

Recreation Commission meeting Tuesday, October 21, 2008

Tana Babbitt not in attendance
Robert Benton in attendance
Len Cidado in attendance
Kathleen DeGrandis in attendance
Charlie Hammond not in attendance
Mike McDonald, Chairman in attendance
Elizabeth Nikiciuk in attendance

Jennifer Hruniak, Director in attendance

Meeting commenced at 7:07PM

Review and Vote on September Minutes

Elizabeth motioned to accept, Bob seconded, all in favor, September minutes accepted.

Old Business

Mike asked if the surfacing has been extended at the Olmsted playground. Jennifer said it has not yet been done. The surfacing company keeps scheduling to come out at the last minute and the school department needs plenty of advance notice. Jennifer has put Mike Green in direct contact with the surfacing company so that they can schedule an opportune time for both parties.

Jennifer reported that the fencing repairs at the Snelgrove playground are complete. The DPW has also loamed and hydro-seeded the area.

Jennifer gave the Commission an updated list of SERD members she received from SERD President, Robin Horrigan. According to the list, there are four new members. With Jennifer and Tana appointed to SERD, this brings the Committee to 22 members. Elizabeth said she knows most of the members. Kathleen spoke with Colleen Corona to clarify questions the Commission had about the Committee's Charge. The Recreation Commission must request money from SERD, who then approves or denies the request. Although the charge talks about excess funding being used to enhance and extend programs, Colleen said the money should be used only for the pool. Kathleen said

there are no guidelines in the charge to determine what constitutes excess funds and she would like to see some specific information added to the charge for clarity. Len noted that the charge calls for a maximum of 21 members and each new member is appointed by the Recreation Commission. He would like to see the charge followed more consistently. Kathleen suggested that SERD and the Recreation Commission should meet together at least annually. Len suggested that Jennifer ask Robin Horrigan why the charge wasn't followed when adding new members to the committee.

Letter to Olmsted/Richardson Parent Advisory Councils

Elizabeth delivered a letter from the Recreation Commission to the Olmsted and Richardson Principals regarding future maintenance of the playgrounds. The letter asked the Olmsted/Richardson Parent Advisory Councils to agree to fund future playground maintenance expenses. The Richardson PAC signed the letter and returned it. They would like to know if there is a maintenance schedule available from the playground company. The Olmsted PAC refused to sign the letter. Dr. Mazzola feels the school or town should be responsible for maintenance. Funding from the PAC is dependent upon the success of their fundraisers and is not guaranteed. Mike instructed Jennifer to speak with Mike Green on this issue. Liz reported that each PAC did agree to reimburse the Recreation Commission for the additional installation costs.

Report on Programs

Jennifer said that detailed program revenue and expense reports will be submitted at the next meeting. She reported a savings of hundreds of dollars on printing costs since the purchase of the department's high speed copier. The fall programs have been very successful with over 90 children signed up for running club, 40 in flag football, and 30 in Super Sports. With the success of the running club, Bob suggested contacting the high school cross country coaches to discuss collaborating on a feeder program. The bus trip to New York City is almost full and sign-ups for the Nutcracker and Bright Lights are coming in steadily. Jennifer asked the Commission if they would support funding a holiday trip for seniors with money from the gift account. The Commission unanimously agreed that this is something they support.

New Business

Jennifer handed out her quarterly report for July 1-September 30, 2008. She reported that Activate Easton's Walk to School Day and Walking Wednesdays at the Olmsted School have been very successful. Liz said she would be interested in volunteering if needed on Walking Wednesdays.

Jennifer informed the Commission that the town has implemented a spending and hiring freeze due to current economic conditions.

Due to the poor economy, Mike suggested that next year the pool be funded through the SERD Account. Liz said that SERD should be notified so that they can begin fundraising. Kathleen feels fundraising will be difficult at this time. Jennifer will contact

Robin Horrigan to discuss funding the pool and the possibility of further fundraising ventures. Bob suggested inviting representatives from SERD to our next meeting.

Mike asked Bob for an update on the Friends Crossing property. Bob reported that there have been two meetings to discuss plans for four ball fields and parking at the site. Mike stated that the Recreation Commission would support multi-purpose fields. He would like the Commission to be part of future discussions. Len said there is a definite need for Babe Ruth and multi-purpose fields.

Jennifer reported that she met with Alice Savage and Stephanie Danielson from Planning and Community Development to discuss the Community Visioning Session. The topic of open space and recreation was discussed at length during the Visioning Session. There is a definite push to get the Recreation Commission more involved in coordinating and managing the recreational land in town. Len will bring a summary of the Visioning Session to our next meeting. Jennifer said she has worked to research the recreational space in town and the different groups that utilize this space. She would like to pull these groups together and meet with them to discuss their field space needs. Kathleen likes this idea and the value it would bring to the Commission. Bob would like to know what parcels of land are being considered by the CPC. Mike suggested inviting Pat Hunt to a future meeting.

Mike said he would like to see a summary of the successful programs and projects of the Recreation Department posted on-line or in the Easton Journal. He suggested pulling information from Jennifer's quarterly reports and sending it to the newspaper in December. Len suggested posting testimonials on the department's webpage as well.

Meeting adjourned at 8:32PM

Next Meeting Tuesday, November 18, 2008

Approval of Minutes

Michael McDonald, Chairman

Jennifer Hruniak, Recreation Director