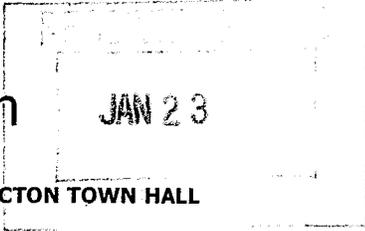




# Town of Acton Recreation Commission



## MINUTES

DATE: DECEMBER 2, 2008

7:00 PM

ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

**ATTENDEES** Recreation Commission members present were Mr. Ron Schlegel, Mr. Frank Calore and Ms. Karen Jarsky. Also present was Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director and Ms. Cheryl Getsick, Secretary.

**NOTE TAKER** Ms. Cheryl Getsick

### AGENDA TOPICS

**Meeting called to order at: 7:05 PM**

**Citizens Concerns:** No reports at this time.

### CONSENT AGENDA

**DISCUSSION** November minutes

**CONCLUSIONS** November minutes accepted as amended, 3-0

### TOPIC: PLAYGROUND PRIORITY REVIEW

Ms. Jarsky provided a map of playgrounds located within the Town of Acton. Mr. Calore stated it would be helpful to determine the age group of the majority of children within a 1/2 mile radius of each particular playground. This information will help determine if some neighborhoods are not able to access any playgrounds at all while other neighborhoods might have over-accessibility to multiple playgrounds. Ms. Fochtman commented about a future public playground at the Robbins Park location. This playground is slated to have both soccer and basketball fields. There is the potential of also building a playground at the Ice House Pond location.

### DISCUSSION

Goward - Ms. Fochtman reported receiving comments relating to the Goward playground. The issues surround maintenance of the equipment and site. Though the playground remains safe, it is monitored for rotting posts and mulch is required. The tire swing was removed last fall. Some monies are available for playground needs. Mr. Calore noted the Goward playground requires maintenance and cleanup. Though it is not currently a safety hazard, the tire walk also needs to be repaired and some areas replacement is necessary. Mr. Schlegel agreed time spent on restoring existing equipment, purchasing a few new pieces of equipment and some clean up should attract more families with preschool/toddler age children to the playground. Ms. Jarsky mentioned contacting local preschools to obtain this information if needed.

Elm Street - Ms. Fochtman received a couple of anonymous letters which voiced disagreement of investing monies into a playground at Elm Street. Ms. Jarsky noted without more donations, Recreation is not able to move forward. Mr. Calore asked if a new handicap playground could be funded via CPC. Mr. Schlegel commented, "No, only playgrounds proposed on recreation land purchased with CPC funds are eligible." Ms. Fochtman recently spoke with the Assistant Town Planner regarding playgrounds and the pavilion. It appears the recent decision which arose from the Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) makes it difficult to move forward. Ms. Jarsky recommended contacting the donors to inform them of the situation and to provide a refund of monies.

### CONCLUSIONS

Ms. Fochtman will put together a list of inventory, including playground safety inspection sheets for each site and a grid of age and the type of equipment at each playground. Cathy will contact the planning department to see if they have access to information on child demographics.

Mr. Schlegel requested an inventory list be developed containing a list of playground equipment along with the current age of the equipment and the lifespan of such equipment. The demographics and safety issues of each playground should also be considered. Ms. Jarsky will take pictures of the playgrounds for visual documentation as well.

**TOPIC – YOUTH LEAGUE FIELD REVIEW SESSION**

**DISCUSSION**

Ms. Fochtman met with representatives of each league, Mr. Andy Magee and Acton Town Manager, Mr. Steve Ledoux. Mr. Magee led the discussion. Ms. Fochtman discussed justification of implementation and acceptance of the per league, per player fee. It was determined the actual numbers of enrollment previously predicated a few years ago is not representative of current enrollment. Mr. Schlegel noted the same issue and concern still exists. The leagues collect and use fees in the manner which they choose however it is Recreation who is ultimately responsible for ensuring safety. It forces Recreation to ask the leagues for monies if something is needed. Ms. Fochtman commented that other towns have committees which oversee the fields and necessary maintenance. Mr. Calore raised a concern about Recreation being liable if leagues place harmful substances on the turf. Ms. Fochtman raised another concern regarding leagues hiring their own contractors for repairs.

**CONCLUSIONS**

It was decided Recreation will not move forward with the fee implementation at this time. The league representatives agreed to meet with Recreation to determine and develop plans as to what their needs are on a field by field basis. All leagues will discuss with Recreation their plan to address such needs prior to implementation. Ms. Fochtman did report league fees may be necessary if needed in the future. Recreation is required to obtain three different quotes prior to hiring a contractor. Written guidelines need to be developed and provided to the leagues regarding methodology and obtaining contractors. Ms. Fochtman informed the Commissioners Mr. Shawn O’Malley is currently attending classes in order to become educated about turf management at UMASS Green School. Ms. Fochtman would like to schedule a follow-up meeting with the leagues prior to the holidays.

**TOPIC – DANNY’S JUICE**

**DISCUSSION**

Mr. Tom Tidman, Ms. Maura Haberman and Ms. Cathy Fochtman met with the staff from Danny’s Juice Place. Danny’s Juice has become a “Battle of the Bands” event which has expanded significantly.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Recreation has been discussing the possibility of bringing Danny’s Juice to NARA Park. Twenty or so bands will perform. This will occur mid June on a Saturday afternoon. This event is geared towards the 6<sup>th</sup> through 9<sup>th</sup> grades. Recreation is moving forward with the process of securing this event.

**TOPIC – LIONS CLUB**

**DISCUSSION**

Ms. Fochtman met with Acton Lions Club members last Tuesday and introduced the idea of having the summer carnival at NARA Park next summer. Previously, conducting the carnival at NARA was not considered a possibility; however with accommodations the soccer fields can accommodate the rides.

**CONCLUSIONS**

Strategies on minimizing potential damage to the fields would also be implemented. Recreation is contemplating incorporating concerts into this event. The Lions Club needs to confirm this arrangement fairly soon. This proposal will be extended to their members for consideration.

**TOPIC – REPORTS**

**DISCUSSION**

Elm Street – Nothing to report  
Morrison Farm – Recreation is expanding the twenty-four garden plots to thirty-six plots; demonstration gardens will be installed as well as a children’s garden. A committee is also looking for architects who can provide insight on the developing property.  
CPC –Nothing to report.  
School Street – The Town of Acton is addressing the various paperwork needed for completion prior to the lease from the state being sealed. Mr. Andy Magee has been involved in that process.  
Playgrounds – See above.  
Open Space & Recreation Plan – Nothing to report.  
NARA Park – The Picnic Pavilion has been placed on hold. A recent bid package provided no takers.

**TOPIC – NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION**

**DISCUSSION**

Ms. Fochtman reported moving forward with corporate events to be held at NARA Park. A meeting with Town Manager, Mr. Steve Ledoux was held for review of the concept. Mr. Ledoux asked that Ms. Fochtman review the documents with Town Counsel. Recreation chose to permit corporate events at NARA on Thursdays as the NARA Youth program will be conducting the field trips that day.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The proposal is being reviewed by Town Counsel.

**MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:** 8:38 PM