**Town of Westborough Recreation Department**

**Recreation Commission**

**Meeting Minutes –May 26th 2020**

**Members Present:** Recreation Commission Chair Earl Storey, Beth Travis, Colleen Dowd, Bill Clausen and Recreation Director Jenn Kirkland

**COVID-19 Summer plans and potential vote.**

**Lake Chauncy**

Recreation Director Jenn Kirkland laid out the state guidelines on what we would need to do to open Lake Chaucny this summer. She then proposed two different plans to open the beach. The first would be include limiting the number of passes sold to 40 per week. This would be a significant change from normal operations as typically season passes are available for purchase or there are options for day passes at the gate. The number of passes sold is typically unlimited.

Bill Clausen asked if there would be any liability on the Recreation Department in general if we were to open the beach or any other programs if someone were to get sick. Colleen Dowd commented that she had a similar conversation about this topic with a doctor she knows and it was indicated that it is very hard to pin point where you get this virus. Jenn concurred that she had also been told that it is very hard to trace where exactly you get this.

Bill Clausen asked if the staff that typically work were comfortable working. Jenn Kirkland explained that she reached out to all of the staff and they were all comfortable working.

Discussion moved to the finances at the beach. The department typically loses $8,000 - $10,000 per year. With the increased staffing needed and the significant decrease in passes able to be sold the department would lose over $30,000 if the beach were to open.

Jenn explained a large expense this year would be pay for the algae treatment that was supposed to be a Town Meeting article. The board pushed back on this stating that they were not in favor at this time for paying for this treatment if we weren’t opening the beach.

Jenn explained that tonights discussion was only around if we were opening the beach. If the commission voted to close the beach Jenn would report that back to Town Manager Kristi Williams, and see if town administration still wanted the algae treatment done. Jenn will bring this discussion back to the commission in a month or so.

There was discussion around opening the gates at the beach but not staffing the beach. Jenn advised against this as it could potentially be a liability if we were opening the gate, and inviting people in but not staffing with lifeguards. When the beach is closed people are still able to use the lake as there is a fence that is easy to walk around. We are covered because technically the beach is closed.

Motion for the summer of 2020 due to COVID – 19 Lake Chauncy will be closed. All in favor. Motion passes 5 – 0 with 5 being present.

**Summer Playground and other programs**

Recreation Director Jenn Kirkland laid out the potential guidelines for potentially running our summer playground program and other programs. There are a lot of variables and at this time there are still no formal guidelines from the state. Jenn spoke to other summer leaders (sports clinic directors) and they indicated that they would run programs but wanted to make sure it was safe and allowable.

Jenn proposed canceling all programs through July. Then reassessing the COVID – 19 situations and then explore the possibility of running activities outside through August.

Beth Travis expressed concern about how fun it would be for kids with the mask guidelines and other regulations.

Colleen Down agreed that the younger kids would struggle with the rules but she felt older kids could adapt and mentioned many sports that could probably be played within the guidelines. She was pleased that the department was not canceling everything forever.

Bill Clausen felt strongly that the department needed to come up with something or guidance for families to help people recreate as he feels that people are desperate for anything to do.

Jenn committed that the department would be continually looking at the guidelines and trying to be creative with program offerings.

Motion to cancel all summer activities until August – Roll call vote. All in favor. Motion passes 5 – 0 with 5 being present.

With no further business the meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM