

Recreation Commission meeting Wednesday, June 9, 2010

Tana Babbitt in attendance
Robert Benton in attendance
Len Cidado not in attendance
Jennifer Gallagher in attendance
Charlie Hammond not in attendance
Mike McDonald in attendance
Elizabeth Nikiciuk, Chair in attendance

Jennifer Hruniak, Director in attendance

Guests: Bill O'Neill, Erin Gianni, Stephanie Danielson

Meeting commenced at 7:00PM

Review and Vote on May Minutes

The meeting minutes of May 11, 2010 were reviewed. Jen G. motioned to accept, Tana seconded, all in favor, May minutes accepted.

Stephanie Danielson, Land Use Agent

The Commission welcomed Land Use Agent, Stephanie Danielson. Discussion took place regarding the field concept plan for the Carriage House property completed by Woodard and Curran. Jen H. is working on getting quotes for the appraisal of this property. Mike said the next step should be a feasibility study. Stephanie said in order to be eligible for the state PARC grant, an appraisal is needed before July 15th.

Bob asked about the status of the Friends Crossing parcel. Elizabeth said there has been no response to the town's offer to purchase the parcel. In order to accept the offer, 80% of the condo association must approve. Bob feels that whether or not Friends Crossing is purchased may affect the plan for the Carriage House property. There are not enough full-size baseball fields for the town's youth league. Two Babe Ruth size fields are needed. If the rehab center takes back their land, there will be no little league fields either.

Stephanie would like to update the town's Open Space and Recreation Plan with this information, the field needs of the other youth leagues as well as the needs of the entire town. She highly encourages the Commission to submit a PARC grant application. She is also interested in holding a joint public outreach campaign with the Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission to discuss where recreation and conservation sites are located and how they can be utilized by the community.

Old Business

Jen H. reported that the docks at the town pool have been removed. The purchase of new docks has gone out to bid and a contract will be awarded to the lowest bidder on June 14th. The pool is scheduled to open on July 6th. There will be free admission on opening day. Jen G. suggested handing out free popsicles on opening day.

The Friends of Frothingham Hall Spring Social for children entering grades 5-7 will take place June 11th. Chaperones are needed for this event. Elizabeth and Jen G. volunteered to chaperone.

A Senior Social will take place June 22nd at Frothingham Hall. Assistance at this event is needed as well as baked goods. Elizabeth plans to make a dessert and help at the event.

Tana reported that she and her son Pat will run the department's Ultimate Frisbee program this summer. The program will begin June 28th for boys and girls entering grade 7 through adults.

Bob reported that he put down seed at Torie's Place Park. The field also needs fertilizer and the infield needs raking.

Vote to Appoint Commission Chairperson

Tana nominated Elizabeth to chair the Commission, Jen G. seconded, all in favor, unanimous vote.

Elizabeth nominated newly appointed Commission member, Bill O'Neill to take Len Cidado's place as the Commission's CPA representative, Jen G. seconded, all in favor, unanimous vote.

Jen H. said a Commission member will need to record meeting minutes once she is laid off in September. Tana volunteered to take on this duty. Elizabeth nominated Tana to record Commission meeting minutes beginning in September, Jen G. seconded, all in favor, unanimous vote.

Department Budget

Jen H. reported that the department's budget has been cut by \$66,028 leaving a budget of \$16,550. This cut eliminates the director's salary as well as a few thousand dollars from expenses. Bob asked where the money to operate Frothingham Hall will come from. Jen H. said these funds will come from a DPW account. Bob asked how much was cut from the Council on Aging budget. He believes budget cuts should be shared equally between the two departments. He feels it was unrealistic to think the Recreation Department could become self funding in such a short time of moving into Frothingham Hall. Elizabeth said David Colton is planning to come to our next meeting to discuss the budget cuts and how they will affect the department.

Summer Programs and Financial Assistance

Jen H. distributed summer program flyers listing close to 30 programs being offered to the community. She also distributed the schedule for children's races at Frothingham Park and asked Commission members to volunteer their help. Participants will be asked to donate towards the cost of race ribbons.

Elizabeth reported that no concerts have been scheduled due to budget cuts. The department can no longer afford to offer free programs.

Jen H. reported that the parent advisory councils from Parkview, Center and Olmsted Schools as well as the Lion's Club have donated to the department's financial assistance fund. She is also waiting to hear if

H.U.G.S. will donate again this year. These donations will allow the department to offer reduced rates to families in need, based upon federal income guidelines. So far there are nine financial aid applicants. Mike said reduced rates should be funded exclusively from donations and not paid through department funds. Elizabeth motioned to allow Jen H. to divide financial assistance funds as appropriate to applicants that qualify for assistance, Jen G. seconded, all in favor, unanimous vote.

Field Use Needs of Youth Leagues

Over the past month Jen H. and Elizabeth have contacted the sports leagues in town to discuss their field needs. Jen H. reported that Easton Girls Softball League needs 1-2 fields dedicated for softball use. Pop Warner Football has a wish list of 2 playing and 4 practice fields. However, they are willing to share multi-purpose fields with youth lacrosse. Youth Lacrosse would like 2-3 practice fields with lights. They are also willing to share fields with football. Elizabeth reported that Easton Youth Soccer owns 2 fields at Oliver Ames and would be happy with any additional field space available. Elizabeth and Jen G. attended the board meeting of Easton Youth Baseball. They would like 2 Babe Ruth size fields. They did not seem interested in sharing field space with other leagues. Bob feels that the Friends Crossing field project should include multi-purpose fields. Mike expressed his agreement.

Friends Group Update

Jen H. reminded everyone about the Spring Social on June 11th and the need for chaperones.

CPA Update

Jen H. said that Len had been working to find an appropriate site for a play structure to be built in South Easton near the Norton line. The structure would be donated in memory of Sgt. William Callahan. She asked if Bill could follow-up with the CPA on this project.

New Business

Jen H. asked that each Commission member update their contact information so that a new department contact list could be distributed.

Jen G. has touched base with East Coast Marketing Group. This organization hosts Red Sox Alumni games as community fundraisers. Easton would need to supply a field and put together a team; East Coast Marketing does the rest. The event could bring the department several thousand dollars in revenue. Possible locations for the event include Frothingham Park or the men's softball field at Oliver Ames. Jen G. would also like the department to try a letter boxing program. This is when boxes with stamps are hidden in different recreational locations. Participants can buy a book of clues to help them locate each box. Once a box is located, the stamp is used to record its finding.

Meeting adjourned at 8:52PM

Next Meeting Monday, July 19, 2010

Approval of Minutes

Elizabeth Nikiciuk, Chair

Jennifer Hruniak, Recreation Director

