. Fochtman reported that she emailed around March 1<sup>st</sup> the leagues that utilize Elm Street for assistance with tournament planning and event assistance. At the time of the meeting, no replies had been received. Mr. Lundberg will contact Pop-Warner along with Mr. Abare for hole sponsorships and Ms. Schlegel will talk with Mr. Rich Gottesman of Acton Adult Softball. The tournament will benefit the Elm Street Lighting Project and is scheduled for Sunday, May 20.

MORRISON FARM: Ms. Gallagher was not present to report. Mr. Schlegel would like Commission members to review the Morrison Farm Reuse Plan distributed to them at this meeting, so questions can be discussed at the next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, April 3.

CPC: Jon reported that a final vote was taken on 12 projects, all were approved including the School Light Project. There were two projects withdrawn. Ms. Fochtman reported that access to school fields and tennis courts are being reviewed. The Commission liked the tennis courts being lit at night.

ELM STREET: Ms. Fochtman reported the bid is being advertised. The ideal time for installation would be during August when AASL is wrapping up its season and prior to Pop Warner's usage.

SCHOOL STREET: Mr. Schlegel reported that Mr. Walter Foster had talked with Town Council, but has not talked with him since.

NARA BEACH: Ms. Fochtman reported that renewal letters had been sent to former beach members.

#### **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Schlegel reported that the original signage approval sought by the T.J. O'Grady Committee was too commercial and the Board of Selectmen would like to see more subtle recognition, i.e. plaque on rock, kiosk, bench. Ms. Haberman reported that the T.J. O'Grady Committee had given \$40,000 to the Recreation Department to help fund completion of the Park. Ms. Fochtman is working on a water fountain.

Ms. Haberman will prepare a new contact list for Commissions.

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.