



Town of Acton

Recreation Commission

Minutes

ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

DATE: November 3, 2015

ATTENDEES	Present were Ms. Bridget McKeever-Matz, Recreation Commission Chair, Ms. Carol Gerolamo, Commissioner, Mr. Joe Will, Commissioner, Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director, and Ms. Melissa Rier, Recreation Coordinator.
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TOPIC: CITIZENS CONCERNS

DISCUSSION	Ms. Gerolamo reported dogs running loose at Great Hill and owners not cleaning up after them. Ms. Fochtman stated that under the Town's bylaws dogs are supposed to be under the owner's control, suggesting leash or voice control. Over a year ago, Ms. Fochtman, Ms. Rier and Mr. Will did put up signs to remind owners to pick up after their dogs; however, the signs were removed by park-goers.
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CONSENT AGENDA

DISCUSSION	October 6, 2015 minutes
ACTION ITEM	October 6, 2015 minutes accepted as amended, 3-0.

TOPIC: ACTION ITEM REVIEW FROM OCTOBER 6, 2015 MINUTES

DISCUSSION	<p>Some of the Commissioners reviewed the NARA Master Plan comments made by citizens who took the NARA Master Plan Survey. Ms. Gerolamo compared the Open Space and Recreation Plan (OSRP) and NARA Master Plan Survey Results and reported that most of the NARA Master Plan reflects the OSRP. The OSRP made a statement about NARA Park being a "regional destination." Citizens who took the Master Plan Survey often complained about non-residents causing issues while visiting the Park.</p> <p>Mr. Will noticed in the Master Plan Survey that many people wanted a community swimming pool, and that they don't like the sight of the gray storage tent. Currently there are no plans to add a community swimming pool to NARA Park. However, the storage situation may be addressed with construction of a proposed Bruce Freeman Rail Trail comfort station in the lower area of NARA Park.</p>
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TOPIC: FEE SCHEDULE CHANGES FOR APPROVAL

DISCUSSION	<p>Ms. Rier explained the Picnic Pavilion rental pricing issues. At the 2015 rates, an Acton resident can rent a wing of the Pavilion plus the dancefloor for \$150, but they can rent the entire facility for \$160. This pricing structure encourages the resident to rent the entire facility. The Recreation Department thus is losing revenue when it could potentially gain two rentals. The Commissioners agreed to a rate increase and Ms. Fochtman suggested \$200 for the four-hour Acton resident rental rate for the entire Pavilion. This rate was approved with a 3-0 vote by the Commissioners.</p> <p>Ms. Rier proposed increasing the NARA Beach Group Rate from \$3 per person for Acton residents to \$4 per person and \$5 per non-resident to \$6. These increases are justified by the fact that the fees have been in place for over five years and that the Recreation Department has increased the number of seasonal staff. Minimum wage has risen each year. The Commissioners agreed on these pricing changes and passed them with a 3-0 vote.</p>
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TOPIC: NARA MASTER PLAN UPDATE

DISCUSSION	Ms. Fochtman explained how the Natural Resources staff has met periodically to organize and implement the NARA Master Plan. The staff have walked through NARA Park twice visualizing future improvements. Suggestions made during staff walks will be added to the NARA Master Plan.
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TOPIC: STUDENT VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

DISCUSSION	Ms. Maura Haberman requested consideration of a new award: Student Volunteer of the Year. The Recreation Department recruits many high school student volunteers each year, especially for events. Ms.
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	Haberman suggested that the selected individual be honored at the high school award night. The Recreation Department nominated Ms. Arianna Lowe to receive the award for 2015. The Commissioners voted unanimously to approve the award for Ms. Lowe, and to continue the award in the future, 3-0.
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TOPIC: WINTER CARNIVAL – SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2016, 4:00-7:00 PM

DISCUSSION	The Recreation Department is looking for help with the event from the Commissioners.
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REPORTS:

DISCUSSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Rail Trails – Bruce Freeman Rail trail construction has been started with the clearing of trees along the paths.b) NARA Comfort Station - Ms. Fochtman forwarded the Power Point presentation she gave to the Board of Selectmen to the Recreation Commissioners. The Recreation Department will work with Town counsel ensuring adherence to procurement laws with donation of the buildings and construction of the comfort station.c) Morrison Farm – Habitat for Humanity is interested in renovating the Morrison Farm house to code for a family to move there in the future.d) T.J. O’Grady – Ms. Fochtman made a presentation to the Board of Selectmen with Town of Boxborough Recreation Commission member, Ms. Mitzi Weil, in attendance. Ms. Weil is applying for \$40,000 in Boxborough CPA funding to help with this project.e) Playgrounds – Some junior high students supervised by Ms. Fochtman came out for a volunteer day and helped mulch NARA Playground. Also, Ms. Rier is forming a citizen’s support group for renovating Jones Playground. The next meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2015.f) Community Preservation Committee – Project applications are due November 16th and will be reviewed over a few weeks.
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NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION:

Natural Resources plans to establish a third community gardening area. The Hebert farm is leasing the Town a field in South Acton for new community gardens. The Recreation Department will pay a yearly fee to lease the land. The Natural Resources Department is hoping to have these gardens ready for the 2016 season. The gardens may be named Hebert Community Gardens, after the owner.

MEETING ADJOURNED TIME:	Meeting adjourned at 9:00 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>*