



Town of Acton

Recreation Commission

Minutes

ROOM 121, ACTON TOWN HALL

DATE: JUNE 2, 2015

ATTENDEES	Recreation Commission members present were Ms. Betsy Mercier, Vice-Chair, Ms. Nancy Gerhardt, Commissioner, Ms. Carol Gerolamo, Commissioner, Mr. Joe Will, Commissioner, Ms. Katie Green, Selectman, Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director, Ms. Melissa Rier, Recreation Coordinator, and Ms. Mary Lou Repucci, Recreation Secretary. Ms. Bridget Matz, Recreation Commission Chair, was absent.
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TOPIC: CITIZENS CONCERNS

DISCUSSION	<p>Ms. Rier reported a citizen concern regarding whether non-rental watercraft are allowed at NARA Pond. A resident launched his canoe near the Patio Tent during beach hours for the purpose of fishing with his son. He was approached by the lifeguard who then contacted Ms. Rier at the Recreation Department office. Ms. Rier went to NARA to speak with the citizen. He felt that as a taxpayer he should be able to paddle on the Pond without paying. Ms. Rier stressed to the Commissioners the importance of a written policy to address this issue. Launching watercraft in the conservation areas was discussed, but NARA is not conservation land. Ms. Fochtman suggested providing information to the citizen about alternative sites in Acton where private watercraft are permitted at no charge. The NARA Pond is limited in space, especially during low water. Last year boat rentals were stopped early due to low water conditions with exposed rocks. Safety issues related to the likelihood of canoes capsizing were discussed. Ms. Rier invited the citizen to the June 2 Recreation Commission meeting asking him to voice his concerns and that the Commission would clarify the rules.</p> <p>Mr. Will moved that the following language be added to the NARA Beach Rules as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Motorized watercraft are prohibited from NARA Pond at all times; and 2. Private watercraft are prohibited from NARA Pond during Beach operation season. <p>The motion was accepted unanimously, 4-0.</p>
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CONSENT AGENDA

DISCUSSION	May 5, 2015 minutes
ACTION ITEM	May 5, 2015 minutes accepted as amended, 4-0

TOPIC: NARA MASTER PLAN AND SURVEY

DISCUSSION	Ms. Fochtman announced a Master Plan for NARA Park in the process of formulation. She presented a draft of a survey to gather public opinion on the future of NARA. The Master Plan and survey were initiated in response to feedback from the Community Preservation Committee requesting long-term planning for the development of NARA facilities and amenities. The survey focuses on what residents would like to see in the next ten years. The primary response by the Commissioners was that the survey should be edited for length and that it should focus on what residents want in the future as opposed to how NARA is being used at present. Ms. Gerhardt suggested omitting any reference to age.
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TOPIC: NARA PARK RULES AND REGULATIONS

DISCUSSION	Ms. Fochtman recommended replacing older signs with new ones updated for current NARA Park rules and regulations. The signs should be positioned prominently in public view as people enter from the parking lot. Mr. Will suggested a review of conservation land rules and regulations to see where they overlap with NARA Park policies. The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail also will require signage.
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REPORTS:

DISCUSSION	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) NARA Picnic Pavilion – Ms. Fochtman reported that the list of unfinished items will be closed out soon. The first wedding of the year was held at the Pavilion on the preceding weekend. b) NARA Comfort Station – Various options for the Comfort Station were discussed. The need to expand Bathhouse area toilet facilities to accommodate riders on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail was discussed. c) Morrison Farm – Mr. Will reported that the main concern at present is design of the boardwalk from the Ice House Pond leading to Morrison Farm. d) T.J. O’Grady – Ms. Fochtman reported that the skating bowl is being reviewed to go out to bid. e) Playgrounds – New mulch remains to be spread at the Goward Playground. A community service student will work on it for ten hours. Renovations to the Elm Street Playground are nearly complete with a fence surrounding the area still to be installed. f) Community Preservation Committee – Mr. Will reported that the June 11 Meeting will discuss increasing the
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	Community Preservation Committee surcharge from 1.5% to 3%. Ms. Green said that the Board of Selectmen intends to organize a standing committee to participate in discussion of the proposed Community Preservation Committee tax increase. g) Acton 2020 – Ms. Gerhardt reported that a new column will run in “The Beacon” every third week of the month with information on the Town of Acton’s long-term planning. Ms. Green suggested that this is a good place to introduce the NARA Master Plan.
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NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION:

The June 2 meeting was Ms. Mercier’s last meeting as Recreation Commissioner, having served for six years. Her service to the Town of Acton is deeply appreciated.

MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:	Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM
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**Supporting and referenced documentation relating to these minutes are available on the DocuShare site; <https://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-1985>*