



**Town of Acton  
Recreation Commission**

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**MINUTES**

**DATE: MARCH 1, 2011**

**7:00 PM**

**TOWN CLERK, ACTON  
ROOM 46, ACTON TOWN HALL**

**ATTENDEES**

Recreation Commission members present were Ms. Karen Jarsky, Co-Chair, Ms. Kim Bodnar, Co-Chair, Ms. Betsy Mercier, Commissioner, Ms. Bridget McKeever-Matz, Commissioner, Selectman Pamela Harting-Barrat, Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director

**AGENDA TOPICS**

**Meeting called to order at: 7:00 PM**

- **Citizens Concerns:** Ms. Fochtman has begun to receive phone calls regarding people not cleaning up after their dogs at NARA

**CONSENT AGENDA**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	February 2011 minutes
<b>ACTION ITEM</b>	February 2011 minutes were accepted as amended, 4-0

**TOPIC: Chinese New Year Celebrations**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	This was a great event but the weather precluded the use of fireworks or outdoor Chinese Wish lanterns. The indoor event was fabulous and very well attended. The Chinese Language School's performance was exceptional and very well done. Photos have been posted on Facebook. It appeared that this event was sold out.
<b>ACTION ITEM</b>	Looking for an event to use the unused fireworks; perhaps they might be used with the Patriots Day celebrations.

**TOPIC: MIRACLE LEAGUE FIELD**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Mr. Tom Tidman was approached by the organizers to think of an alternate location to School Street. His thoughts were to develop a small piece of Town property adjacent to NARA that is currently not used as fields and include additional parking. Funding will be required for both field development, as well as parking and accessorial needs (i.e. snack bar, restrooms). The development of Recreation's concept for a Miracle League Field will be shown to Mr. & Mrs. Richardt, who are the State of MA organizers of the Field. Mr. Tidman has reached out to architects to begin moving the project along but buy in from Town Management is required. The closest Miracle League Field is in Westchester County, New York. There are very high attendance numbers for these events so parking and scheduling is crucial to success.
<b>ACTION ITEM</b>	Mr. Tidman is looking for the support of the Leagues for his vision.

**TOPIC: GOWARD FUNDING**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Nothing new to report. Ms. Fochtman has not spoken to Jana Cataldo this past month.
<b>ACTION ITEM</b>	In the near term, Ms. Fochtman will reach out to Jana and provide the status of the playground quotes.

**TOPIC: OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN UPDATES/MODIFICATIONS**

<b>DISCUSSION</b>	Ms. Fochtman populated the spreadsheet created by Ms. Bodnar regarding the status of fields. Some of the town expenditure data is not easily found. Costs are not broken out by field so it is difficult to provide costs for Town spent by field. Ms. Fochtman also input expenditure data into the playground spreadsheet. Ms. Bodnar asked if it made sense to include expenditure data from prior years since there appears to be a substantial amount spent for a few playgrounds in 2010 that is more of an anomaly. Ms. Jarsky asked if it made sense to add a column that spoke to the remaining lifespan of the playgrounds. Ms. Fochtman advised that this data is available and can be included. In terms of the spreadsheet column headers, change "age of playground" to "year installed". Ms. Jarsky asked if we should include Robbins Mill and Ms. Fochtman advised that we should. We also should replace "spent in 2010" to "average spent" over a certain number of years.
<b>CONCLUSIONS</b>	Looking at whether or not more expenditure data is required and do we need to ask the leagues to provide better expenditure data is an area to be explored. Ms. Fochtman spoke to JD Head about providing us data re: school playgrounds. We haven't received any information yet so Ms. Fochtman will follow-up.

**REPORTS:**

**DISCUSSION**

**a) Elm Street Update** – Nothing to report

**b) Morrison Farm Update** - There is a settlement to have Mr. James Fenton, the contractor, begin renovations to the Morrison Farm House. They will upgrade the bathroom, replace a roof, etc...

**c) CPC** – Since the last meeting it was decided that the Elm Street funding will not be approved. Conversely, the NARA Park pavilion funding is readily available. There is no need for an article to allow for the NARA pavilion project. Ms. Fochtman has requested that the architect finish the design by June 30. This will allow the project to be ready for bid and then construction. Ms. Fochtman is going to follow up with Roland Bartl to better understand the status of funding. The Conant Nature Trail's funds will be allowed to lapse.

**d) School Street** - The Lions Club Fair will take place at School Street this year. Nothing new with the status of the lease. There are two state agencies, DAR and DCAM, that are very slow to respond to the proposal that the Town of Acton submitted to them. Ms. Jarsky asked if the Recreation Commission should provide a letter to the two state agencies urging them to swiftly arrive at a decision. Ms. Jarsky also asked if it would be feasible to ask Jamie Eldridge to write a letter as well. Ms. Fochtman will follow up with Mr. Eldridge.

**e) Playground Update** – Nothing to report

**f) Open Space & Recreation Plan** – Nothing to report

**g) NARA Park Pavilion Update** – Nothing to report

**h) Recreation Operations Peak Software** - Ms. Fochtman has been asking them for help with their beach pass printing. Also, at the next meeting, Ms. Fochtman will provide reports providing historical revenue data from Nara Park. These reports will be run from PEAK. We are nearly at the point where the Recreation Commission will need to renew their license with PEAK but continue to be concerned about their level of support

**New Business/Discussion:** Ms. Jarsky will be attending the Volunteer Fair run by the League of Women Voters. Ms. Jarsky asked the Commission to review the description of a Recreation Commissioner to ensure its accuracy. Feedback was provided. Ms. Fochtman mentioned that the Town of Acton is assessing how Quail Ridge could be used if they were to purchase or be gifted a part or the whole of the facility and its grounds.

**MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:**

8:45 PM

*\*Supporting and referenced documentation relating to these minutes are available on the DocuShare site;  
<https://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-1985>*