



RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

February 5, 2019

7:00 p.m.

RECREATION CENTER, 50 AUDUBON DRIVE, ACTON, MA 01720

Present: Ed Holcomb, Commissioner; Stephen Trimble, Commissioner; Joe Will, Commissioner; Barbara Willson, Commissioner; Katie Green, Board of Selectmen Chair and Recreation Liaison; Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director; Melissa Rier, Recreation Coordinator; Mary Lou Repucci, Recreation Office Manager

Absent: None.

1. Opening

Chair Stephen Trimble opened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

2. Regular Business

- A. Approval of Meeting Minutes: The meeting minutes from the Recreation Commission's January 8, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved by a vote of 4-0, with amendments.
- B. Citizen Comments: Nothing to report.
- C. Action Items:
 - i. Responsibility for Bruce Freeman Rail Trail maintenance: Postponed until Katie Green can follow up with Town Manager John Mangiaratti.
 - ii. History of wording in BFRT signage: The origin of signage wording is unclear; however, neither the Planning Department nor Natural Resources objects to changing it to conform with other towns.
- D. Reports:
 - i. Rail Trails: (See 1.C.i, above.)
 - ii. NARA Sports Pavilion: Natural Resources Director, Tom Tidman, met recently with support volunteers for help with site work. The project is moving forward.
 - iii. T.J. O'Grady Skate Park: Melissa Rier has assumed management of this project and is overseeing progress. Engineered plans are finished. \$15,000 has been paid



to Stantec for the signed contract. Melissa is now working on bid documents for review by Town Counsel.

- iv. Playgrounds: Recreation is awaiting approval by the Community Preservation Committee of a funding request for the Jones Playground Renovation project. Melissa reported details of deliberations at the January CPC meeting.
- v. Community Preservation Committee: Steve reported on the status of various requests.

3. New/Special Business

A. Signage at Baseball Fields Policy:

Cathy Fochtman shared a memo from herself to Town Manager, Steve Ledoux, dated 10/2/2012, regarding permission granted to permitted users of Veteran's Field and the Miracle Field to post promotional signage for the purpose of gaining sponsorships. (The AB Youth Baseball League uses Veteran's Field while the Miracle League of Massachusetts uses the Miracle Field at NARA Park.) The need to renew the agreement was discussed and whether it was possibly renewed in 2015. Town staff takes care of mowing, trash removal, weed-whacking and other miscellaneous tasks at Veteran's Field. Reimbursement for various field maintenance items was discussed and that the new agreement should require receipts of service from the leagues. Katie suggested rolling the signage policy into the proposed field fee policy discussed below.

B. Field Fee Update:

Adult leagues already pay user fees for their field permits; a fee to youth leagues is being proposed to help offset field maintenance costs paid by the Recreation Department. The primary question is whether to charge a per-user fee or a flat fee to be adjusted annually. While the Commissioners did not vote on this item, they did recommend charging a lump-sum, flat fee for youth leagues as opposed to a fee tied to per-player registration. The permit fee would include a maintenance schedule stipulated by the Recreation Department. Annual turf maintenance was also discussed. Katie suggested a similar policy for non-sporting groups, such as the Acton-Boxborough Farmer's Market, if it uses the Gardner Playground in future which would necessitate field maintenance. Initiatives to require payment of delinquent field permit fees for last year were discussed. The next step is for Melissa to meet with league representatives. The prohibition against subletting fields will also be addressed at that meeting.

C. Recreation Director Search Update:

The Commissioners inquired as to whether a search committee has been formed to fill the Recreation Director position after Cathy retires. Cathy's last day will be Saturday, February 9, the night of the Studio Two Beatle Tribute concert at the 50 Audubon Drive Recreation Center. We thank her for her outstanding service to Town of Acton and wish her well in her future endeavors!



4. Adjournment

At 8:33 p.m. it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved unanimously.

Documents and Exhibits Used During this Meeting

- Meeting minutes of January 8, 2019; and
- Memo to Steve Ledoux, Town Manager, from Cathy Fochtman, dated 10/12/2012, re: Veteran's Field and Miracle Field advertising signage