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Recreation Commission Minutes 10/14/2008

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes

Tuesday, October 14, 2008

Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM on the first floor of the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, October 14, 2008.

Members in attendance included: Leslie Mayer, Nancy Campbell, Jim Robillard, Jen Rothenberg and Don Vitters. Also in attendance was Director of Recreation Joseph Connelly.

Members of the public included: Paul Carroll, Rich Greco, Karen Grossman, Jim McLaughlin, Anthony Vogel and Christian Klein.

Approval of Minutes

The Park and Recreation Commission reviewed the minutes of September 09, 2008. Mr. Vitters and Ms. Mayer amended the minutes. Mr. Vitters motioned to approve the minutes as amended, seconded by Mr. Robillard Motion was approved 5-0.

Friends of Spy Pond Planting Request

Ms. Mayer introduced the request from the Friends of Spy Pond Park to plant day lilies around the circular benches. Ms. Mayer reviewed the meeting with the Conservation Commission with regards to the beach area and pathway erosion. Ms. Grossman reviewed the request to plant the day lilies. Mr. Connelly stated that he did talk to DPW and their only concern was that they would get destroyed when people sat on the benches. Mr. Vitters discussed the size of the plantings with Ms. Grossman. Ms. Mayer stated that she was concerned with planting any flowers that may attract bees to where people may be sitting. Ms. Grossman asked if it would be ok to plant the lilies in another location. Ms. Mayer stated that planting the lilies at another existing planting bed on site should be fine. The Commission agreed. Mr. Connelly stated that there was a leak in the irrigation line on the bike trail side of the path and it is being repaired.

Discussion with Arlington Cal Ripkin Baseball/2008 Season Review

Ms. Mayer first welcomed Mr. Carroll to the meeting and congratulated the Cal Ripkin organization on the overwhelming success of this past season. Ms. Mayer reviewed the last meeting between Cal Ripkin and the Commission. Mr. Carroll stated for the record that Cal Ripkin is actually an age division of the national chartered Babe Ruth organization. Mr. Robillard and Mr. Carroll explained that the Arlington did have two different charters with the Babe Ruth Organization.

Mr. Carroll explained that this off-season their organization will take down the batting cages at Poets Field and store them in one of the storage sheds on sight. Mr. Carroll stated that there might be a way to store the unit in it's own enclosure but that option has not been finalized yet. Ms. Mayer asked that when a design is ready that the Park Commission approves it before any further action is taken. Mr. Carroll agreed and will inform Mr. Connelly when they are ready to proceed. Ms. Mayer also asked that Mr.

Carroll give Mr. Connelly notification of when the batting cages will be taken down and when they will be going back up.

Mr. Connelly stated that he did speak with Town Counsel and was told that just because something was on town property it did not become the town's property until it was officially gifted to the Town. Mr. Connelly also stated that because there were no fees charged for the direct use of the batting cages it fell under the recreation statute limiting liability to both parties.

Mr. Connelly and Ms. Campbell asked if the second shed at Poets would be brought back to Buzzell. Mr. Carroll said it could but did state that the two sheds at Poets were very useful in storing the batting cage equipment. Mr. Carroll and Mr. Connelly will touch base in March to develop a plan for Buzzell.

Ms. Mayer asked Mr. Carroll if he had the final agreement for the gifting of the lights at Buck Field. Mr. Connelly stated that he also inquired with Town Counsel. Mr. Carroll will try to find the agreement and get back to Mr. Connelly. Ms. Mayer did explain to Mr. Carroll that the Commission has received a written complaint from a neighbor regarding the high volume of use and noise at Buck Field since the lights were installed. Mr. Greco and Mr. Carroll stated that since Buzzell Field was closed this past year many of the games were pushed to Buck. Mr. Greco did state that with Buzzell now open it should have some impact on reducing Buck Field usage.

Ms. Mayer and Ms. Campbell discussed the use of the Buck Field lights by the girls' softball program. Mr. Carroll and Mr. Greco explained that due to the mound it was not a preferred field for softball use. Mr. Carroll stated that the girls in the baseball program do use the field/lights. Mr. Connelly suggested allowing the girls softball program to play under the lights at the newly renovated Buzzell Field a couple of nights a week. Both Mr. Carroll and Ms. Mayer stated that sounded like a very good possibility. Mr. Connelly will sit down with youth baseball/softball prior to next season to work out a schedule.

Ms. Mayer ended the conversation by requesting Cal Ripkin's involvement in the park restroom subcommittee. Mr. Carroll stated that he was familiar with the subcommittee thanks to Mr. Cunningham and that he would certainly have someone from youth baseball/softball involved.

New Softball Team/League – Jim McLaughlin

Mr. Connelly introduced Mr. McLaughlin to the Commission and briefly explained the request. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he was starting a single U-16 girls softball team that was comprised of 13 girls of which 9 were from Arlington. Mr. McLaughlin's request was for two practice areas per week during the spring and summer with a possible mid summer tournament. Ms. Mayer stated that the spring was a busy season and that Mr. McLaughlin would have to take only fields that were not being used by the current in town organizations. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he understood that and that he would work with Mr. Connelly and youth baseball. Mr. McLaughlin stated that a minimum of three practice times per month would be needed.

Ms. Campbell motioned to support the New England Fire girls, softball programs efforts to work with the existing organizations to find some adequate field space for their program. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 5-0.

Friends of Robbins Farm Sundial Project

Mr. Vogel and Mr. Klein introduced the Human Sundial project at Robbins Farm. Mr. Vogel reviewed the technical information and local history of the human sundial. Mr. Klein shared his experience trying to place a temporary one at Robbins Farm. The Commission discussed the project with Mr. Vogel as he reviewed the site conceptual drawings. Mr. Vogel stated whatever design was proposed it would require little to no maintenance. Mr. Vitters stated he liked the concept and asked if any grading was necessary. Mr. Vogel stated some minor grading would be necessary in the installation phase. Ms. Mayer stated that any work on site would need to be handicap accessible. Mr. Vogel stated that the project would be completely funded by private donations and that the project was most likely two years away from. Ms. Campbell motioned to approve the human sundial plan as a concept with further detail to be presented at a future time. The motion was seconded by Ms. Rothenberg and approved 5-0.

Picnic Request Approval

This item was tabled to give the Commissioners time to review the proposed policy.

Veteran's Flagpole at Summer Street Field

Mr. Connelly reviewed the schematic of the flagpole and memorial stone. The Commission discussed the placement of the pole and

memorial behind the backstop. The Commission would like the area on top of the hill near the benches investigated. Mr. Connelly will work with the architect to create a new schematic. Mr. Connelly stated that he believed the memorial phase of the project and the wording on the plaque would have to go through the Public Memorial Committee.

Rink/Recreation Update

Recreation – Mr. Connelly stated that the inaugural golf tournament went very well and that although the fundraising was not what was expected it was building a foundation for a future successful event. Ms. Campbell commented on how well organized it was and the participants seemed very much to enjoy the event. Mr. Connelly discussed his fear of how the current economy might affect program registrations.

Rink – Mr. Connelly stated that the rink was operating successfully after the first month and that rink users seemed very happy. Mr. Connelly did state that one adult user group was given a verbal warning for loitering.

Special Events

Friends of Waldo Park – October 28th and October 31st -

Ms. Rothenberg made a motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 5-0.

Spooky Walk – The Commission discussed this event. Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve with the details to be worked out between the FoMRP and Mr. Connelly, seconded by Ms. Campbell and approved 5-0.

Peirce School Model Rocket Launching – McClennen Field – October 18 – Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve, seconded by Mr. Robillard and approved 5-0.

Capital Update

Arlington Sport Complex – Mr. Connelly reviewed the upcoming public meeting on October 30th. Mr. Connelly stated that the intent of the meeting was to begin the public input process so that the feasibility study could move forward.

Buzzell Field – Mr. Connelly stated that the contractor owned the turf maintenance of the field until it was officially turned over to the Town.

Thorndike Parking – Mr. Connelly stated that the survey was almost complete the next phase was for Warner Associates to develop plan details and cost estimates prior to another public hearing. Mr. Connelly stated that the goal was to narrow the plan to a single option before beginning the special permit process through the Redevelopment Board.

Pheasant Ave. – Mr. Connelly stated that the playground was 99.9 % completed and was open for the first day of school. Mr. Connelly stated that the remaining items to be fixed included the step handrails.

Menotomy Rocks – Mr. Connelly stated that the aerator has been repaired

Handicap Access – Ms. Mayer reviewed with the Commission her letter to the Board of Selectmen requesting handicapped parking spaces on the street near several parks/playground.

Summer Street – Ms. Mayer reviewed her letter to DPW Director John Bean with respect to several Summer Street park properties concerns, including the removal of the fence at Summer Street Field, tree planting plan and paved parking lot area on Town property at Hill's Hill.

Committee Updates

Green Dog Committee – Ms. Mayer stated that there would be several more meetings in November to solicit input on the revised

plan. Ms. Rothenberg suggested broadening the sub-committee to help spread the workload.

Restrooms in Parks Committee – Ms. Rothenberg reviewed the first meeting with the user groups stating that more background information was being gathered and a second meeting was being scheduled.

Ms. Rothenberg motioned to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Campbell and approved 5-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:15 PM.

Respectively Submitted:

Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation