

Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC) Meeting
Pavilion at Adams Park
Minutes of August 5, 2020
Approved

Attendees: Kate Coon, Vice Chair; Rob Fox; Andrew Brescia; Brendan Bohl;
Resident and immediate past PRC Chair Andy Dunbar; resident Roxanne Loudin;
Lisa Koziell-Betz, Recreation Director; John Kohlmorgen, Program Coordinator;
and Lauren Martin, Administrative Assistant and Minute Taker

- I. Call to Order: Without a chair since the expiration of Andy Dunbar's term in July, Vice Chair Kate called the meeting to order at 6:34p.m.
- II. Thank You Send Off: On behalf of the PRC and PRD, Kate presented Andy Dunbar with a framed certificate of appreciation. Kate remarked, "Thanks a million" for Andy's 21 years of dedicated service to the Town and the PRD, as a member of the PRC and as Chair for the past five years.
- III. Approval of Minutes: Brendan motioned to approve the March meeting minutes. Andrew B. seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- IV. Set Up New PRC Members:
 - A. Introductions: Kate invited each person present to briefly introduce him or herself. Roxanne Loudin explained she moved to Peterborough two years ago and is interested in joining the PRC.
 - B. Introducing John Kohlmorgen: John provided more detail on his background and experience, including his most recent position as the program coordinator for Milford, NH for four years. He began serving as the PRD Program Coordinator in April.
 - C. Nomination and Election of PRC Chair and Vice Chair:
 - a. Rob nominated Kate to serve as PRC Chair and Andrew B. seconded. Kate was elected unanimously.
 - b. Andrew B. nominated Rob to serve as Vice Chair and Kate seconded. Rob was elected unanimously.
 - D. Resignation of PRC Member Michael Strand:
 - a. Kate read aloud an email from Michael Strand dated August 4th, in which Michael resigned from the PRC retroactively effective on 8/1/2020. Michael recently decided to move to Bedford, NH, and will therefore be disqualified from holding any Peterborough office. Kate will write back to thank Michael for his service to the Town and will prompt him to forward his resignation to the Select Board, according to the PRC Bylaws.
 - b. Reading from the Bylaws, Kate explained that the PRC will present and recommend to the Select Board a candidate to fill this vacancy. The appointment is to last until the next scheduled election. Andrew B. requested the opportunity to think about whom to recommend and discuss again at the September PRC meeting. There was consensus to wait until September to decide whom to recommend.
 - c. Kate invited Roxanne to share more about herself and explain her interest in the PRC. Roxanne has lived in town approximately two years and has a 16-month old son. She is an avid outdoors person and has enjoyed using PRD facilities, as well as the new Monadnock Conservancy trails at Cunningham Pond. Kate invited PRC members to add comments about what lead them to their current involvement. Brendan, who was elected in July, had heard that Recreation is the best way to get involved in town. Andrew B. noted that this is his first step into public service and that he also enjoys using recreation facilities and trails. An avid pickleballer, Andrew B. appreciates that his involvement with the PRC is a way to expand his network with people in town. Rob agreed, noting that as

a bed and breakfast owner for twelve and a half years, he met many residents' visiting guests but did not know many residents directly. Kate added that she has lived here six years and was invited to consider the PRC through her volunteering at the community garden. She feels the members each contribute special skills and perspectives related to their professional backgrounds. There was general agreement that serving on the PRC is interesting, fun, an opportunity to work with great people, and a good way to be connected to the town.

- V. Summer Updates: Lisa explained that this month's updates will all be provided verbally.
- A. Cunningham Pond:
- a. Lisa thanked the PRC members for volunteering to support the young adult seasonal staff at the pond gate. Stating that we could not manage without this important assistance, she suggested that the moment we stop having a mature adult at the gate we will undoubtedly have a problem.
 - b. Lisa feels the daily non-reservation opportunities from 12:30 – 2:00 and from 5:30 – 7:00 are working wonderfully. This is when residents can take their chances on being admitted to fill the vacant parking spots of those with reservations who have left for that time block.
 - c. We lose a huge chunk of our staff on August 16th, when they return to college. Lisa put out a request for adult volunteer help with the gate. While she did not get a lot of volunteers, she thinks she may have enough. She and John are hoping to keep the pond open through Labor Day. She thinks we will have to close the gates after that, assuming that- based on our experience with the pond in early May- an unsupervised facility would quickly become overcrowded.
 - d. In March, we had permission to sell 125 non-resident pond stickers at \$130/apiece. Approximately forty non-residents had purchased pond access before COVID-19 struck. We decided to honor their good faith purchase by allowing them access to the 2020 pond reservation system, which is otherwise restricted to Peterborough residents. Many non-residents requested refunds, so now 22 non-residents have the ability to make pond reservations. Andrew B. remarked that he has drafted a short note we could consider submitting as a Letter to the Editor, thanking everyone for their cooperation and for treating the young adults at the gate so respectfully. He has witnessed that if individuals are unhappy, they do not voice this to the young staff. Andrew B. feels the young staff have handled the public so well that his presence as an adult back-up has been unnecessary. When it was acknowledged that there has been a fair amount of traffic on non-PRD Facebook pages that is critical of the current pond situation, Andrew B. felt his letter would encourage people to act respectfully the rest of the summer. Brendan remarked that he is pretty active in Facebook groups in the area and he is generally seeing positive comments about the pond. He discerns that it is the closing of the playground that is getting complaints on social media. Roxanne stated that since the Monadnock Conservancy opened up their trail to the pond (approximately 1/8 mile past the pond parking lot), people who do not have pond reservations seem to be parking in that small lot at the trailhead. She wondered if the Conservancy could put up a sign saying that this parking is only for using the trails.
 - e. Kate asked if a volunteer schedule might allow the pond to remain open past Labor Day. In the past, the gates were left open after Labor Day for the public to use the facility at their own risk. Lisa expressed willingness to look at the possibility of a volunteer schedule, perhaps with shortened hours, restating that she does not want to simply open the pond up without limits. There was general agreement that it will be boat owners, dog owners and long-distance swimmers who will get upset if the pond has to be closed after Labor Day. Brendan expressed concern about liability, should someone have a medical

problem. If the gates are closed, even if people walk in to use the facility it would be clear the Town is absolved of liability. If the gates are open, he questioned if the Town would be assuming some liability. Lisa said that beginning around August 20th we will be posting clearly on Facebook and in posted signs that the facility no longer has lifeguards.

- B. Summer 2020 Challenge: Lisa remarked that it appears people are more fearful of COVID-19 than they say they are. Earlier in the summer, many families were asking for a summer program saying that kids need to socialize and be out with their friends. State guidelines for summer youth programs presented significant logistical challenges, such as requiring two counselors for every eight campers, separate supplies and restrooms for each group of eight campers, and removing the possibility that we could transport kids in PRD vehicles. Lisa and John came up with a viable plan for eight counselors to work with four groups of eight kids each, from 8:00am to twelve noon, scattered around the PRD property. No one signed up for the first or the second week. Only two people signed up for the third week. We were able to move them into Week 4, so that we are running the program next week for six kids with two counselors.
- C. Swimming Lessons: Lisa added that swimming lessons also took time to get going. This week we have four pairs of parent/child participants in Me and My Shadow socially distanced lessons. Private swimming lessons are going well.
- D. Adams Pool: Lisa summarized that on Monday, Associated Concrete Coating was still conducting pool maintenance. This was supposed to have been done in May, but when COVID-19 hit the project was delayed. Then materials were unavailable and had to be backordered. They found more problems once the project had begun, leading to our spending an unexpected \$6,800 on caulking. Even if they finished their part of the project tomorrow, the paint needs a week to set. After that, it would take two to three days to fill the pool with water, and Guarino's still needs to recalibrate and replace sand in the filter. Lisa does not think it is possible for the pool to open this year, but there has still been no official decision from Town Administration. Because some of the pool chemicals have expiration dates, she was waiting until the project was completed before ordering them. Kate and Rob agreed that with pond staff departing by August 16th it was nearly impossible to imagine the pool opening, and noted that most people in town assume by now that it will not open. It was suggested that people would likely complain if we chose to incur, this late in the summer, the many expenses related to opening the pool.
- E. Adams Playground: Lisa confirmed that the general public seems very upset about the playground remaining closed. She received a message today from someone questioning that since schools are making plans to reopen, what is the plan for the playground? Lisa referred this person to the Safer At Home guidelines for outdoor attractions, which specifically include outdoor playgrounds. Guidelines involve having someone at the gate to take temperatures and ask COVID-19 screening questions, monitoring patrons to enforce social distancing, not allowing too many people, and closing the facility every two hours to sanitize the equipment. PRD maintenance staff did a test run on cleaning, which would take 45 minutes to spray the equipment down and then allow additional time for it to dry. The cleaning process would have to be repeated every two hours. Rob stated that it would have to be run like the pond, with reservations. It was suggested that when the pressure washer is no longer needed at the pond it might cut down the cleaning time at the playground. When asked if other towns have opened their playgrounds, Lisa responded that some of the bigger towns have opened for "play at your own risk," despite the governor's recommendations. She stated that our Emergency Director does not want us to do that. Brendan commented that even if it was posted you "play at your own risk," if something happens people might still want to sue the town. John said that changes to the Safer at Home guidelines seem to happen without warning, so he and Lisa keep checking. Rob remarked that if we have any chance of opening the playground, we should put effort into that and not into the pool. Lisa stated that with all the guidelines and with all the time and effort

they are spending at the pond, she and John acknowledge they cannot manage two facilities at the same time.

- F. Senior Programs: Lisa announced that Senior Program Specialist Gloria Schultz has been meeting outside, under the tree at the Peterborough Community Center, with small socially distant groups from the senior lunch program and knitting/craft group. Gloria takes their temperatures and asks the COVID-19 screening questions. Both groups bring their own chairs and the lunch group brings their own food. People are very appreciative of the chance to meet. Lisa does not know if our buildings will open again to the public when the weather turns colder, so Gloria may have to try to figure out something else at that time.
- G. Other:
 - a. Staff Appreciation Event: Kate asked if the PRC may support the PRD in offering some kind of summer staff send-off/appreciation BBQ. Following brief discussion about serving burgers versus ice cream and the time and place where the event might occur, Lisa stated that she and John will look at staff schedules and will figure out a plan. Kate motioned that the PRC support the PRD in some gesture of appreciation for the summer staff. Rob seconded the motion. After noting that we lose the bulk of the staff August 15th and 16th, it was agreed that if it is problematic to get the staff to gather somewhere else, the event could be brought to them where they are working. The motion was approved unanimously. Kate stated that the PRC does not want this event to become one more thing for Lisa and John to manage, but that if they (Lisa and John) decide what should happen, the PRC will do it.
 - b. Pump Track: Andrew B. remarked that he keeps an eye on the pump track and he wondered how much patrons are expected to socially distance. He also wondered if they are supposed to wear helmets. Andy D. commented that if there is a helmet law, the problem is in how to enforce it. Lisa stated that we have safety signs posted at the skate park and she can talk to Tim Selby, the primary pump track liaison, about similar signage for bike riders at the pump track. When Andrew B. asked if there is an understanding that kids will have an adult present while using the track, Lisa remarked she was unaware of the regular users organizing adult supervision. Rob mentioned that he has seen a group of kids getting out of one vehicle together, so kids may be travelling and riding with folks in their regular circle of social contacts.
 - c. PCC Building Envelope: Rob asked for an update, noting that, in March, an assessment of the entire building was the next step in the PCC renovation process. Lisa had scheduled a meeting with Seth MacLean, Public Works Operations Manager, to get the ball really rolling. Seth had to postpone the meeting until next week. Lisa reported that the PCC remained dry despite yesterday's tropical storm. It is a matter of concern that the building leaks when we do not expect it to and does not leak on a day like yesterday. With Town Administrator Rodney Bartlett retiring in December, Lisa confirmed that she and Seth will be working together on moving the PCC assessment forward.

VI. New Business: There was no new business.

VII. Adjournment: Kate motioned to adjourn the meeting and Brendan seconded. With unanimous approval, the meeting adjourned at 7:35pm. The next PRC meeting will be Wednesday September 2nd at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Martin
August 6, 2020