

Recreation Advisory Board
Tuesday, March 29, 2022
Recreation Offices
7:00 PM
Final Minutes

1. Call to Order

Members Present: Dick Matthews, Mike Wissler, Dan Provost, Stephanie Papakonstantis, and Jenn Harrington; Julie Gilman, Select Board Rep; and David Tovey, Tara Barker, and Greg Bisson of Parks and Rec.

Members Absent: Brinn Sullivan

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

2. Public Comment

- a. There was no public comment at this meeting.

3. Minute Approval - 9/29/2021, 11/9/2021, 11/30/2021

MOTION: Mr. Matthews moved to approve the minutes of September 29, 2021, November 9, 2021, and November 30, 2021 as presented. Ms. Harrington seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

4. New Business

- a. Rockingham Planning Commission Senior Survey Update

Mr. Tovey said the Senior Survey had over 300 responses. This is the last week for online submissions, and paper submissions are closed. He's meeting with Rockingham Planning Commission [RPC] on Friday to review the results.

Ms. Papakonstantis asked who put the survey together, and Mr. Tovey said RPC. Ms. Papakonstantis said the online version wasn't user friendly. It wouldn't let her submit the survey without an email, but it also asked for very personal information like income.

Ms. Papakonstantis asked about community transportation options. Mr. Bisson mentioned TASC (Transportation Alliance for Seacoast Citizens). Ms. Gilman said you have to schedule trips with them in advance. Ms. Papakonstantis suggested having a bus service through Parks and Rec.

- b. Winter Programming Recap

Mr. Tovey said monthly crafts at 277 Water Street have been a hit. This program was sponsored by Humana Insurance. The Hospital is sponsoring a chair yoga program there. Courtney Marshall is teaching Zumba and Strength & Fitness; she will do Aqua Zumba again this summer. We held our first adult CPR/AED class with the Fire Department. We started a senior history education program, and we're hoping that will catch on. Trips are starting to pick up as well.

Ms. Papakonstantis said she used to go into 277 Water Street to do jewelry making classes before Mother's Day and donate supplies, and she can do that again.

Ms. Barker said for winter sports, basketball went well despite some issues. The Gunstock ski and ride program had 101 participants and went well. Karate program numbers were good. For spring sports, soccer, baseball, field hockey, and lacrosse are coming up. Everything has been advertised. Registration is open through April 1 for baseball. Mr. Wissler said there's a new batting cage at LSS. Ms. Papakonstantis suggested having a booth at Get Fit in May for summer sports. Mr. Bisson said they didn't get a good response when they went before. It would only be for summer camp and flag football, since summer sports will already be underway by May 21.

c. Pickleball Court Conversion Update

Mr. Bisson said we presented the pickleball proposal to the Select Board, but they wanted to table it to a future meeting so people aren't caught off guard. Pickleball will create a presentation. Tennis is nowhere near the numbers we have for Pickleball. Ms. Gilman said Select Board members felt that the tennis courts are used all the time. Mr. Bisson said he confirmed with the High School that their six courts are open in the evening and all summer. He's never seen people turned away from the tennis courts. There's room for both sports to be up there. We've never had complaints about availability. Ms. Harrington said there should be equity for the Pickleballers. Mr. Bisson said it will be a stand-alone agenda item at the April 11 Select Board meeting. Having more Pickleball tournaments will have a good economic impact for the town. Mr. Matthews said Riverwoods is a major sponsor. Most Pickleball players are ex-tennis players who have aged out. We will run beginner lessons and camps. Mr. Bisson said we're going to run a para pickleball tournament.

d. Summer Update

Mr. Bisson said Summer camp numbers aren't coming in as fast as pre-Covid, but we're getting solid numbers. We had to make a massive pay adjustment to all our seasonal employees. They will now start at \$14, with CITs at \$12. Ms. Barker said of 28 positions in summer camp, we have 19 hired, 18 of whom are returning; we need 5 counselors and 4 CITs, and have 10 interviews this week. Mr. Tovey said lifeguarding staff is looking good, and there's some returning staff from last year. There's a new swim instructor with 10+ years of aquatics experience who will oversee the program and teach the lifeguards. It will be in a MWF format this year so that summer camp kids can take field trips without missing their swim lessons. Camp is going back to pre-Covid practices like field trips. Ms. Barker said there are 181 registered, and 30 or 40 spots left. Teen camp is back; so far there are 24 full campers for the summer, 7 for session 1, and 2 for session 2. Ms. Barker talked about ideas for the teens to do community service. Golf has 12 people registered. Football camp is up and

running. Soccer camp is lined up. There are two Lego camps, and we're working with Mad Science to fill the time between summer camp and school start, with about 20 slots. A paddleboard company will offer a program on the Lamprey in Newmarket. Six kayaks will be available for rental at Stuart Park. Primex and the lawyers have signed off on it. There are also six spots that people can rent to store their own kayaks.

e. 10 Hampton Road Update

Ms. Papakonstantis said the article on the purchase of 10 Hampton Road needed 60% to pass, and got 78%. It was a record turnout. A lot of those who were previously vocal naysayers were saying that this was the right opportunity. Mr. Bisson said we will get 50 additional parking spaces. We're putting up a temporary barrier between the green space and the parking lot so people don't drive on the grass. We're trying to line up contractors, but a lot are saying they're booked this year. We have one quote and another lined up to come look. An HVAC company took a look. We're working on alternative funding. CDBG funds could be up to \$500,000; this is due in May. Public works will alter their sidewalk plan to accommodate this property. Closing is this week or next. We have access now. Ms. Papakonstantis thanked Yeti Landscaping for cleaning out the brush. Mr. Bisson said we're having a survey done of the property corners. The gate is on Churchill's property, so that will be closed up, but we're taking the rest of the fence down. Ms. Papakonstantis said she would call her contact about pricing for a tent for outdoor programming.

f. Park Improvement Project Update

Mr. Bisson said for safety fencing at the Rec Park for softball, we'll be putting in Grand Slam Fencing in outfield #3 and along the hillside. We're getting 8 more benches for the courts. We're ordering five new water fountains, which are ADA compliant and have a bottle filling station. We're rehabbing the pool slide from 2005. To address the pipe leak, we're having a contractor fix it and redo the concrete. We're replacing the picnic tables at Planet Playground. Townhouse common will have improved irrigation. Park Street Common will be renovated and fenced at the end of April. For playground chips, we found an alternative product that will make the playground ADA compliant at 1/3 of the cost. We found the owner of the Planet Playground land, and they are interested in working out a lifetime lease at a reasonable cost, which should take 1 -2 months. We're putting in a letter of intent to LWCF to offset the cost of Planet Playground, for up to \$400,000 in grants. Members should send a letter of support to our Senators to fully fund LWCF. We can use the Friends group to solicit more donations. We will not do a community build, we want a professional to install it and certify that it's compliant.

5. Old Business

- a. There was no old business discussed at this meeting.

6. New Business

a. Quarterly meetings

Ms. Papakonstantis said the meetings have turned quarterly anyway. Ms. Gilman said seasonal meetings make sense.

MOTION: Mr. Wissler moved to go to quarterly meetings. Mr. Matthews seconded. The motion passed 5-0.

The next meeting will be in June. If there are any projects that require a vote the Board can meet on demand.

Mr. Wissler asked if there will be a ribbon cutting for the Gilman Park pavilion. Mr. Bisson said yes, we want to do a cookout; he will look at dates.

Mr. Wissler asked if the UFO festival will come back. Mr. Bisson said yes, but the Kiwanis Club wants to do it themselves.

Mr. Bisson said this summer, we'll be partnering with TEAM to do a food truck and music night. We're applying for an AARP grant to do new lighting and benches. This will be every Tuesday night for 8 weeks.

7. Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Matthews moved to adjourn. Mr. Wissler seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary