

Recreation Advisory Board  
Tuesday, September 29, 2020  
Remote via Zoom  
7:00 PM  
Final Minutes

1. Call to Order

Members Present: Courtney Marshall, Dan Provost, Mike Wissler, Stephanie Papakonstantis, Jenn Harrington, Brinn Sullivan, and Val Castonguay; Molly Cowan, Select Board rep; and Melissa Roy, David Tovey and Greg Bisson of Parks and Rec.

Members Absent: Steve Geiger

Ms. Papakonstantis called the meeting to order at 7 PM.

2. Minute Approval

a. April 28, 2020

**MOTION:** Mr. Wissler moved to approve the minutes of April 28, 2020 as submitted. Ms. Castonguay seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

b. May 26, 2020

**MOTION:** Ms. Harrington moved to approve the minutes of May 26, 2020 as submitted. Mr. Wissler seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

c. June 30, 2020

Mr. Wissler asked for an update on Planet Playground funding sources. Mr. Bisson said they're still going back and forth, but they are applying for a grant. Ms. Papakonstantis said they can discuss this as old business.

**MOTION:** Mr. Wissler moved to approve the minutes of June 30, 2020 as submitted. Ms. Sullivan seconded. By a roll call vote, all were in favor.

3. Program updates

a. Summer Recap

Mr. Bisson said Mr. Tovey and Ms. Roy did an awesome job on the CareKids program. There were no confirmed cases of Covid. The kids were engaged. Ms. Roy secured a \$19,000 grant to extend the program for another week. Around 16 kids took advantage of it at \$50 for the week. Summer movies and concerts were successful all summer long. They are going to have two more movies in the fall.

Mr. Tovey said kids and parents were able to adapt very well to the new procedures. Ms. Roy said they appreciated the opportunity to do smaller group activities like arts and crafts.

Mr. Bisson said those parents who signed up for the camp this year that was cancelled will receive an October registration mailing for next year's program, which should be returned by the end of the year. He will discuss with staff when they will hold the registration.

b. Fall Update

Mr. Bisson said the Select Board gave them approval to do fall sports. The survey was a good predictor of people who were interested, about 200 kids. They did away with games and focused on skills & drills. They're still scrimmaging, but this limits the amount of kids who would have to be isolated with a positive case.

Mr. Tovey and Ms. Roy created enrichment programs for SAU students and taught some of the classes. Kids had to wear masks. Ms. Papakonstantis asked about attendance, and Mr. Bisson said between 5 - 14 kids per class. Mr. Provost asked if Mr. Bisson can use teen volunteers for this program, and Mr. Bisson said yes, if they are willing to sign a Covid waiver. Teen volunteers could also do park cleanups or help build Halloween parade floats.

They vetted having the Parks and Rec building serve as a remote learning center, but it was not fiscally prudent. They would have had to upgrade the internet access at the building, and they could only have handled a limited number of kids.

The Powderkeg Festival would have been this Saturday. Hopefully they will be doing it again in 2021.

Regarding trick or treating, the CDC put out guidelines that discouraged it, but the State recommendations came out ok. They have a conference call with other town officials tomorrow to discuss and make a recommendation to the Select Board.

c. Winter Projections

Mr. Bisson asked for ideas on recreational opportunities for the winter. Basketball may not be possible. Ms. Papakonstantis suggested snowshoeing or cross country skiing activities. Mr. Bisson said Talbot Gym may be an option for indoor athletic programs. Ms. Papakonstantis suggested a winter safety survival course. Mr. Bisson said that one resident has suggested a "Coyote Club." Ms. Sullivan suggested geocaching, stargazing or full moon events. Ms. Papakonstantis recommended coordinating with the Conservation and Sustainability Committees. She said they should be mindful of the community's mental health and have some programs in place. Ms. Harrington asked if they are doing virtual programs, and Mr. Bisson said currently only karate. The Rinks is adding an e-sports team, and they would be open to something similar. There's a lot of Zoom fatigue. Ms. Harrington asked about basketball. Mr. Bisson said there are some Covid concerns. They're purchasing a hydrostatic sprayer for indoor events. Is the Board open to a typical basketball season, as at The Rims? Mr. Wissler said the priority should be getting kids back in school, and the Board generally agreed. Ms. Cowan suggested bowling. Mr. Bisson said bowling alleys have a strict set of guidelines, and Exeter Lanes is up and running safely. Mr. Provost said kids could choose their own teams and scrimmage with them only, so that people stay within their bubble.

Mr. Bisson said they're looking at doing a social emotional support group for parents.

4. Project Updates

- a. Gilman Park Pavilion painting
    - i. Mr. Bisson said Five Star Painting is scheduled to finish the Gilman Park Pavilion painting in October. Parks and Rec will furnish this park with picnic tables next spring. It was hard to schedule when construction was delayed due to supply chain issues.
  - b. Gale Park walkway renovation
    - i. They put out a Gale Park RFP in August, and have received four quotes so far. They will be writing a memo for the next Select Board meeting. They're hoping to have it done before Veteran's Day.
5. Events Update
- a. Movies

Ms. Roy said the drive-in movies had an average of 30 cars a night. For the fall, they started the movies earlier and lowered the movie audience age, since it gets dark earlier. For the next one, they will do Halloween costumes and pizza.
  - b. Scarecrow Contest

They're running a Scarecrow Contest. They partnered with Exeter Lumber to provide the frame, and the rest of the decoration is up to the family.
  - c. Halloween Parade

On Halloween, they will do a reverse parade like at Easter, with Police and Fire.
6. CIP Update
- a. Park Improvement Fund

Mr. Bisson said there's only one CIP request in the budget. They requested \$43,000 for the Parks Improvement Fund, which is significantly less than the \$100,000 requested in FY20.
7. Old Business
- a. Planet Playground

They're looking at an LWCF (Land and Water Conservation Fund) grant of \$300,000. They could do a 30 year lease, but in order to get the grant, LWCF requires the lease to be in perpetuity or a purchase. He's been going back and forth with the property owner's lawyer.
  - b. Ski Program

Mr. Tovey said they're planning to do a ski program this year, partnering with Gunstock. They're not providing transportation, but would meet families there for lesson days. Mr. Bisson said there will be no access to the lodge, and masks will be required.
8. New Business
- a. There was no new business discussed at this meeting.
9. Adjournment

**MOTION:** Ms. Harrington moved to adjourn. Ms. Castonguay seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Joanna Bartell  
Recording Secretary