



Town of Acton
Recreation Commission

Minutes

ROOM 126, ACTON TOWN HALL

DATE: March 1, 2016

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| ATTENDEES | Present were Ms. Nancy Gerhardt, Commissioner, Ms. Carol Gerolamo, Commissioner, Mr. Tom Heinlein, Commissioner, Mr. Joe Will, Commissioner, Ms. Katie Green, Selectman, Ms. Cathy Fochtman, Recreation Director and Ms. Mary Lou Repucci, Recreation Secretary. |
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TOPIC: CITIZENS CONCERNS

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| DISCUSSION | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A resident with a family of five emailed the Recreation Department stating that she no longer purchases the NARA Beach membership, finding the cost per use prohibitive. The daily rate also seems too high when she can take her family elsewhere for less. Ms. Fochtman invited the resident to attend the March 1 Recreation Commission meeting where her concerns would be addressed. Ms. Fochtman also explained that NARA is self-funded without Acton tax subsidy and that Beach fees help pay for summer staff, utilities and supplies. The Town Manager has advised competitive salaries for summer staff, and utility costs have escalated, especially water. The Commissioners discussed rates in the commonwealth for comparable beach access and found NARA to be a good value. Ms. Fochtman added that NARA Beach fees have been raised only once in the past ten years and that financial assistance for membership is available through the Doli Atamian scholarship program. Mr. Will suggested adding a five-visit pass for residents, or raising the non-resident rate. 2. The Recreation Department received a telephone call from a regular NARA visitor who observed fresh dog waste within the NARA playground. The caller was deeply concerned over the health risk posed to her young children. A confrontation had occurred between the caller and a nearby visitor with a dog, but the dog owner denied responsibility. Mounting frustration among Acton residents over dog waste in public areas was discussed along with the challenge of enforcing dog policy. The Recreation Department will replace the "no dogs allowed" sign in the playground that had been removed. |
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CONSENT AGENDA

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| DISCUSSION | February 9, 2016 minutes |
| ACTION ITEM | February 9, 2016 minutes accepted as amended, 4-0. |

ACTION ITEM REVIEW FROM FEBRUARY 9, 2016: TODDLER SWING AT ELM STREET PLAYGROUND

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| DISCUSSION | The Natural Resources crew will swap a bucket swing from Goward Playground to the Elm Street Playground. |
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TOPIC: VETERANS / MIRACLE FIELD SIGN POLICY

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| DISCUSSION | The Commissioners voted 4-0 to request the Selectmen to renew the sign policy for Veteran's Field and the Miracle Field. If approved the policy will allow Acton-Boxborough Youth Baseball and the Miracle League of Massachusetts to collect fees from sponsors for advertising signs in designated areas. The fees defray costs of maintaining the fields. If approved the sign policy will remain in force for three years. |
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TOPIC: NARA MASTER PLAN

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| DISCUSSION | The NARA Master Plan is near completion. Ms. Fochtman passed around a draft for perusal. |
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TOPIC: RECREATION DEPARTMENT SPRING & SUMMER PROGRAM

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| DISCUSSION | Ms. Fochtman provided copies of the new Recreation booklet with exciting new offerings, including robotics classes! |
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REPORTS:

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| DISCUSSION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Bruce Freeman Rail Trail – Nothing to report.b) NARA Sports Pavilion – The Board of Selectmen accepted donation of two modular buildings for a new Sports Pavilion at the NARA Upper Fields. Moving details are being finalized along with a project completion timetable.c) Morrison Farm – Nothing to report.d) T.J. O’Grady Skate Park – The low-bidder of the skate bowl project is registering with the commonwealth as a foreign contractor. Ms. Fochtman will recommend he be hired for the bowl project, commencing construction in June.e) Playgrounds – High school Senior Work Day projects are being planned for April or early May including mulching at Gardner Field. Two new shade structures will be installed this spring, one at the NARA playground and one at NARA Beach. Repurposing of Jones Field is under consideration: Neighbors have requested a basketball court and perimeter walkway. A pickleball court may be added. The possibility of relocating amenities within the field to better accommodate the nearby river is under study.f) Community Preservation Committee (“CPC”) – The CPC approved two funding requests including the T.J. O’Grady Skate Park bowl (\$135,000) and the NARA Sports Pavilion (\$350,000). A request for NARA parking control funding was not approved. Ms. Fochtman plans to speak with the Department of Conservation and Recreation for input on parking lot management. |
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NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION: Ms. Fochtman handed out a comparison of NARA Beach revenues, 2013 - 2015. Daily passes garnered significantly more revenue than memberships.

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| MEETING ADJOURNED TIME: | Meeting adjourned at 8:30 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>*