



Town of Acton Recreation Commission

MINUTES – DATE: MAY 6, 2008

7:00 PM

ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

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

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AGENDA TOPICS

Meeting called to order at:

Citizens Concerns:

DISCUSSION	Request for Dog Ban in Cemeteries
CONCLUSIONS	Other commissioners responded that banning dogs would be unenforceable because nobody gives their name. The commission concluded that people need to be responsible dog owners. Cemeteries are not under Recreation Department's authority; when complaints are submitted, names are usually not provided.

CONSENT AGENDA

DISCUSSION	April 2008 minutes
CONCLUSIONS	April 2008 minutes were accepted as written, 4-0

TOPIC

DISCUSSION	Morrison Farm
CONCLUSIONS	The new plots have been well received and all plots have been accounted for. The plots are spacious and well layed out.

TOPIC

DISCUSSION	Recreation Volunteer of the Year
CONCLUSIONS	After the Commission's careful consideration for a recreation volunteer of the year, the Commission unanimously recommended Ms. Carol Bradley, a very dedicated Acton Recreation Teen Repertory Theater volunteer.

TOPIC

DISCUSSION	Elm Street and Goward Playground Grants
CONCLUSIONS	Elm Street - Ms. Cathy Fochtman reported on a conversation she had with Mr. Roland Bartl, Town Planner. He reported that as long as Recreation works with a vendor on the Massachusetts State Bid List, we are not required to put out to bid the new playground at Elm Street. Therefore, Recreation can move forward from the quote currently obtained. Companies bid on the cost and the Recreation Department may specify the type of equipment needed. Game Time is offering a 45% discount. The Town of Westford has used Game Time because it worked for them. Recreation will speak with Game Time as well as the vendors on the state bid list. Goward – Ms. Karen Jarsky and Ms. Cathy Fochtman worked on a grant application which was submitted about 2-3 weeks ago and they have asked for more information. Ms. Jarsky filled in the questions that pertain to fund raising and community support. One of the criteria is the input from volunteers within the community and their involvement. Ms. Fochtman is working on site preparations and access right now. Boundless Playgrounds is working with the private donor in providing approximately \$125K to build a boundless playground which is handicap accessible. This playground will be used to showcase the company's potential. Certain requirements are outlined within the grant application. The park must be completed by 2009. Early Intervention Centers surrounding the Town of Acton were also asked. The major issue is that the Town of Acton will need to provide all the site work. We could possibly request some local contractors to donate their time and equipment usage. The Recreation Department is moving forward on this application and hopes to know something for June meeting.

TOPIC

DISCUSSION	NARA Picnic Pavilion
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Fochtman is obtaining an architectural drawing. She is trying to obtain them through a company from which the quote was obtained. The next step would be to begin the bid process will take us through the summer, (i.e. site preparation, actual installation in the fall). Ms. Fochtman reported that currently the tents will be used this summer for picnic rentals, however, the framework is in need of replacement. Recreation will continue to use these tents after the new pavilion is built to continue to offer more shade opportunities. The Selectmen want to put a priority on funds for

the end of year funding towards NARA. This would include changing rooms behind the amphitheater. For the productions coming up in June, a tent and trailer will be available.

TOPIC

DISCUSSION Field Fee Discussion

CONCLUSIONS

Ms. Fochtman reported that she has discussed with ABYS plans to get an area of School Street improved with irrigation, compost and reseed; however, it would not be occurring this spring. The Recreation Department anticipated having funding in the Natural Resource's budget however the funds have been utilized on other purposes. The likelihood for School Street improvements would be Fall 2008. Recreation would like to make some field improvement commitment to the ABYS. Ms. Fochtman will be discussing with Sudbury Recreation the specific accounts he sets from league field users fees. One question for Sudbury is how are they utilizing enterprise funds for capital expenses?

REPORTS

DISCUSSION	<p>a) Elm Street Update Ms. Fochtman reported that the lights are now being used. The field preparation for Elm Street was delayed a bit and there are still some ruts in the outfield from heavy trucks on field for the new sports light installation. Ms. Fochtman had talked with OLEC regarding a lighting assessment survey and OLEC report one positive and one negative response.</p> <p>b) Morrison Farm Update Ms. Fochtman reported on several Morrison Farm items. The new community gardens are under way and have been very well received. Beauty and the Beast stage sets have been stored in the barn which has been ideal for storing large set pieces. There is a bid out there for an architect to look at the building and refurbish. The proposed rail trail will not include the bridge near the Morrison Farm side.</p> <p>c) CPC Mr. Benson reported that award letters will be going out Thursday. Next fall will begin a new cycle. He also reported that there is a case pending against the City of Newton. A Superior Court Judge was in favor of the citizens of Newton regarding CPA monies needed to reestablish parks. In the warrant article which was sent to the Board of Selectmen, NARA and Elm Streets' release of funds will be held until the release of the pending judgment which will arise out of the City of Newton case. Mr. Benson reported Town Counsel (Mr. Steve Anderson) has flagged NARA and Elm Street. The statue states towns can not restore recreational facilities that are not on land that is purchased with CPC funds. However, Acton has taken eight older facilities and is requesting funds to bringing them up to par. NARA has never had a pavilion. Hopefully the Superior Court Judge will make a decision by the end of summer.</p> <p>d) School Street Ms. Fochtman reported Natural Resources has been looking at ways to irrigate School Street, however there are a lot of factors involved and the Town does not have permission to bring water up. Mr. Schlegel asked if we had obtained a water cannon? Ms. Fochtman stated, yes, however it has not yet been tested. The Town could potentially borrow two from the school, but we have not yet looked into this. Ms. Fochtman also reported that pulling from a hydrant is easier than a stream, but we still need a long term solution--possibly a well, solely for the purpose of watering the fields.</p> <p>e) Playground Update Ms. Fochtman reported that mulch will be purchased for Goward and NARA. Mr. Calore recommended utilizing community service hours from high school students. Ms. Fochtman reported that she had received her Playground Safety Certification (good for three years).</p> <p>f) Open Space and Recreation Plan Ms. Fochtman reported that Mr. Peter Ashton and Ms. Mary Ann Ashton are currently editing the Open Space and recreation Plan and are seeking various updates. Selectman Friedrichs joined the meeting (at this point) noted that she is available to help with writing grants and is interested in becoming more involved as a new Selectperson. Selectman Friedrichs noted that she wants to know the outcome of the "needs" assessment for the soccer fields, specifically for Morrison Farm. Ms. Fochtman noted we are using the Open Space and Recreation for the "needs" assessment. Mr. Schlegel noted this is a five year plan.</p> <p>Ms. Fochtman noted the number one desire is to have a dressing room and raise the stage front at NARA. To meet performer's needs and to allow growth a dressing room is needed. Recreation will continue to supply the need portable units for events--this is a large event expense to Recreation.</p> <p>Mr. Schlegel commented that NARA plans were originally in the proposal but got cut (\$247K) construction of the changing room, grading which we were hoping would be funded with the additional cash available. Mr. Schlegel noted that Recreation runs self funded programs. Mrs. Fochtman noted in terms of running programs, we seek fees--for the concerts we seek sponsorships.</p>

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

DISCUSSION No report

MEETING ADJOURNED TIME: 8:35 PM