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Parks and Recreation Minutes 6/08/2004

Park and Recreation Commission Minutes

Tuesday, June 8, 2004 - 7:00 p.m.

Approved Meeting Minutes

The meeting came to order at 7:00 PM.

Commissioners Present: Joseph Carabello, Thomas Caccavaro
Nancy Campbell, Leslie Mayer, and
Donald Vitters

Staff Present: Jonathan Jalbert, Recreation Superintendent
Patsy Kraemer, Director of Human Services
Brian Sullivan, Town Manager

Recording Secretary: Laura Munsey

Other: John Coles, Friends of Robbins Farm

1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes

Mr. Carabello welcomed the Commissioners and guests to the June 8, 2004 Park and Recreation Commission meeting. Approval of the May Minutes will be postponed until the July 13th meeting to give the Commissioners time to review them sufficiently.

2. Friends of Robbins Farm

Congratulations was extended from the Commission to Ms. Jenn Rothenberg on her new baby, and Mr. John Coles stated he would pass along the Commissions well wishes. Mr.

John Coles is an experienced painter who would like to request permission to paint an outdoor mural at Robbins Farm. Mr. Coles cited several projects, including one in Lexington that worked very well. He would like to paint the walls at the big slide (30' x 3') to look like a stone wall, and believes it will fit nicely into the historic scenery of the park. He may invite children (Brackett School 5th Grade) to help, however, he would like the final product to look professional upon completion. Mr. Coles submitted examples of his work. Mr. Coles painted the Arlington Heights Nursery School Wall approximately 10 years ago, and he reported it has held up well.

Concern was expressed by the Commissioners whether or not this mural would invite or discourage graffiti and inquired if the wall was the subject of graffiti could that be repaired and who would be responsible for that repair? It was shared that Hardy School painted murals on the back doors and it looked nice and there were no problems. Mr.

Caccavaro stated that he is a mason by trade and a General Contractor. He expressed concern that you can't get paint off a wall unless it is sandblasted. When graffiti vandalized Bishop School it took a lot of money and sandblasting to

repair. Mr. Caccavaro stated that painting of doors is different than painting of cement walls, because doors can be painted over. Mr. Carabello stated that they are already having a problem with, and finding Graffiti in the area of Robbins Farm. Several benches have been damaged.

The major concerns of the Commissioners is the upkeep, maintenance, vandalism, and would like assurance that the Friends of Robbins Farm endorse this project.

The Friends of Robbins Farm will be having their annual meeting on June 12th,

2004, and Ms. Mayer recommended that Mr. Coles share the concerns of the Commissioners with his committee at their annual meeting.

MOTION

THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION WOULD LIKE TO POSTPONE THE DECISION REGARDING THE PAINTING OF A MURAL AT ROBBINS FARM UNTIL THEY RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OF THE FRIENDS OF ROBBINS FARM COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE ISSUES RAISED.

VOTE: 4-1 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION.

(MR. CARABELLO, MS. CAMPBELL, MS. MAYER, MR. VITTERS - YES)

(MR. CACCAVARO - NO)

3. Special Event Approvals

Mr. Carabello informed the Commissioners that several requests for special events came up in an untimely fashion. He authorized Mr. Jalbert to approve those events if no conflicts were present. Many of these events were for end of year field days for schools throughout town. Mr. Jalbert informed the Commission that all groups will be sent notification regarding the procedures, and time-frame, for scheduling special events to avoid future problems, or disappointments.

A special permit request for July 11, 2004, 3:00 pm - 8:30 pm, at Menotomy Rocks Park for the annual Shakespeare in the Park Festival. Anticipated attendance is 500 people. Ms. Mayer expressed concern that last year some people were restricted from the park area and she received complaints. Mr. Jalbert stated that he too heard these complaints and learned that several people with dogs were restricted, but further stated that several people had dogs off leash, which would present a concern/safety issue. It was recommended that those who lawfully had their dogs on leash should not be turned away from the Shakespeare in the Park Festival.

MOTION (made by Leslie Mayer, 2nd by Nancy Campbell)

THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION APPROVES THE SPECIAL PERMIT FOR JULY 11, 2004 3:00 PM - 8:30 PM, AT MENOTOMY ROCKS PARK FOR THE SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK FESTIVAL, SUBJECT TO POLICE DETAILS, AND IF PUBLIC ACCESS IS NOT DENIED.

VOTE: 5-0 (UNANIMOUS IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION)

Mr. Carabello informed Mr. Jalbert that the auxiliary fire department will be requesting a special permit for their annual picnic at Menotomy Rocks Park.

4. Rink Fees Proposal and Volunteer Credit

It has been past practice that the 3 major user groups (Arlington Hockey and Figure Skating Club, Arlington High School, and Arlington Catholic High School) were offered Credits for Volunteer hours worked. Mr. Jalbert would like a policy established that this program is fair and consistent for all of three major user groups. This program started over 10 years ago, and needs to be re-evaluated. A vote regarding a Volunteer Credit Proposal will be postponed until the Sports Center Improvement Committee has the opportunity to meet and discuss this issue.

Mr. Brian Sullivan, Town Manager, and Mr. Jonathan Jalbert, Recreation Superintendent, submitted the proposal for Rink/Ice Rental Fees for the 2004-2005 Season, as well as the most recent rink budget. It was recommended that Youth fees stay the same, that High School rates increase by \$5/hour, and adult and non resident user

groups increase by \$10/hour. Ms. Campbell expressed concern that she has received several budgets over the last few months, which show several different discrepancies. Mr. Jalbert stated that several of the earlier budgets were based on projections, and not actuals, and that the fiscal year ends June 30th. Ms. Mayer stated that it is town policy that Public High Schools are exempted from town user fees. Mr. Sullivan stated that he does not believe that is the case for an enterprise fund, such as the skating rink, and that maintaining and operating an iceskating rink is a costly endeavor. Ms. Mayer stated that she believes tax dollar based fees are being raised more than other fees. Mr. Vitters stated that based on the information provided, several other towns charge higher rates than Arlington, and that he did not find this rate increase significant, over the course of the year, and the rates appeared to be balanced and fair. Ms. Mayer inquired if Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Jalbert looked at increasing Arlington Catholic to a higher rate where they are a Private High School, and not part of the towns tax levy. Mr. Caccavaro stated he did not want division between schools. Mr. Sullivan further stated that the Rink is State owned, and as part of the lease agreement, the Veteran's Memorial Skating Rink is to be used by all, and we cannot be exclusionary. Ms. Mayer stated that she believes the Commission should protect the Public High Schools. She expressed concern that AHS asked for exemption of fees last season, and it was denied, and she stated that this request had not been brought to the Commission for discussion or approval. Mr. Jalbert stated that at the end of the Season he received a request for a 50% reduction of all fees established by AHS for the 2003-2004 season, and that this request was submitted to the Town Manager for Review. Mr. Sullivan stated that it was his responsibility to review this request, and that it was not the responsibility of the Park and Recreation Commission to approve such a request. Ms. Campbell brought to the attention of the Commission that it appeared a \$6,000 fee was added twice, and therefore should increase the profits of the Rink by \$6,000. Concern was expressed over a loss at the Concession Stand last season. Mr. Jalbert stated this was due to having paid staff work the Concession Stand rather than Volunteers as has been done in the past, and that changes will be made next year regarding hours of operation.

MOTION: (made by Mr. Caccavaro, 2nd by Mr. Vitters)

THE PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION APPROVES THE RECOMMENDATION PRESENTED BY MR. SULLIVAN AND MR. JALBERT REGARDING RINK FEES AND ICE RENTAL RATES FOR THE 2004-2005 SEASON

VOTE: (3-2 IN FAVOR OF THE MOTION)

(MR. CARABELLO, MR. CACCAVARO, MR. VITTERS - YES)
(MS. CAMPBELL, MS. MAYER - NO)

Note: Ms. Campbell and Ms. Mayer voted against the recommended increase in light of the fact that an additional \$6,000 was found in the budget. Ms. Mayer also believes that the public high school fees, funded by taxpayer dollars, should not be raised during a time that the local public school system faces significant fiscal constraints.

5. Committee Updates

Field Policy Committee. Mr. Carabello informed the Commission that Town Meeting voted to approve a new Field Committee, to look at field permitting and user fees. There will now be two separate field Committees in Town. This new committee will have representatives appointed from the Board of Selectmen, DPW, Park and Recreation Commission, Finance Committee, and an appointee from the Town Meeting Moderator.

Dallin School is moving forward (anticipated start date of July 1, 2004) and inquiries regarding construction, staging, and its affect on Florence Field should be evaluated. Mr. Vitters stated he spoke with the Architect, and they are aware that Florence Field is under the Jurisdiction of the Park and Recreation Commission.

Sports Center Improvement Committee. Jim Carne has agreed to be the Park and Recreation Commissions Appointee to serve on

the Sports Center Improvement Committee. The first meeting will be scheduled in July.

Open Space Committee. No Report.

Friends Groups.

FOCCA is concerned about the dog park planned at McClennon Fields. Concerns have been raised by an Arlington and Lexington Neighbor regarding Liability Issues, and plans are currently on hold.

SPY POND RENOVATION. One more permit is needed for the Boat Ramp. Drawings are complete and ready for 4 week bid. Planning and design phase is complete.

ROBBINS FARM. Mr. Jalbert is withholding \$15,000 until the punch list is complete. One Post is missing, they are filling depressions in old tennis courts area, graffiti on concrete, there is a big crack in the big slide @ plat form. Most of the slide is original. Hydro seed is beginning to take.

WALDO LOCK AND CROSBY TENNIS COURTS. A public meeting will be scheduled for June 21st at the Senior Center. This shall be posted at the clerks office.

Mr. Carabello inquired if Mr. Sullivan had any recommendations regarding using a Clerk of the Works for Capital Projects. Mr. Sullivan stated that many towns hire 1/2 time project managers for several projects. They are usually hired independently and approximately a 10% fee should be added to the total Capital Budget. Mr. Carabello stated that in previous projects the Commission identified problems with specifications.

RESERVOIR COMMITTEE. Town Meeting approved Capital Money for Dam Project. A public hearing is scheduled for June 17, 2004. The Reservoir Committee held a clean up day, and they will have a table at the Recreation Department's Open House. The Boy Scouts will also be mulching part of the Conservation Area as a project. The pipe has been closed up, and the dam has been shut. Stratton School 5th Grade had a tour of the Reservoir and they made sketchings of the area.

6. Recreation and Rink Update

The Recreation Department is finalizing the Dog/Boarder Collie Program to help control the geese population at the Reservoir, Spy Pond Shore, Scannell and Thorndike Fields. Upon testing the Spray Pool at Thompson School, a potential problem was identified, and will be repaired. The Reservoir has an expected opening of June 24, 2004. Arlington High School had a volunteer clean up day, and several students volunteered at Hills Hill, Summer Street, and the Reservoir. The Receptionist position is currently open, and being temporarily filled. Donna Sullivan requested 12 weeks off under the Family Medical Leave Act. A posting has been issued for a temporary replacement. Summer equipment has been ordered, workrecreation assignments are being made, and seasonal staff and jobs, jobs, jobs students are being hired. Mr. Jalbert commented that he and Mr. Gore have been working very hard to make up for the reduced staff, and things are going smoothly. In May, the Rink hosted an alternative transportation fair, and next year this event may be combined with the Memorial Day Road Race. Ms. Mayer stated that with the hiring of Mr. Gore it was expected that 75% of his salary would be charged to the Recreation Office, and 25% charged to the Rink for Programs, and that she does not believe that has been done. A letter was received by Christine Connolly of the Board of Health, stating that the driveway owned by the town, under the jurisdiction of the Park and

Recreation Commission at the Spring Street Entrance at Menotomy Rocks Park has become a mosquito habitat. Mr. Carabello stated that he is familiar with this problem, and several options are being evaluated.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:35 pm