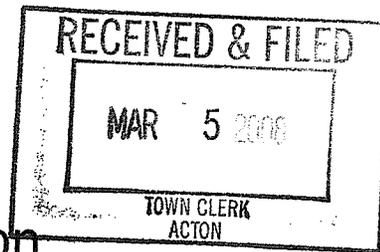




Town of Acton Recreation Commission



MINUTES

DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 2008

7:00 PM

ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

ATTENDEES	Recreation Commission members present were Mr. Ron Schlegel, Mr. Frank Calore, Ms. Allison Gallagher. Also present was Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director and Ms. Cheryl Getsick, Recreation Secretary
NOTE TAKER	Ms. Cheryl Getsick

AGENDA TOPICS

Meeting called to order at: 7:15 PM

Citizens Concerns: None

CONSENT AGENDA

DISCUSSION	January 8, 2008 minutes
CONCLUSIONS	January 8, 2008 minutes were accepted as written, 3-0

GREAT HILL: DOG RECOMMENDATIONS

DISCUSSION	The Commission reviewed last month's summary recommendations for Great Hill
CONCLUSIONS	Ms. Fochtman will submit a letter regarding the recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. Consensus on utilizing the ABYB President's offer of his graphic services for signage. Revision of the "Field and Weather" policy will include language directed to the leagues informing them of their responsibility to enforce the "Carry In - Carry Out" policy. A designator from each of the leagues should remind all coaches to clean up after the games. We all have to be mindful to take care of the limited resources which are shared by everyone.

FIELD MEETING OVERVIEW

DISCUSSION	<p><i>Field Scheduling Meeting Review</i></p> <p>Ms. Fochtman introduced a new league fee, per person, for all league participants. The 2008 field fee schedule including the memo addressed to the Board of Selectmen was given to each league. Ms. Fochtman reported that Mr. Murray mentioned to the Board of Selectmen that the league fee is a new recommendation and to date, field users haven't been charged in the past. The field fees are intended to cover Recreation's operational costs and not capital items. Mr. Murray has recommended that the Recreation Commission take up the question of implementing fees that cover capital items.</p> <p>Ms. Fochtman reported that ABYS Field Coordinator had a few questions regarding the new participant fee. The Town of Acton wants to set priorities as to what to do with these monies for turf improvements. The idea behind this is to gather ideas from all the users but the town would be making the final decisions and setting the priorities. Ms. Fochtman also addressed questions from Mr. Khosla from ABYB and from AASL after the field meetings.</p> <p>Mr. Schlegel stated that the Recreation Department is simply looking to implement procedures which are similar to and implemented by other local towns as well. Acton is not asking anything more than what various other towns are currently implementing. Ms. Gallagher inquired about further clarification regarding ABYB's expenditures on town fields. Ms. Fochtman will be discussing with leagues regarding field maintenance and improvements. Mr. Calore commented if ABYB has been maintaining the fields, then we really don't have any control over what they are doing to it (organic vs. chemical). Mr. Schlegel concluded that is exactly why the town needs to be more in control of how the fields are maintained as these are town fields.</p> <p>Ms. Fochtman had a meeting with Mr. Tidman and Mr. O'Malley to discuss hiring an outside contractor to oversee the fields. Contractors would bid on field maintenance. This would allow Recreation to maintain control over the fields. Ms. Fochtman also noted that she has heard a few disgruntled comments. AB Lacrosse thinks this is difficult to fairly implement and adds to their tax burden. There is a need to charge all who play for Acton Boxborough leagues whether they play on our fields or not. Ms. Fochtman will be meeting with the soccer field maintenance group next week.</p> <p>Mr. Schlegel mentioned that soccer and baseball do have a lot of assets. Recreation still depends on the leagues to contribute as they have previously.</p>
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CONCLUSIONS	<p>Ms. Fochtman referred to her remarks which she made to league representatives at the Field Scheduling meeting. She outlined the goals over the next five years which were recommended by the Recreation Commission to the Open Space Committee, including "Enhance the quality of Acton's athletic fields through improved maintenance techniques." To fund this initiative, a per participant fee for Acton and non-Acton participants is necessary.</p> <p>Ms. Fochtman suggested writing to the leagues to inform everyone about the details.</p> <p>We will be evaluating the number of league participants to estimate the amount of monies the fees will generate. What is the expected revenue and what are the expenditures; multiplied by the number of fields were looking at? Will a fee of \$10.00 be enough to cover even the basic maintenance? Will there be enough to cover equipment purchases? We need to ask the leagues to bring their contract and their numbers to the meeting and compare. Ms. Fochtman will follow up with a letter to the leagues outlining the details and moving forward. Certainly we will be tackling more of these types of questions.</p>
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NARA PARK PICNIC PAVILION

DISCUSSION	Ms. Fochtman reported over the past few weeks the Selectman and Town Manager have added NARA improvements to the budget capital list prepared for Town Meeting approval. NARA improvements include changing rooms to the back of the amphitheater, irrigation and snack bar upgrade.
CONCLUSIONS	NARA improvements will be on the warrant for Town Meeting.

REPORTS

DISCUSSION	<p>Elm Street Update Ms. Fochtman reported she is awaiting a report from the engineer to give evidence that the new sports lighting meets the town lighting bylaw which will then be passed along to the town building director.</p> <p>Morrison Farm Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Charter and Mr. Tidman are reviewing 12-15 RFQ's for architect firms that want the business to review the buildings on site. • Community Gardens – will be placed into the Recreation Program Guide this spring • Water spigot will be installed and the plots will be marked <p>CPC Mr. John Benson was absent and Ms. Fochtman reported updated CPC information. CPC has fewer projects this year. It looks like all proposals will be approved this year. This will be the last year the State matches CPA funds at 100%. This will be discussed at Thursday's meeting because the Recreation based projects comprised 12% of the proposals; with the addition of the pavilion project which will bring it up to 35%. Recreation is in the mix for funding but we are not sure exactly how much.</p> <p>Park Pavilion Request – The Recreation Department submitted a CPA application for \$250K to fund a picnic pavilion at NARA. Instead of custom made pavilions, the Recreation Department is looking at a "modular" design to save monies.</p> <p>Ms. Fochtman reviewed the CPA presentation slide show. She noted that a picnic pavilion was part of the original designs for NARA, but was eliminated due to financial reasons. Since then, Natural Resources have been requesting funds for a picnic pavilion on its capital list. The pavilion would be handicap accessible. This would be a wonderful community center. Usage would increase for both families and corporations. Ms. Fochtman noted this would be fabulous to utilize for town's 275th anniversary. Ms. Fochtman and Mr. Tidman will be presenting the CPA application to the committee Thursday evening at 8:00 pm.</p> <p>School Street Ms. Fochtman reported, there is an older CPC project for ballfields on School Street. Comments by Mr. Khosia of ABYB indicate that because ABYB funds have been put into the high school lighting project, they are less inclined to contribute toward new ball fields at School Street as their needs are now met at the high school.</p> <p>There was a request from Mr. Steve Donovan to run AAU baseball games. The Recreation Department is looking at giving him some space and available times at Elm Street and NARA. Mr. Donovan suggested that mid-sized fields are in demand and many people would likely utilize those size fields.</p> <p>Playground Update Ms. Fochtman researched the cost of funding a water feature for the CPA Elm Street playground proposal. A water feature added to Elm Street would cost an additional \$75K, which the CPC did not feel was worthwhile.</p> <p>Open Space & Recreation Plan Ms. Fochtman will be meeting with the committee soon with some updates to the verbiage in the plan.</p> <p>NARA Park 2008 Summer Operations Update Ms. Fochtman reported John Grant and Amanda Johansson are returning. New hires and returning staff are being addressed.</p>
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MEETING ADJOURNED TIME: 8:35 PM