

Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: 9/4/2018

Recreation Center, 50 Audubon Dr., Acton MA, 7:00pm

Attendees: Edward Holcomb, Commissioner; Stephen Trimble, Commissioner; Joe Will, Commissioner; Barbara Willson, Commissioner; Katie Green, Board of Selectman Liaison; Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director; Mary Lou Repucci, Recreation Office Manager

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair Stephen Trimble at 7:00 pm.
2. Citizen's Concerns:
Cathy Fochtman received an email from a parent about the single-structure bridge at Jones Playground. The structure's linked panels have deteriorated and are severely corroded. Cathy did an inspection and taped off the area with signage. The Natural Resources crew will disassemble the structure and erect plywood barriers. The structure can't be repaired and will need to be taken down. Funds do not exist at present to replace it.
3. Consent Agenda: August 7, 2018 Minutes accepted as amended, 4:0.
4. Action Item Review from August 7, 2018 Minutes:
Cathy will contact Tac Palmer for his input on how to address citizen concerns over unleashed dogs in NARA Park.
5. Oktoberfest, 9/29/18:
Cathy asked the Recreation Commission to staff a table at the upcoming Oktoberfest on September 29. Barbara Willson volunteered to run the table from 12-2pm.
6. Budget Planning:
Budget season has begun with each Town department planning its financial requirements for the next fiscal year. As a starting point, Cathy, and Recreation consultant, Pat Savage, analyzed Recreation's revolving account for the prior two years. The budget is usually level but may be reduced in future because Recreation doesn't always spend the total amount encumbered. Past years have ended with around \$15,000 in profit but the last two have broken even or lower due to two primary factors: 1) wage increases supporting fifty seasonal workers; and, 2) underwriting by Recreation of utilities and maintenance costs for NARA and other Recreation properties. There is no revenue source to offset these utility and maintenance costs as would be appropriate for a revolving account. Cathy is seeking to relocate these costs to another area, possibly the Natural Resources budget paid from the General Fund. Moving the annual July Fourth event at NARA from the Recreation revolving account to the Town's Celebrations account, which funds the Veteran's Day and Memorial Day parades, was also discussed. The Recreation revolving account in general was discussed including the need for a new Ford Transit Van to replace the year 2000 van currently in use.

7. Reports:

a. Rail Trails: Steve Trimble reported a tree limb down on the BFRT near Brook Street; Cathy will contact the Highway Department to have it removed. Heavy erosion of stone dust in some areas is already being addressed. Paul Malchodi of the BFRT Friends organization has been in communication with Cathy about these and other issues.

b. NARA Sports Pavilion: Cathy will meet with Consigli Construction on September 18 to show their representatives the Miracle Field and to give background information putting the modular buildings in context of the overall NARA plan. This is the next step in the process of possibly gaining support from Consigli for certain aspects of the project. Allied Paving is halfway done with the expanded parking lot.

c. T.J. O'Grady Skate Park: The AM Jam had to be cancelled due to insufficient participation. A new date has not yet been set.

d. Playgrounds: (See Citizen's Concerns, above.)

e. Community Preservation Committee: Joe Will reported public input due by 9/6/18 for the meeting to be held on 9/13/18.

f. Community Gardens:

North Acton: Ed Holcomb reported that brush-hogging, rototilling and mowing all are needed. Use of pesticide sprays was discussed; the Community Garden Rules were cited as a source of what is permissible.

Morrison Farm: The new shed is in place. The next step is to install a separate electric meter at the house to serve the well pump.

8. New Business: The Volunteering Coordination Committee sent out a memo asking for assistance in recruiting new volunteers by helping to produce short video segments highlighting each board, committee and commission. The segments will be broadcast on Acton TV and YouTube, a new effort extending the print-media form of outreach already in place. Barbara Willson volunteered on behalf of the Recreation Commission.

Meeting adjourned 8:05pm.

Minutes submitted by Mary Lou Repucci.