

Town of Westborough Recreation Department

Recreation Commission

Date: Tuesday, January 25th 2022

Location: Zoom (Virtual)

Convened: 6:30 p.m.

Adjourned: 7:45 p.m.

Committee Members Present: Recreation Director Jennifer Kirkland, Liaison to the Community Preservation Act Exploratory Committee Colleen Dowd, Golf Course Manager Matt Griffith, Bethany Travis, Bill Clausen, Katie Welch, Girl Scout Luna, Girl Scout Tessa, and Administrative Assistant Grethel Guzman-Ruck.

Committee Member Absent: Commission Chair Earl Storey, Program Coordinator Josh Aponte, Finance Committee Liaison Andrew Bradley, and Brian Kane.

Spring Golf Operations (Fees) / Potential Vote

Jennifer Kirkland went over the earnings for the golf course; she noted that this would be our first year with our own data. It was noted that it is very odd for us to discuss earnings and to get a clearer picture of what they could be because of the fact that the fiscal year begins July 1st which is in the middle of our peak season.

Matt recognized that there is not much of a difference in resident versus non-resident prices. He wants to give residents and seniors more of an incentive to sign up and play by keeping their prices the same. At this time, he sees a more even split between resident and non-resident golf players that come in to play. Going into the year 2023, Matt would like to make the difference in prices between residents and three dollars. Matt recognized that there has not been a rate difference in the past for weekend rates and he is planning in keeping it the same. This is because the weekends are usually busier than our open hours during the workweek (Mondays through Fridays). There were discussions as well to make a discounted rate for town employees.

Bill made a motion to increase the non-resident green fees by one-dollar and Katie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous: 4 - 0.

Matt is also thinking about building a loyalty program as an incentive to keep golfers coming to the golf course. Bill was curious to know if there was a way to identify the amount of resident and non-resident golfers we have going to our golf course and Matt said that he was already thinking of a way to get that data.

Town Meeting Warrant Discussion

We put a warrant in to have the town fund stocking Sandra Pond with fish. We also put another warrant to pay for the replacement of a mower at the golf course.

Program Update

Jenn announced that Basketball is going well although players and coaches occasionally are having problems behaviorally at the games. Bill also noted that he has heard some things such as shoving and pushing as well. He suggested looking into the Positive Coaching Alliance. He said that there are different curriculums and courses. Bill also mentioned that the Positive Coaching Alliance are very organized and will even come to us to teach the course(s). He suggested that all leagues in town should take part in this and that these issues could be a result of the current times. Jenn also noted that people forget as time goes by the hard job that referees have. She also mentioned that we are pushing through the COVID-19 surge and that we are successfully running the volleyball clinic.

Facilities Update

We had both Luna and Tessa join us from the local Girl Scouts. They proposed using the money that they raise from sales towards making a sled library at the golf course. Although we would not promote the use of the sled at our fields due to questions of liability, this would be the proposed place to borrow sleds. This is just a service that the Girl Scouts are looking into for residents that cannot afford purchasing a sled on their own. In addition, a parent is willing to construct the sled library on behalf of the Girl Scouts. Bill suggested maybe having the public submit ideas on what to engrave on the sign, which will ultimately advertise the sled library as well. We will have to see with Mike Hightower, the superintendent at the golf course, to see if he had an idea of where to put the sled library. If we promote this service, we will also have to look into possible liability. If this is approved but the sled library is not constructed in time, we can use the sled library for the next wintry season.

Approve Minutes from December 7th and 20th of 2021 Respectively

Minutes approval will be done and discussed next meeting.

Fields Policy Review and Potential Vote

Jenn went over the updated Facilities Rental Policy. We rent out our fields based on a priority list: town departments, youth sports, recognized adult leagues, school departments and athletics, Westborough business (with three one-day permits allowed per year), and other resident and non-resident organizations in that order. We need to make sure we can maximize the usage of these fields which will ultimately enhance and grow our field account. Colleen raised the concern over the potential wear-and-tear of these fields. Jenn admitted that we need the advice and opinions from Earl and Brian to further evaluate the conditions of our fields. Beth noted that in the past, the selectmen have said that the fields must only be used for residents of Westborough which she said is a ruling that should ultimately be changed. Bill agreed that the fields are there to be used. Because of this stringent rule, it is difficult to get usage out of these fields. Jenn said she would review and reword the policy once more. She cited that while it is beneficial for us to have the fields be used, there is an order of usage and we must make sure that we are prioritizing properly.

Jenn also talked about pavilion rentals and recognized that residents are always surprised that there is no charge to rent these structures. We do ask for a one-hundred dollar deposit in case

there is any issue or damage; there usually never is a problem and the check is either voided or returned to the resident. We always need to renovate our pavilions and structures at the site and do so with our own money. Jenn suggests haking a fee (fees varying based on hours of usage) to fund these projects and expenses. Colleen suggested making the fee a donation instead in case there is a family that is financially unable to rent the pavilion. Jenn recognized that they do take situations like these on a case-by-case basis.

Lake Chauncey was discussed as well and it should only be able to rent as long as there are enough lifeguards and the lake is open on the date of the event.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Bill made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. and Colleen seconded. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Rec. Commission approved on March 1st, 2022.

Respectfully Submitted,

Grethel Guzman-Ruck