

Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC) Meeting  
Roland "Beaver" Jutras Recreation Building  
Minutes of August 10, 2016  
Approved

Attendees: Andrew Dunbar, Chair; Heather McClusky, Vice Chair; Howard Russell; Stacey Howarth, Chris Kotula; Ed Juengst, Select Board Liaison; Jeffrey M. King, Recreation Director; Lisa Koziell-Betz, Program Coordinator and Minute Taker

I) Meeting called to order: Andy called the meeting to order at 6:32pm.

II) Approval of Minutes:

- A. Heather motioned to approve the July 6th minutes as written. Andy seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- B. The question was asked if vandalism around the property has subsided any. "Yes" was the answer. The maintenance guys did a great job cleaning up the large amount of graffiti that happened over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend. They cleaned it up quickly and there has not been a re-occurrence.

III) Director's Report:

- A. Budget: Jeff handled out copies of his Director's Report, the 2016 fiscal year end budget expenditure/revenue report as well as a nine page "To Do" list that was created for maintenance and staff to work off of.
- B. Regarding the "To Do" list, Andy asked that the list be put on an Excel spreadsheet with columns to notate when the job was completed, by whom, when and cost associated with the project. Jeff thought this was a good idea and will have Lauren do it when she gets back from vacation.
- C. Back to the budget report, Jeff reported that our operating budget came in under by \$28,777.21. When looking at the individual line items, it looks like some items were under spent while some were over spent. Jeff told the board that it is the "bottom line" that really matters. He looks at each line item and makes adjustments in the next fiscal budget if the need is warranted.
- D. Regarding the mention of the Miller Fund mentioned two times on the Expenditure status report....
  - 1. Jeff explained to the new board members what the Isabelle Miller Fund was.
  - 2. As a general rule (dependent upon market conditions), the PRD receives about \$20,000 a year from a fund Isabelle Miller bequeathed to the PRD - which goes into the Trustee of the Trust Funds line item for use at a future date.
  - 3. To spend this money, there needs to be the recommendation of the Rec Director and the approval of the PRC (Peterborough Recreation Committee).
  - 4. Jeff explained further that the ultimate goal is to save up this money for larger expenses rather than spending the money on smaller budget items. \$3,445 for the purchase of stand up paddleboards occurred in 2015. The next big ticket item that needs to be addressed is the repair/refinishing of the gym floor in the PCC. This cost is estimated to be around \$48,000.
  - 5. The two individual line items are due to a coding error that could not be corrected. It is all there in the report itself, but broken into two line items instead of one. No monies are "lost".
- E. Under the revenue side of the report, we exceeded expected operating revenue by \$6,960.25.
  - 1. Pool revenues were slightly more than expected.
  - 2. PCC rentals were significantly over last year. Jeff did tell the board this is inflated because of the Cal Ripken bill. It is noted, financially, in the system but still outstanding.

- a. Speaking of Cal Ripken, Andy asked if the outstanding bill is paid. Jeff said no.
  - b. Rodney send out a notice but there has been absolutely no response, verbal or written.
  - c. There is talk about not letting Cal Ripken use the PRD fields until the bill is paid in full.
  - d. It was explained that the new president of Cal Ripken inherited a mess when he took it over this year. Despite being new and inheriting a mess, many on the board felt this was bad practice not to pay bills.
- F. Due to the encumbrance of \$35,000 allocated for the mini-bus (The PRD could not find a decent Mini-bus for under \$50,000) the overall budget shortage, when factoring-in all expenses and revenues was about \$1,000. Not bad at all, according to the Finance Director.
1. When asked about the mini-bus, Jeff said that the vans are very difficult for the seniors to get in and out of. The vans are great for the kids who are limber and strong. A mini-bus, particularly a wheelchair accessible mini-bus, would be a very positive addition for the senior programming.
  2. The mini-bus would also potentially provide us the ability to get seniors to our programs, ie: senior lunch. Jeff was not talking about the folks that live in the assisted living facilities, for they have their own vehicles. He was referring more to seniors who still live at home but do not have transportation.
- G. The Noone Fund is another fund governed by the Trustees of the Trust Funds for recreational purposes.
- H. Jeff told the board about Boy and Cub Scout camps and the fact that they are very busy this summer. For the Cub Scouts, for example, they had the most boys attending their camp (last week) in 5 years.
1. Jeff needs to schedule a meeting with the new PES principal regarding the open house and Cub Scout recruitment that is scheduled for September.
  2. Jeff invited Heather and the Girl Scouts to field a table at the open house also. Heather said she would check into it.
  3. As a side note, Jeff told the PRC that the PCC is going to be PES' new emergency back-up location for the kids now that the old Divine Mercy Church has been razed.

- IV) Revolving Fund Report: Since the overall budget report was being discussed, the committee chair wanted to move directly into the revolving fund report.
- A. The program income was up almost \$21,000 over last year. A lot of this can be attributed to the collection of monies owed from old program participants.
  - B. Rental revenue of the PCC was up around \$7,700.
  - C. Expenses for the PCC as well as program expense were down from LY.
  - D. This was the first year the PCC expenses did not seriously dig into the programming revenue. Revenue came in at \$33,698 versus \$33,626 for expenses. Jeff felt as though we are beginning to turn the corner as far as making the PCC a functional recreation building that can start generating revenue. Jeff also made note that part of this is due to the warm winter we went through, not demanding as much heat.
  - E. Several improvement projects were done over the past year to the PCC: built new offices, staffing the building to a small degree, bought a laptop computer and installed wifi.
  - F. Andy asked about heating and the possibility of installing solar panels to cut costs. Both Ed and Jeff said the installation of solar panels is an expensive project...something that is usually cost prohibitive unless you get some grant money to offset the expense of the project.
    1. It was asked if Barbara Miller still helped write grants for the Town. Jeff thought so, if asked.
    2. Andy said there is so much south facing PRD property that can be utilized for panels

that it might be useful to look into it.

3. Jeff mentioned that the hope was for enough energy to be generated from the existing solar panels to go back into the grid that he thought the cost of the PCC lights would eventually be covered by that.

G. The bottom-line balance for the revolving fund is \$88,567. Jeff likes it at this level in case a big project comes up, he does not like to see it over \$100,000. To him, this means we are holding onto too much revenue instead of investing in programming.

V) Program Report: Lisa gave the program report, as written. To highlight a few points, attendance has been over last year's numbers in most of the programs. The playground program attendance was capped for safety purposes and another counselor was hired, part time. It is hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the summer – from a programming perspective.

A. When talking about swimming lessons, the hours of the pool came into question. With the Town's water ban and the high heat we have seen in August, the town administration is asking the PRD to keep the pool open as long as possible. It was discussed that we may not staff the pond that last week in August in order to staff the pool. The schedule has not been set yet. As of this meeting, the pool is scheduled to close after business on the 21<sup>st</sup>, with hopes of expanding operational hours to the 26<sup>th</sup>.

B. The heat made for a long summer as far as staff and participants are concerned, but the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

C. The addition of the modified playground program, for the week(s) before school starts, was appreciated by many. The week of the 16<sup>th</sup> through the 18<sup>th</sup> is booked. Time will tell if we can offer the same program the following week.

1. Andy was concerned that we created this program with limited staffing.
2. The PRD restricted the enrollment numbers so the program can be run safely.
3. The PRD is finding that folks are signing up for programs at the last minute so a program put together at the last minute is not a big issue. When asked about those on the waiting list and if it was fair, Lisa said the program went out to the public on Friday and was filled by the following Wednesday morning. This gave ample time to register. Remember, the registration website is accessible 24/7 – 365 days per year.

D. Two field trips have also been added during the last week of summer break.

VI) Senior Report: Gloria submitted her report to be read. Andy is very surprised more seniors do not attend these programs for there are a lot of great offerings. He said that he does realize a lot if it is due to transportation issues. (Reference notes about regarding mini-bus).

VII) Outstanding Balances Update: Lauren Martin usually puts these reports together and presents them to the board. Being on vacation, the report was prepared ahead of time and explained to Lisa for the meeting. Lisa, however, could not adequately answer some of the questions that the board presented so Ed suggested that we table the report until next month. All agreed. A few points, however, were brought up after the recommendation.

A. Regardless of what the numbers for the outstanding balances may have been, a couple board members felt we should not be spending our time in the office chasing down payments. They felt our time in the office could be better spent.

B. Appreciation was expressed for trying to track down old outstanding balances as well as minimizing new outstanding balances, but some felt there needs to be a better way.

C. A debate ensued.

1. Chris said that we should collect all fees, up front.....that we are not the welfare department.
2. Jeff and Lisa both said this would not be possible in looking at some of the families involved.
3. Jeff respectfully disagreed with Chris' statement because some folks are living paycheck to paycheck and it is all that some of them can do to get that weekly check into the PRD for

- their child(ren)'s enrollment in the eight week Playground Program.
4. Jeff went on to say that we (as a municipal recreation organization) are not catering to upper middle and upper class families with discretionary income to pay lots of money for high end programming – we are a municipal recreation department, supported by taxpayers and need to support all, including the lower income families. He said a large part of our program participants come from the middle to lower income families.
    - a. Taking property via tax liens was touched upon as an example of the Town's way of covering past due accounts. It was pointed out that this is not a short process. Jeff also mentioned that the tax abatement process is the proverbial equivalent of the Town's version of our campership program.
  5. As discussion continued, it sounded like the board did not necessarily want the PRD to expend so much time and energy in collecting old/new balances. Rather, the tone of the meeting sounded like the PRD should prevent this from even happening by collecting monies before the program even starts.
    - a. The statement above is different from what the PRD was tasked with earlier this spring as far as how we create our payment contracts and collect balances. Previously, it was stated and agreed upon that the PRD would minimize the size of outstanding balances to the best of our ability but there was never mention of collecting all fees ahead of time.
    - b. One example was given to the board where the PRD was keeping up with one family, not allowing kids to attend if payment was not received etc. It worked the first time and the PRD received some of the monies due. The second time was right before the last week...the family chose not to send the kids that week...so the question was asked, what do we do now?
    - c. Some felt that we would not be in this quandary if we collected all fees due ahead of time.
    - d. Jeff re-iterated there are many families in Peterborough who cannot pay the bill up front. Most of the payment plan folks have been paying on schedule, but we do have a few who try to slip through.
    - e. It was asked if the PRD follows the Free Lunch Program criteria the schools have. The answer was no because there are a lot of folks who do not qualify but definitely still need help. The Keep Peterborough Warm program was cited as an example.
    - f. It was agreed upon that the PRD offers a valuable resource to Peterborough families but the avenue by which fees should be collected was never resolved.
    - g. Further discussion will be scheduled into next month's meeting.
    - h. It was expressed that the board would like to see the breakdown of new outstanding balances and see if folks did honor the understanding that their child(ren)'s program was to be paid in full before the program ended.

VIII) Questions/Comments: Several questions were asked before the meeting adjourned:

- A. Status of the water fountain at the PCC. It was noted that the water fountain was not on the maintenance check list and should be.
- B. Jeff was asked if healthy food vending machines were being looked into. He said not right now.
- C. Heather asked what the algae rolls are all about – at Cunningham Pond. It was explained that this was due to the low water volume. Jeff said the water quality reports for the Pond are fine.
- D. Jeff mentioned the *Ledger-Transcript's* Letter to the Editor where someone suggested converting Cunningham Pond back to a water source.
- E. Jeff asked the board if they could be flexible with him regarding September's PRC Meeting...whether it is held on the 7<sup>th</sup>, as currently scheduled, or postponed to the 14<sup>th</sup>. Much depends upon when his daughter will be allowed into the dorm at Hebron Academy, which is 3 hours away. Jeff will notify everyone as soon as he knows.

IX) Adjournment: Andy motioned to adjourn. Howard seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.

Next meeting: Wed. September 7<sup>th</sup> or possibly the 14th at 6:30pm

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Koziell-Betz,

Minute Taker

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