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Acton Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
Room 126
Acton Town Hall
August 11, 2010

Call to Order

Ms. Karen Jarsky, Co-Chair, called meeting to order at 7:05 PM. The following attendees were present: Selectman Pamela Harting-Barrat, Commissioner Ms. Elizabeth Payne, Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director, Ms. Betsy Mercier, Citizen; Mr. Robert O'Neil, Citizen, Ms. Cheryl Getsick, Recreation Part-Time Secretary.

Consent Agenda

MOTION to accept July 2010 minutes as amended, passed 2-0

Citizens Concerns

a) Ms. Fochtman reported an averted drowning incident at NARA. The child was swimming with her mother when the incident occurred. The lifeguards worked well as a team and were commended for their appropriate and quick responses. Thankfully, the child began breathing on her own and was transported to Emerson Hospital for observation overnight. Challenges with the phone line relating to the 911 call will be addressed.

b) An Acton resident contacted Ms. Fochtman requesting to know when the outfield netting at Jones Field would be replaced.

Action Items

a) Ms. Fochtman addressed the technical problems with the phone line with Mr. Mark Hald from the Information Technology Department. Selectman Harting-Barrat suggested the 911 response phone line be tested prior to the commencement of the 2011 season.

b) Ms. Fochtman is obtaining quotes for the netting. Installation of these nets is quite expensive.

Recreation Concert Music Selection

Ms. Jarsky spoke with Selectman Lauren Rosenzweig-Morton regarding Citizen Bettina Norton's concern about obtaining a more diverse musical selection for the summer of 2011. Possibly obtaining music suggestions/selections from the town residents was discussed. Selectman Harting-Barrat would prefer additional classical concerts at NARA. Ms. Fochtman noted the concerts and other events at NARA require sponsors to pay for the overhead. Ms. Fochtman received an email from a resident recommending the Lexington Symphony for next year. Selectman Harting-Barrat suggested obtaining the Concord Band and or ticketing some concerts to raise funds. The Concord Band currently plays to a full house at the Fruitlands Museum each week and has a diversified selection of music. Mr. O'Neil inquired about the costs of the concerts this year. Ms. Fochtman noted anywhere from $800.00 to $2,000.00. Ms. Fochtman commented on the importance of having necessary funding secured prior to the distribution of our spring-summer program in March in order to make residents aware of the upcoming events/concerts.

Action Item

Ms. Fochtman will forward along the results of a "Survey Monkey" survey as it relates to musical preference.

Recreation Staffing

Recreation is looking to create and fill a full time position. As the department has expanded and grown, the responsibilities of the office have grown. Though these are difficult economic times, it is essential for the development and expansion of the office to create and fill this position. The task of developing this and moving forward during these economic times will be challenging.

Event Reports

Thursday Evening Concerts have been well attended. There has been an average of approximately 200 people in attendance for these concerts.

Chamber of Commerce Appreciation Event – This was a well attended event with food, beer and wine sampling by Chamber Members. The event thanked sponsors of the Oktoberfest 5K Road Race, scheduled for Saturday, October 2, 2010.

Theater – The production of Wizard of Oz by StarzNLightz was well attended with approximately 750 people in attendance during Friday evening's attendance and 400 in attendance for Saturday evening. There is discussion of performing "Cats" during the summer of 2011.

Goward Playground Volunteer Task Planning

Ms. Fochtman met with the grounds crew to discuss some of the volunteer tasks that could occur. There are some wooden structures that need sanding and painting. In addition there are areas of crabgrass to be removed as well as additional tasks. Ms. Jarsky inquired about contacting Haartz Corporation regarding the roofing materials for the wooden structures. Ms. Fochtman will follow-up with this task.

Reports

Elm Street

Currently there is a lighting issue at this field. MUSCO provides free replacement of parts should they fail to work; with the exception of Acts of God, such as lightning strikes. One of the routers is not working properly. A technician is expected to arrive tomorrow to repair/replace any parts.

Morrison Farm Update

The Selectmen are deliberating about the proposed list of improvements which have been proposed at Morrison. These items need to be placed in a list and prioritized as to the importance of preservation. The Selectmen will continue to address this topic at their next meeting.

CPC

The Recreation Commission appointed Ms. Elizabeth Payne as the CPC liaison. The next meeting is scheduled to occur during September 2010.

School Street

Nothing new to report

Playground Update

Ms. Jarsky will contact the Commission on Disabilities to inquire about updating handicap accessible swings at the playgrounds.

Open Space & Recreation Plan

Ms. Kimberly Bodnar will be assisting to update the Open Space & Recreation Plan. Ms. Fochtman will provide Ms. Bodnar the contact information as a follow-up. Mr. Tom Tidman suggested that the Commission contact other surrounding towns and view the open space plans developed by them. Selectman Harting-Barrat recommended inquiring with Sudbury's Recreation Department.

Nara Picnic Pavilion

Ms. Fochtman has met with the Architect, Kaffee Kang, to review the cost estimate. There are discussions of structuring a "bid process" which would allow alternatives for "options" which could be added or removed from the bid in order to meet the budget constraints. Recreation has funding this process to date and will proceed forward with developing some engineering plans. Selectman Harting-Barrat has suggested contacting locally owned construction companies who would be willing to devote their time and resources to contributing to this project.

Peak Software

Ms. Fochtman is meeting with Mr. Steve Barrett, Finance to discuss the structuring of financial responsibilities between Recreation and Finance.

New Business

Nothing to report.