



Town of Acton Recreation Commission

MINUTES DATE: JUNE 3, 2008

7:00 PM

ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

ATTENDEES	Recreation Commission members present were Mr. Ron Schlegel, Mr. Frank Calore, Ms. Karen Jarsky. Also present were Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director and Ms. Cheryl Getsick, secretary.
NOTE TAKER	Ms. Cheryl Getsick

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 JUN 18 2008
 TOWN CLERK
 ACTON

AGENDA TOPICS

Meeting called to order at: 7:00pm

CITIZENS CONCERNS:	Interior Road at NARA Park
CONCLUSIONS	<p>Ms. Fochtman reported a complaint was received from a resident who resides on Quarry Road. The complaint was regarding a film crew from India who were driving to fast down the interior road. The crew was obtaining their equipment and driving to and from the site location on the interior road.</p> <p>The person who held the permit was not present. The police were also called by the resident. Ms. Fochtman requested the president of the organization contact the resident and apologize. Ms. Fochtman also noted other concerns of girl's youth softball utilizing the interior road when they shouldn't. Ms. Fochtman will also speak with Mr. Tidman; Director of Natural Resources, regarding a visual barrier which is needed. There are concerns regarding pedestrian getting hit. Possibly looking at a post that stands up and restricts vehicles from entering the area. Mr. Schlegel noted the time of day these disturbances are occurring day/evening and possibly hiring a site manager to monitor as more issues arise from mid April to October. Ms. Fochtman raised an additional concern of the weekends being more difficult to monitor when the lifeguards go home at the end of the day.</p>
CONSENT AGENDA	May 2008 minutes
CONCLUSIONS	May 2008 minutes were accepted as amended, 3-0
AGENDA #4	Board of Selectmen Meeting
CONCLUSIONS	Mr. Calore requested we maintain this topic for agenda during the October meeting. Ms. Fochtman commented she has heard a general overview. Mr. Schlegel noted a report of the "dog situation" should be mentioned. Mr. Calore stated no matter where the dogs are located, citizens always assume to contact Recreation to file a complaint. Mr. Schlegel noted this has been discussed extensively over years past however it continues to need readdressing. Possibly requesting the expansion of the animal control officer's hours as well.
AGENDA #5	Handicap Accessible Playground
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Fochtman visited a handicap accessible playground located in Cambridge. The playground cost was approximately \$1.5M to construct. The playground overlooked a sod playing field however it was not too large but space was ample for the children to play on. There was a single tennis court overlooking a street of housing. Cambridge officials incorporated a lot of "art" into the playground. Large chairs made out of fabricated metal were attractive along with lots of sculpture incorporated into the playground. The playground had a combo of wood fiber mulch and solid surfacing. Lisa Franklin, commission on disabilities provided a guided tour. Mr. Calore asked if wheelchairs are able to cross over mulched areas on a playground; Ms. Fochtman responded yes. Mr. Schlegel asked how funding was provided; Ms. Fochtman responded the city of Cambridge. Ms. Fochtman noted access onto the equipment had landings where a child could get off a wheelchair and onto the structure. The manufacturer of the equipment is located in Europe. It was the plastic style formed look but somewhat different than what we see around here.
AGENDA #6	Field Fee Discussion
CONCLUSIONS	<p>Ms. Fochtman noted receiving negative feedback being received. Monday Night Quarterbacks totaled \$600 hundred dollars for three sets of dates at three different locations. She also noted there has been no charge at all during the prior two years. Previously, a one time charge of \$150 was applied and received. Ms. Fochtman noted there is a lot of damage done to the fields. A certificate of liability is also requested. Mr. Schlegel noted there are approximately 100 children and for many years there were no fees applied. Ms. Jarsky stated that exemptions to the fees should not be provided because all leagues will begin requested exemptions for one reason or another. Ms. Fochtman stated the leagues may possibly go to Boxborough. Ms. Fochtman is scheduled to attend a Field Scheduling meeting tentatively scheduled for next Monday. Ms. Fochtman requested a Recreation Commissioner attend the meeting with her. Mr. Schlegel volunteered.</p> <p>Ms. Fochtman also noted ABYB also raised concerns. She responded to ABYB by informing them it brings the fees more closely to what surrounding towns charge. Ms. Jarsky asked if there is any way to give them a reduced rate for the remainder of this year and begin charging them in full next year. Mr. Schlegel noted that the announcement was made early in the year. Ms. Fochtman noted we are not charging per player, per season as other towns. We are charging them the field permit; it's one or the other, not both. Mr. Schlegel noted that a grace period may be considered however let's bring the information which Sudbury provided to the meeting with the leagues.</p>

a) Elm Street Update

There was a lightning strike at Elm Street. It knocked down a lot of the lighting. Ms. Fochtman contacted Mr. Jack Blaze who installed the lighting at Elm Street. Mr. Blaze attempted to replace a part which Musco, the manufacturer suggested be replaced. Remotely, Musco can diagnose which part of the unit is not working. Musco was able to isolate what was wrong. Mr. Blaze attempt did not correct the issue. Mr. Blaze recommended another contractor named, "Island Power and Light". Ms. Fochtman contacted Island Power and Light noted there was a significant problem. It was their claim the voltage was not safe. They suggested a new ground was needed going to and from the electrical box. Ms. Fochtman contacted the original installer to review Elm street. It was determined the system at Elm street is different than the system at Veterans field. Unlike Veterans field, a fault on a Delta system will not shut it down. The system at Elm street was determined to be safe. A letter will be sent to Ms. Fochtman recommending changing the Delta to a "Y" system. If there is a fault on a Delta system there is no indicator stating where to fix the fault whereas a "Y" system everything will trip everything. Mr. Schlegel asked if the lights are currently operating. Ms. Fochtman responded yes, as of now the lights are working with one exception. The lights have to be manually shut off. The wiring inspector from the building department is also concerned about a "Delta" system verse a "Y" system for a ball field. Ms. Fochtman will keep all informed.

b) Morrison Farm Update

Everything at Morrison Farm is up and running.

c) CPC

Mr. Schlegel noted the neighborhood support pledge and requested if we are in contact with Mira. Mr. Schlegel is concerned there is a soft pledge and would like to secure this before time goes by. Ms. Fochtman and Ms. Jarsky will speak with Mira. Ms. Fochtman noted Mira is involved with the 5K during Acton Day. Ms. Fochtman informed Mira monies would have to be raised from registration fees. Ms. Jarsky will contact Mira and remind her that Acton Day will be held on September 13th.

DISCUSSION

Ms. Fochtman requested when cross country utilizes NARA if there is any possibility to avoid painting the grounds that would be very important. Painting the grass is acceptable but painting anything else would not be acceptable. Mr. Calore agreed and will contact Mr. Steve Desy at the High School who will inform cross country.

d) School Street

A Kilder nest is located in the middle of the circle at this time. It is hoped the birds will be moving along soon.

e) Playground Update

No updates at this time.

f) Open Space and Recreation Plan

No updates at this time

g) NARA Summer Operation

Ms. Fochtman noted the current enrollment figures have exceeded last year's enrollment.

h) NARA Improvements

Ms. Fochtman reported the Board of Selectmen meeting occurred last night. Mr. Tidman attended and reported Recreation is requesting \$183K to install a changing room, a storage area and snack bar behind the amphitheater. Upgrades are needed to the front of the amphitheater as well. There is a need for electrical upgrades at the snack bar currently. There is not enough capacity on the current system. An ice machine is needed and the current electrical will not support these needs. Additionally, the heaters run continually which is a waste of energy. The installation of thermostats will allow shut off when not in use. Mr. Tidman also reported there is new equipment needed such as grass mowers, shade structures and life guard chairs. Ms. Jarsky requested a shade structure be placed over the playground. Mr. Calore asked if Recreation would be purchasing a new tent to replace the tent which was damaged. Ms. Fochtman reported yes, the Board of Selectman approved those items and now the request will go to the finance committee for approval.

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

AGENDA #8	NARA Park & TJ O'Grady's Skate Park
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Fochtman noted one of the boards is broken at the NARA Amphitheater. T.J. O'Grady's also had additional graffiti sprayed on the surface of the structures. Mr. Schlegel requested additional police presence be requested to deter potential vandals.
AGENDA #8	Playgrounds
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Fochtman spoke about performing a review of town wide playground to determine where the need for updates is needed. Ms. Jarsky began mapping out locations however she requested if the town had the ability to provide a good map as to where the need for playgrounds are located. Ms. Fochtman recommended contacting Engineering. Ms. Fochtman mentioned a possibly of contacting a local real estate agent who may have maps showing local schools, playgrounds, etc... Ms. Jarsky will contact a local real estate agent.
AGENDA #8	Mr. Schlegel informed the Commission Mr. Jon Benson has requested to depart from the Commission. The Recreation Commission will be looking for at least one full member. Ms. Fochtman noted there may be a need to fill two positions if Ms. Gallagher departs as well. Mr. Schlegel will contact both Mr. Benson and Ms. Gallagher

MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:

8:35pm



Town of Acton Recreation Commission

MINUTES DATE: JULY 8, 2008

7:00 PM

ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

ATTENDEES	Recreation Commission members present were Mr. Ron Schlegel, Mr. Frank Calore, Ms. Karen Jarsky. Also present were Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director and Ms. Cheryl Getsick, Secretary.
NOTE TAKER	Ms. Cheryl Getsick

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JUL 25 2008

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AGENDA TOPICS

Meeting called to order at: 7:00pm

CITIZENS CONCERNS:	Colonial Baseball Program
CONCLUSIONS	A child enrolled within the Colonial Baseball clinic, organized by Mr. Steve Donovan, was injured. Ms. Cathy Fochtman was contacted by the child's mother. The mom of the injured child reported, through her son, was injured during the clinic yet she did not receive a phone call. Upon learning of his injury at pick-up, she brought her son to the doctor. It was determined he had a broken nose. Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted a similar incident occurred last year during the same baseball clinic. Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted that she also spoke with Mr. Donovan about the incident last year. Ms. Cathy Fochtman will contact the mom and Mr. Donovan tomorrow to follow-up.
CONSENT AGENDA	June 2008 Minutes
CONCLUSIONS	June 2008 minutes were accepted as amended, 3-0
AGENDA #1	NARA Projects
CONCLUSIONS	<p>Ms. Cathy Fochtman reported the end of year expenditures have been all approved. Mr. Bill Thomas, an electrician for the town, is scheduled to install an expanded circuit board and add some thermostats. Currently there is no way to control the heat. Additionally, the Recreation Department has made the switch from Coke to Pepsi. The Coke refrigerator cooler was drawing a lot of energy. Pepsi has a smaller size unit which is more energy efficient. A vending machine was also installed at the amphitheater. Pepsi will take care of stocking this vending machine for us.</p> <p>Amphitheater excavation will be performed by Lincoln Tree. The ground around the amphitheater will be removed approximately 18 inches; drainage will then be installed. Irrigation will follow and completed with suitable loam and sod. This improvement will make a very big difference on performances.</p> <p>Approval to proceed with a shed/changing room along with a snack bar area behind the amphitheater was granted. The Recreation Department is working on specifications for a bid package. The design consists of a saltbox shaped shed with double doors on the pond side along with another double door on the opposite side. A small window on the side that faces the front of the stage is recommended. Recreation will find this useful as a small ticket area and snack bar. The slanted area is suitable for storing items. Recreation has purchased 300 chairs which have been placed on carts and can be pulled around. Lighting and sound equipment will also be properly secured within the shed as well. There are also a lot of miscellaneous items which will help maintain NARA such as; a new electric John Deere Gator vehicle. It will replace the Cushman unit which is mostly broken down. A weed-wacker, generator and other items will also be purchased and stored.</p> <p>Mr. Frank Calore asked how the bee situation was affecting NARA this year. Ms. Fochtman noted the bee's are not too bad, however a more significant problem is the geese. Ms. Fochtman also noted two shade structures have also been ordered; one for the beach and another for the upper field. Ms. Karen Jarsky asked where the locations for the shade structures would be. Ms. Fochtman commented the shade structures will be placed on the beach and on the upper field.</p>
AGENDA	Field Scheduling Meeting
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Cathy Fochtman relayed to the Commissioners a list of questions which were asked during a recent meeting. Ms. Cathy Fochtman informed meeting attendees a letter would soon be sent out to them discussing the implementation of the field fee implementation. There were a lot of questions. The attendees want to have another meeting where they could voice their opinions and conduct an open discussion. Mr. Ron Schlegel noted the leagues seem to be voicing the same concerns as they shared in the past. The Recreation Commission provided five (5) months notice dating back to February 2008. Mr. Ron Schlegel noted the contributions are sparse and a major concern is that the leagues solely decide what the monies will be spent on; however the Town of Acton owns the land. Mr. Schlegel will attend the next meeting. Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted liability coverage as well, was an issue. Ms. Cathy Fochtman will propose July 14 th , 2008 as a meeting date which will be held at the Acton Memorial Library. Mr. Ron Schlegel will create a structured agenda which Ms. Cathy Fochtman will send out to attendees.
AGENDA	July 4th Event
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Cathy Fochtman commented the event was great! The Air Force Liberty Big Band was fabulous! Officer Bob Cowen estimated an approximation of 8K attendees. All food vendors did wonderful business while Recreation received donations and sold glow sticks. Staff shirts were provided to Recreation Staff as this helped with the collection of donations. Ms. Karen Jarsky commented a possible raffle could raise monies. Mr. Ron Schlegel noted the firework donations were received from both Donelons and Goulds in the amount of \$6K each. The Town of Acton also provided \$6K as well bringing the total cost of the fireworks purchased to \$18K. The fire and police detail overtime are additional

AGENDA	Acton Teen Repertory Theater
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Cathy Fochtman provided the Commissioners with a program from the Acton Teen Repertory Theatre play production of Beauty and the Beast. She noted this was the department's first outdoor theater presentation. Three performances were held. There were a lot of overhead expenses in performing a "Disney" production. Some costumes and staging was obtained by renting them from Maynard High School's theater performance. The next performance, West Side Story, is scheduled for January 2009. Ms. Mary Spinosa-Wilson is the Director and in charge of theater production. The production is open to all; anyone who enrolls in the production is guaranteed a role. The production is free to attend. Due to an overwhelming enrollment, West Side Story registration is now closed. Ms. Mary Spinosa-Wilson is now exploring the possibility of not running the programs financially under the Recreation Department. The concern is that rehearsal space is free because of the involvement of Recreation. The Recreation Department provided \$30K in resources for the Beauty and the Beast production. Mr. Frank Calore noted the use of NARA Park's facilities by themselves would be expensive.
AGENDA	Commission Membership
CONCLUSIONS	Mr. Ron Schlegel noted we are looking for at least two (2) associate members and one (1) full time member for the Commission. The discussion of proposing that sports league members join the Commission and become more involved may be a possibility. Ms. Cathy Fochtman will contact the VCC about publicity of these positions.
AGENDA	REPORTS
DISCUSSION	<p>Elm Street Update - The lights are now working properly.</p> <p>Morrison Farm Update Morrison Farm will be on the agenda at the next Board of Selectmen meeting. Discussion of possibly obtaining an architectural firm to study the buildings from a previously issued Request for Proposal. Mr. Frank Calore asked if Ice House Pond is considered part of Morrison Farm. Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted is considered part of the Recreation Department; therefore the pond is part of the recreation facilities. Ms. Cathy Fochtman also noted that one thought is to have a new playground and access to the parking lot with a parking lot located at the Ice House Pond lot which would then funnel foot traffic into the Morrison Farm area. In addition, the rail trail will come on-line soon on the other side of Ice House Pond.</p> <p>CPC - Presently, no updates at this time.</p> <p>School Street Ms. Cathy Fochtman commented Sid Mazolla (Interbandits) asked about future plans for School Street. He has offered to contribute towards improvements. She has heard positive reports about the Interbandits and their ability to follow through with cleaning the fields after usage.</p> <p>Playground Update Ms. Cathy Fochtman and Ms. Karen Jarsky met with a representative from Game Time. Game Time is a vendor for playground equipment. Game Time will provide a quote for the Elm St. Playground. Ms. Jarsky noted the playground will be geared towards smaller children since the older children have access to the school playgrounds as well.</p> <p>Open Space and Recreation Plan - No updates at this time</p> <p>NARA Summer Operation Ms. Fochtman noted enrollment and the program is going very well. The weeks during the middle of the summer are the popular weeks. Currently, NARA has two counselors who are dedicated solely to preschool kids. Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted she has hired staff that had prior preschool experience and her desire to hire staff with that type of background to enroll more children in the future.</p> <p>Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted E. coli test results of the pond have been on the rise this year. Surrounding towns with ponds have closed. There is a larger presence of geese this year and it is hard to keep them off the beach due in part to people continually feeding the geese. The groundskeeper cleans up bags of droppings each morning off the beach before he begins his daily routine. In addition, the water level is lower than it normally would be. The Board of Health has received elevated higher levels and the testing is accelerating. Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted Recreation is trying to run an aerator pump which circulates cooler water towards the beach, hopefully helping to alleviate the situation as bacteria does not flourish in the colder water.</p> <p>Mr. Frank Calore asked what the procedure is for opening camp up each day, with concern about situations that have occurred to young people like Molly Bish. Ms. Cathy Fochtman noted the groundskeeper arrives first. There is a ½ hour pre-care option for children who attend camp however the groundskeeper arrives before the staff. The on-site director shows up first and the waterfront staff does not come there until later in the morning. Ms. Cathy Fochtman has requested more of a police presence at NARA. There have been people who should not be there after hours. The Police Department is now patrolling via cycling in the area.</p>

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

AGENDA	August 2008 Recreation Commission Meeting
CONCLUSIONS	The Commissioners determined that they would not meet in August due to vacation conflicts. Therefore, the next Commissioners meeting will be held on September 2, 2008.
MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:	8:35pm