

Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC) Meeting
Roland "Beaver" Jutras Recreation Building
Minutes of June 1, 2016, 7:00 PM

Approved

Attendees: Andrew Dunbar, Chair; Heather McClusky, Vice Chair;;
Stacey Howarth, Secretary; Howard Russell; Chris Kotula;
Jeffrey M. King, Recreation Director; Lisa Koziell-Betz, Program Coordinator;
Lauren Martin, Minute Taker

- I) Meeting called to order: Andy called the meeting to order at 7:09pm. He expressed gratitude on behalf of the PRC and the Town to former member Stacey Kolk and welcomed newly elected PRC member, Chris Kotula.
- II) Election of PRC Officers:
- a. Jeff clarified that according to the PRC by-laws, members cannot hold a leadership position in their first year serving on the Committee, to allow them time to become acclimated.
 - b. Secretary: Jeff described the official duties as taking minutes if there is no PRD staff member present to do that, and sending any official correspondence on behalf of the Committee. Chris nominated Stacey. Heather seconded the nomination. Stacey Howarth was elected unanimously.
 - c. Vice Chair: Duties were explained as stepping in to conduct PRC meetings when the Chair is not present. Howard and Heather were both nominated. Heather McClusky was elected.
 - d. Chair: Heather nominated Andy. Howard seconded the nomination. Andrew Dunbar was elected unanimously.
 - e. Jeff confirmed the following term expirations: Andy and Howard's terms expire in 2017; Stacey's term in 2018, and Heather's and Chris's terms expire in 2019.
- III) Approval of Minutes: Andy motioned to approve the May 4, 2016 minutes as written. Howard seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- IV) Director's Report:
- a. Budget: Jeff pointed out that we are entering the final month of FY2016, so he will be busy with end of year encumbrances and journal entries. In June our payroll balloons due to seasonal employees.
 - b. Playground North:
 - i. Adams Pool has been filled. Guarino's (pool contractors) came out over the weekend to relocate the auto-fill sensor for the splash pad. It had been placed near the intake pipe causing it to be constantly wet, which made it think that the tank was full and would stop filling, requiring a manual override. Hopefully this situation has now been repaired. Guarino's will return again to calibrate the chlorinator after the pool and splash pad are up and running. Last year Guarino's saved us a ton of money.
 - ii. The shade shelters and splash pad features have been re-installed. Splash pad features look like their paint has faded, but this is due to the chlorine. They will be polished with a restorative product our maintenance worker, Bob Kruger, has used for his boat.
 - iii. We've placed a bigger chlorine order than last year. Approximately half of our summer's worth of chlorine has already been ordered.
 - iv. We have needed some new signs and others have been broken or vandalized. Jeff has ordered some new signs from Steve's Lettering.
 - v. Girl Scouts have mulched and weeded Morgan's Garden.
 - vi. Picnic tables have been moved to move convenient locations.
 - vii.

- c. Playground South:
 - i. Fields have been aerated and fertilized and are almost needing to be mowed twice a week. ConVal played a night game on Ecco Field 5/20, which was an opportunity for us to identify what we need to do to improve our lights. After borrowing a ladder truck from the Peterborough Fire Department, we replaced three bulbs, but then discovered that the lights still do not work. We will have to rent a lift and hire an electrician to take a look at all the lights that are out.
 - ii. Exploring the situation on Ecco led to the discovery that the lights on Picard did not work at all. The main breaker switch and the breakers for the lights have all been replaced, so that now all the lights work. This repair cost approximately \$1,000. A sign now identifies that these are not light switches and should not be toggled back and forth.
- d. Cunningham Pond:
 - i. We opened on Memorial Day weekend and that Saturday was very busy. Facilities Supervisor, Kathy Bosk, has been available at the Peterborough Community Center (PCC) on Saturdays from 9:00am – 1:00pm for pond stickers. There is new sand at the beach and new rope lines and buoys. Until school gets out, gates remain open during the week but will be locked on Saturday and Sunday night. When we are fully open after school has finished, we will lock the Pond gate each night and reopen each morning.
- e. Peterborough Community Center (PCC):
 - i. The Peterborough Farmers' Market has begun their outdoor season. They have new signs and this year are offering some live music on certain dates.
 - ii. We plan to have our maintenance staff create bocce courts at the PCC and install a couple of air conditioners. Senior programming will continue through the summer. Senior programming specialist, Gloria Schultz, is ordering a shade tree for the side of the building to the left of the blue door. Jeff would like to place a grape arbor there in the future, too.
 - iii. Jeff noted that Francie Von Mertens is helping the food pantry spruce up their doorway with gardens.
- f. Personnel: We hired 17 new summer staff this year, which is approximately half of our total number of seasonal employees. There has been a mountain of paperwork to get through. Each employee gets a background check and drug test, along with many other items of documentation.
- g. Youth Baseball:
 - i. Jeff explained that Cal Ripken Baseball had not paid us for field use for the past two years or for this year. A \$1,000 payment in April covered last year, but they still owe us \$1200 for two years ago and \$1000 for this year. Jeff thinks they undercharge for what they are offering and are not doing a great job collecting from vendors for fence advertising signs.
 - ii. Not only is it impossible to deny use of the fields without a lockable fence, from a public relations standpoint Jeff points out that it would be a nightmare if he had to tell nine year olds they cannot play baseball. Cal Ripken basically gets to use Bishop and Picard fields as needed.
 - iii. The situation has escalated to where Town Administrator, Rodney Bartlett, is now involved. Andy commented there is considerable cost to us to maintain the fields. Jeff remarked that with a growing drug crisis, people will be increasingly looking to us to provide more wholesome options for our youth. It was pointed out that the ConVal School District will no longer charge non-profits to use their fields, but Chris responded that there should be an expectation that PRD fields must be paid for.

V) Program Report:

- a. Fishing Derby: Lisa remarked that the annual Loran Hanson Fishing Derby was a blast, even though there were not a lot of kids participating. It was a beautiful day and, thanks to Jan Fischer, we had lots of wonderful prizes to distribute, in addition to the enormous Don Rodenhiser trophy for the winner.
- b. Pickleball: Lisa has been trying to have regular participants assume responsibility for setting up and taking down materials, but the group has thus far been unable to commit to more than a week at a time. Jeff pointed out that we cannot spare two hours of our program director's time each time pickleball needs to be set up or broken down. Lisa added that Kathy Bosk is developing a pickleball tournament for July.
- c. Lacrosse: Jeff commented that the program has gone well this year and the U15 girls are tied for sixth place out of 27 teams. Nine boy players were selected to participate in the end of year festival, which is similar the All Star experience in baseball.
- d. Babe Ruth Softball: All Star teams have already been selected. League playoffs will take place June 10 – 12. The 12U team only had three girls, so they formed a combined team with players from Antrim, Peterborough and New Ipswich. We have had a full complement of Peterborough area players for 10U and 8U.
- e. Dog obedience: Lisa said the next class offering in June has not had any registrations, so it will probably not be held.
- f. Adult Softball: Because a few folks had been chirping about the cost to participate, Jeff held a meeting with team managers, where he reviewed our costs and our budget. The majority of those attending walked away satisfied. We spend \$22,000 on our fields, which is more than half the amount area towns spend on their entire recreation budgets. League play began last week. We bought a new chalker and batter's box frames so that adults can touch up the fields when youth teams have used them first. When asked about the charge per softball team, Jeff responded that their \$600 fee works out to be less per person than the youth pay to participate in softball and the adults get more games.
- g. African Drumming: Lisa announced that instructor Abou Sylla held a free concert before returning to Africa for the summer, and that he expects to resume drumming with a core group in the fall.
- h. Summer Teen Challenge is completely filled for Session 1 (with a waiting list) and Session 2 is filling up. We have two great leaders this year: Jen Ambrosini is returning for her third summer, and will be partnered with Riley Henry, who had been a camper in the program years ago.
- i. Playground Program: We are currently getting late registrations and concerns about scholarships. Weekly sign-ups are allowed and have been very popular. The beginning and end weeks of the program have higher registrations than in the middle of summer. Heather questioned whether we are offering a shorter season, since the program concludes on August 12th. Lisa said it is eight weeks, as always, but we are beginning the Monday immediately after school ends. Jeff added that we used to start a week later, but parents did not know what to do for the week after school was first released. Because more families seem to go on vacation in August, the shift in program weeks has been well received.
- j. Adams Pool: Jeff remarked that we will keep the pool open as long as people are using it and we have staff. We are not advertising a date to close the pool. It will probably stay open through August 19th anyway, and we will see what the weather is like after that.
- k. Jeff is driving on a Red Sox trip in the middle of June and it is totally booked.
- l. Swimming lessons: Registrations have been slow.
- m. Request: Andy asked us to consider having maintenance supervisor Roland Patten run a green lawn care class in the fall. Andy spoke with Roland recently and learned so much about why we aerate and test the soil.
- n. Scouting:
 - i. Our Cub Scout pack and Boy Scout troop participated in the Memorial Day service held at the Town House.

- ii. Camp card sales, which allow boys to subsidize their fees for summer camp, are finishing. Troop 8 Scoutmaster Chris Edscorn will be moving to Georgia this summer, so incoming Scoutmaster Todd Powell will take the reins at the end of this month. The troop is organizing a fundraising dinner.
- iii. At the recent Mt Monadnock District Recognition Dinner, six Scout leaders from our town were recognized for outstanding service. The PRD was named Charter Organization of the Year. Lauren Martin was also presented an award at the Daniel Webster Council recognition dinner in April. Troop 8, Pack 8 and Venture Crew 808 each received the gold award for their programs at their yearly Journey-to-Excellence reviews.
- o. Senior Program Update:
 - i. Lisa pointed out that Gloria is doing a great job with senior programming.
 - ii. Peterborough Players received a grant to allow seniors to enjoy a free performance of "Driving Miss Daisy." Approximately 100 people have signed up through Gloria to attend performances on two different June dates.
 - iii. The special Chinese New Year senior lunch that was originally scheduled for February has been rescheduled to next Friday. Approximately 40 people plan to attend.
 - iv. Gloria believes outdoor games at the PCC, including bocce and horseshoes, will help our senior programs be more visible to the community. Andy commented that he has enjoyed lots of fun and great conversation at Senior Lunches.
 - v. Jeff noted that Gordon Kemp, who regularly attends Senior Lunch, served Our Town on the Budget Committee for 37 years. Jeff urged those in attendance to thank Gordon whenever we see him.

VI) Outstanding Balances Report:

- a. Lauren reviewed a handout detailing the progress in collecting on overdue balances. Since the last report on April 12th, \$1,679.00 has been collected. Since this concerted effort to collect began on Nov. 4th, 2015, we have collected a total of \$9,132.50. One person signed last month to accept a certified letter threatening legal action if her bill is not paid, but has not contacted us nor made any payment. Jeff will pursue taking this person to small claims court for their outstanding balance of \$168.
- b. Jeff explained that with our former computer system it was very time consuming to identify accounts in arrears. Our new system makes it easier to flag people who have outstanding balances and freeze their accounts so new charges cannot be added. Plus, we are now doing a monthly accounts reconciliation to remain aware of the status of overdue accounts.
- c. This year we will require more aggressive payment plans. Lisa explained that in the past, people might charge their whole summer program, pay it off the following year when they received their tax returns, and then charge the new summer's fees again. Our plan this summer is to ask for payments every two weeks so we will keep seeing them and can stop them from participating further if they do not keep to their bi-weekly payment schedule.
- d. Regarding scholarships, Jeff noted that we do not give anyone a full ride. Years ago, he said we used to use participation in the school lunch program as a guideline for qualifying for scholarship aid, but now that is so low. This year Jeff has recognized that there are a sizable group of people who are above the poverty threshold and would not qualify for free lunch, but who are still not making it and clearly need financial aid. Many of these cases are due to divorce, job loss, or getting a new low-paying job.

VII) Scoutmaster's Report: The written Scoutmaster's Report was submitted for the record without discussion.

VIII) Revolving Fund Report: Agenda packets included a Revolving Fund Report which was just received that day. It was not reviewed in the meeting.

IX) Other:

- a. Andy suggested moving the monthly PRC meeting time earlier. It was agreed that beginning in July, meetings will begin at 6:30pm and hopefully conclude by 8:00pm at the latest.
- b. Stacey asked about the status of getting a working water fountain installed at the PCC. Jeff replied that he has been too busy to act on this yet.
- c. Heather asked if we could consider installing a vending machine at the pool. Jeff expressed interest in this, stating that he had been talking with our maintenance crew about creating more storage space by enclosing the breezeway between the bath house and arts and crafts building. Perhaps a nook for a vending machine could be built into the front and the rest of that space could be used for storage. Jeff's only worry is about vandalism. He remarked that it does not make sense for us to start selling concessions because when this has been tried in the past, we have spent more money on payroll than we took in from concession sales. Jeff also mentioned that someone had suggested to him that a local restaurant might want to provide dinner at the pool. They could advertise it as a special night at the pool for takeout and might consider having music playing.
- d. Heather reminded Jeff that last year she had asked about having umbrella holders in the grass at the pond for people who bring their own umbrellas. Jeff acknowledged that these would have to be something like PVC pipe with a plug so they did not fill with sand. Lisa thought vandals might unplug them on purpose to fill with sand. Jeff countered that an innocent child might think it was fun to fill them with sand.
- e. Heather commented that Jaffrey Recreation is offering to allow members of the public to attend their day camp field trips and she wondered if we were open to that. Lisa says this would open a legal liability can of worms regarding who supervises the extra kids who sign up for a cool trip. She feels we have a tight camper/staff ratio to begin with- sometimes 10 or 15 kids per staff member on a field trip. Jeff noted that our entire staff does not go on trips because not all the campers go on each trip. Jeff added that our staff knows the Playground Program kids and they are easily identifiable in their bright green shirts. Other kids who show up for a trip might not be as easily identifiable and might not respond to the directions of the staff. Jeff and Lisa agreed that offering a trip to the public like the upcoming Red Sox trip is different from already having a bus load of kids and adding more kids whom you do not know. Jeff said that when our program has an upcoming field trip, the staff review at length ahead of time the behavior expectations. This would not be possible in the same way with additional kids attending just for the day.
- f. Heather expressed her feeling that there is a gap in our summer programming for kids finishing 6th grade. Each session of Summer Teen Challenge is for four weeks only, and many kids this age are not ready to be left at home alone all day for half of the summer. Lisa and Jeff explained that although some times our Playground Program campers are divided into smaller groups, they do still have time in one big group. We already have a broad age range between children entering first grade and those entering 6th grade. Lisa and Jeff were open to the idea of selecting certain students to be part of a volunteer CIT program.

IX) Adjournment: Stacey moved to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded. The meeting adjourned at 8:41pm. Next meeting: Wednesday July 6th at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Martin, Minute
Taker June 7, 2016
