

Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC) Meeting
Roland "Beaver" Jutras Recreation Building
Minutes of March 14, 2018
Approved

Attendees: Andrew Dunbar, Chair; Heather McClusky, Vice Chair; Chris Kotula, Secretary;
Kate Coon; Ryan Griffiths; Jeffrey M. King, Recreation Director;
Guests Melissa Stephenson and Kin Schilling; and Lauren Martin, Minute Taker

- I. Call to Order: Andy called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.
- II. Approval of Minutes:
 - A. Scanning the minutes from the February PRC meeting, Andy reminded Jeff that he would like information on the income and expenses for Senior Lunch. Andy also remarked that he has shared his entry to the Town Report with members of the PRC. Jeff stated that the Department's report has also been submitted, along with lots of photos.
 - B. Kate motioned to approve the minutes of February 12, 2018 as written. Heather seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved.
- III. Presentation on the First NH Honey Bee Mural:
 - A. Melissa Stephenson and Kin Schilling introduced themselves and thanked the PRC for time to share their excitement over a mural they hope to have painted at the side entrance to the Peterborough Community Center (PCC). Melissa explained that through a serendipitous series of events, she became aware of an artist who paints large murals of honey bees on the sides of brick buildings. Matt Willey is conducting a world-wide project described on his website TheGoodoftheHive.com, where he hand-paints images of honey bees to raise awareness about the importance of honey bees and other pollinators, while celebrating the beauty and power of human connection. He sees the hive as a metaphor for communities of people, where the health and success of the individual relies heavily on connections within the group. Matt's goal is to paint murals with combined total images of 50,000 honey bees- the number necessary for a healthy, thriving hive. Jeff shared images from Matt's website on his phone, and Melissa shared a printed image from a mural Matt painted on a barn in Nebraska. After painting, Matt applies a protective coating to the murals to help preserve them. Part of the agreement is to keep the mural on the PCC wall for as long as Matt is working on the project.
 - B. Melissa and Kin are still looking for a non-profit group to support this project. The Monadnock Beekeepers have secured Matt to come to Peterborough in August to paint this mural. There is a place for Matt and two others to stay in the area and someone will be loaning them a car. Melissa expressed that the PCC feels like the perfect place for this mural, due to the potential to raise awareness in all the people who participate in programs there. Jeff pointed out that the mural would be on the main entrance to the building and would dress it up considerably. Melissa remarked that in 2014, 40% of the bee population had collapsed. Kin stated that bees pollinate 80% of the food we eat so we need to be aware of them. Melissa added that they are

also fascinating creatures. Kate suggested that we could raise awareness by passing out Mason jar beehives. Andy noted that we all can help increase the bee population by not using pesticides and by planting lots of flowers.

- C. Melissa explained that \$1,500 has been spent to secure Matt's time for the month of August, but the total cost of the mural project is \$20,000. They are not too worried about raising this money. Peterborough will be the first bee mural site in NH, which Melissa believes will bring incredible exposure to the town. She is already thinking about related extensions such as a honey festival and a dinner comprised entirely of pollinated food. Jeff remarked that when he first heard this proposal to decorate the building at no cost to us, it immediately appealed to him. He agrees that this could lead to other things and mentioned that there is a large whale mural in Portsmouth, which has remained years after its installation. Jeff thinks children and the general public could be attracted to it, and it might even be visible from Route 101. Kate mentioned the tie-in with the Farmers' Markets held at the PCC. Jeff stated that the loss of the bee population is all over the news so it is a good move for us to do something about that.
- D. Right now, Melissa and Kin are looking for a place to deposit donated funds. Jeff states that although the Town has the ability to accept donations, they should look for non-profit options. The Town of Peterborough is not a 501(c)(3) non-profit, and some potential donors will only contribute to a 501(c)(3). When the Cornucopia Project was suggested, Kin explained that they felt it might be confusing since she is involved in both Cornucopia and the bee mural project. It was proposed that another benefit of the bee mural is to promote the health benefits of honey. Comments were made that honey can help one's immune system and that local honey is the best. Ryan stated that some compelling articles have been written in professional journals comparing raw honey's efficacy in suppressing coughs and promoting sleep versus Robitussin DM. He asked if the Monadnock Community Hospital Philanthropy Department had been approached as a potential partner, and Melissa agreed that is a great idea.
- E. When asked what the PRC could do to indicate support, Melissa asked for something formal where the PRC gives its blessing to the project. When the status of Francie Von Mertens' proposed PCC landscaping project was questioned, Jeff stated that he understands they are still raising money. He envisions both projects dovetailing nicely. Melissa described how the mural would encompass the entire wall at the PCC, remarking that we may need to move the current sign. Melissa will ask the artist if bricks need to be washed or prepped, and she will ask the school where he has just completed a mural about their experience working with him. Jeff commented that his only concern is that the wall where this mural will be painted bakes in the sun, so he doubts it will last forever. Melissa will ask about touching up the painting and if there is any additional cost for that. Kin said it has been suggested that if they raise over the required \$20,000, they should keep the excess funds in reserve for future repairs. Ryan asked when that wall has last been re-mortared or re-pointed, and it was questioned whether the \$20,000 includes that kind of surface preparation. Andy stated that he hoped the \$20,000 includes ongoing maintenance. Jeff responded that he accepts that at some point this mural will fade, but he does not want the

responsibility for maintaining it put on the Town. Andy motioned that the PRC accept and endorse the First NH Honey Bee Mural project with the provision that it is not up to the Town to maintain it. Chris seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously. Andy thanked Melissa and Kin for coming.

IV. Director's Report:

- A. Calendar: Jeff called attention to an updated calendar of meetings and important dates for the PRC. Ryan is the only one whose term expires in 2018 and who therefore is affected by the date for filing candidacy. Ryan affirmed that he was sworn in when he took office last year.
- B. Budget: Jeff mentioned that at the recent Budget Committee meeting, he noted that we broke even at the PCC for the first time in six years. Barbara Miller reportedly gave kudos that night, while Tyler Ward and Ed Juengst apparently expressed consternation that the Town has to pay rent to use the PCC for elections. Jeff explained that the Select Board determined that the operation of the PCC was not to be a burden to the taxpayers for recreation services. Elections are not recreation services. Jeff hates to nickel and dime residents, kids, and seniors if the Town doesn't want to follow its own rules to use the facility. He is encouraged, however, that the Town Clerk's budget for FY2019 includes PCC rental money for future voting. When questioned why voting is taking place at the PCC when taxpayers' money (from the Town Clerk's budget) will now need to be spent on rent, Jeff stated that the Town chose the PCC because it has better parking and is more accessible than the Town House. After the dry run of using it for the national election in 2016, residents remarked that it was a good spot for voting. They will continue to hold town meetings at the Town House, however. Chris asked about the plan to have the PCC gym floor refurbished, noting that voters will not change their footwear when entering the facility. Jeff responded that part of the floor refinishing project includes purchasing a gym floor cover. There are products that are like vinyl strips eight or ten feet wide, on rollers, that can be extended to cover the whole floor for any non-sporting event. PRD maintenance worker, Ray Eaton, went over the floor at least two times to get rid of salt brought in on the shoes of voters this week. When asked if we can retroactively bill the Town for the expense of that gym floor cleaning, it was noted that this service is included in the cost of the rental. A conversation ensued about the appropriateness of the Town House versus the PCC for voting. Jeff described that our operating expenses are roughly \$25K – \$30K/year. If the Town would cover that, we could reduce taxpayer fees for programs at the PCC. The Town is already paying rent for some mini-conferences and Select Board retreats held at the PCC. Ryan asked if we could take an easy tally to show the Town what it is spending already. Jeff explained that the food pantry does not pay anything to be there. We used to pay for everything in the building, but now we pay 73% of the operating expenses and the Town (Buildings and Grounds) pays 27% to cover the proportion of the building occupied by the food pantry. The Town looks at subsidizing the food pantry as helping the Human Services budget, which ultimately saves the Town money.

C. Facilities:

- i. Jeff noted that we received some great furniture donations when GFA moved into their new location in December. We rushed in a rainstorm to pick up Lauren's new desk and a number of new chairs as they had told us they wanted to get rid of it quickly. Additional desks are apparently still available, however, so we are looking at getting Lisa a new desk and doing over her office.
- ii. When asked if our plan to acquire the current Town House chairs for the PCC (when they are replaced) also includes plans to acquire more tables, Jeff said the issue is not buying them but storing them. We only have approximately 100 chairs at the PCC currently. Although the Town House chairs are not terribly comfortable, they hook together which is important for the fire code when hosting a large gathering.

V. Program Report:

- A. Kate remarked that she does not think she received her Spring Program Brochure, which was mailed to all households in the PRD data base. Jeff pointed out that it was folded in half, which is cheaper to mail but labor-intensive with hours of folding and applying stickers to seal the open edges for mailing. For the next brochure, we are going to try mailing as a flat which may be better in the long run. Jeff also thinks the front cover, when mailed as a flat, will be more eye-catching. It's entirely possible that Kate could've missed it in the mail since it was folded.
- B. In addition to Lisa's written report, Jeff added that he has received a couple of letters from Pickleballers who are unhappy with the lighting in the PCC gym. He explained that we are on our third set of light bulbs. First, the building had incandescent bulbs which were not bright enough. These were replaced with fluorescent bulbs which proved to be hazy, and were then replaced with LED bulbs which are better, but still not great. Jeff's top priority for the PCC gym is getting the floor done, then abating the asbestos glazing in the windows, and *then* addressing the lights. He stated that we have already spent over \$3,000 on light bulbs trying to appease the Pickleballers, but we now have to take care of higher priorities. Kate, a Pickleballer, advised Jeff to respond to the letters by explaining that we are researching options to address their concerns, but first must deal with the higher priorities he had just outlined. Jeff is envisioning new LEDs, such as he has seen recently in some ice rinks. He said that depending on the quotes we get for the floor refinishing project, if there is enough there maybe we can throw in lights at the same time. Chris expressed agreement with how Jeff prioritized. Jeff has received one quote on the abatement of windows and two quotes on the floor. He needs a third quote for the floor and the PRC will need to vote officially to proceed with the project. Jeff estimates it will cost approximately \$9,000 for the gym floor cover, which is a separate cost from the flooring company work.

VI. Senior Program Report:

- A. Andy commented that Senior Program Specialist Gloria Schultz is very creative and very energetic with planning senior programs. Ryan mentioned that he has been posting the Senior Programs Flyers at Monadnock Community Hospital and he

wondered if this has had an impact on participation. Jeff responded that we appreciate the flyers being posted because we want to try to involve more people to keep the various senior programs vibrant. He said our target market is people who live in their own private homes, as opposed to those at Rivermead, Summerhill or Scott-Farrar, which already offer programs to their residents. Jeff noted that in the recreation world, “senior programs” typically refers to offerings for individuals aged 55 and over. Some younger, more active adults do not want to be referred to as “seniors” and think that “senior programs” means Bingo for 80-year-olds. Jeff said that we have to be careful how we label our programs, and this is why we do not refer to the PCC as the “senior center.” We do not want to imply that others are not welcome.

- B. Ryan asked if we had thought of reaching out to the Peterborough Community Theatre about offering a senior matinee day. Jeff responded enthusiastically that this is a great idea.

VII. Revolving Fund Report: This item was tabled because Jeff explained we have not yet received the report from the Finance Department.

VIII. Troop 8 Scoutmaster’s Report:

- A. In addition to Scoutmaster Toby Gray’s written report, Jeff added that the Webelos and Boy Scouts did really well at the recent Klondike Derby, which is an annual competition for Scouts from throughout our southwestern NH district. Boys pull a homemade dog sled filled with supplies to various stations, where they earn points for meeting scout skills challenges and working together as a group. Toby is a professional artist and Star Wars enthusiast, so when Troop 8 hosted the event this year it creatively incorporated a Star Wars theme.
- B. Three boys from Troop 8 have been accepted to the U.S. contingent for the World Scouting Jamboree at The Summit high adventure base in West Virginia in 2019. Scouts from 122 countries are expected to attend.
- C. New Cubmaster Tim Theberge is doing a great job bringing fun stuff to the Pack 8 Cub Scouts. He recently arranged to have all of the pack leaders attend a leader training session, which was required before they could begin participating in a pilot program allowing girls to join Cub Scouts. Jeff explained that Cub Scouts is for youth in first through fifth grade. The intention is that girls would form their own Cub Scout grade-specific dens, but we might not be able to do that if we do not have enough girl members. After the initial year of accepting girls into Cub Scouts, the Boy Scouts of America (BSA) will begin accepting girls from 5th grade to age 18 into separate gender troops. Venturing is the co-ed Scouting program for youth aged 14 – 20. Crew 3165, chartered by the PRD, is planning to attend this summer’s VenturingFest at The Summit, in celebration of 20 years of Venturing.
- D. Tomorrow morning, Jeff is going to Concord to the NH Rec and Park Association meeting. UNH professor Matt Frye is a member of the association and also the Cubmaster for a pack on the seacoast. He is interested in doing a research project through UNH looking at attitudes surrounding municipalities chartering Scouting units. Jeff explained that municipalities are seeing a decline in youth sports.

Participants are shifting to private, non-profit “elite” organizations, adding that we have seen that happen in our area. Jeff said the delivery of youth sports has become more complex. At the same time, on the Scouting side of things a lot of former barriers have been eliminated, with the last one being that the programs are going co-ed. This is opening the door for more municipalities to consider chartering Scouting. Jeff explained how chartering a Scouting unit is more than simply sponsoring it. We receive a charter from the BSA that allows us to offer Scouting as a program. Similarly, we pay a fee to the American Red Cross to be able to offer their curriculum at the local level through our American Red Cross swimming lessons. Our lifeguards are Red Cross and WSI trained. The Red Cross is a national program that we can offer by buying into it. In addition, we offer softball at our local level as part of the Monadnock Youth Softball League, which is part of Babe Ruth, Inc. We pay dues to the league, which pays the national organization, so that we can offer youth softball at the local level. So, we pay dues to be able to offer Scouting in our area as part of Mt Monadnock District, which is part of Daniel Webster Council, which is part of the BSA. Manhattan East sponsors one of our Babe Ruth teams, meaning they give us a check to pay for their uniforms. In Scouting, youth pay dues to be a Scout and part of that goes to the BSA. Other types of charter organizations include churches, Rotary Clubs and VFWs. The responsibilities of the charter organization are primarily to provide a place for the group to meet and to approve adult leadership applications. The PRD was recognized by Mt Monadnock District as the Charter Organization of the Year for two years in a row in 2016 and 2017. We can offer more to the troop than other groups might be able to offer. Because Scouting is a PRD program, their volunteers are our volunteers. They developed the campsite at Cunningham Pond. The Scouts and our PRD programs are the only ones who use the campsite. We provide benefits to the Scouts, but it is also beneficial to us to offer an outdoor program to youth. The troop is offering character development, youth development and outdoor skills. Jeff has been trying to “scout-up” our camp program. In the past, on PRD campouts our camp counselors would order pizza for dinner. They told Jeff they did not know how to cook outside, so he has been teaching them how to cook with Dutch ovens and Coleman stoves. Chris remarked that he sees people at EMS who did not grow up in Scouting but who fell in love with the outdoors when they joined college outing clubs. Jeff noted that summer staff training will be more intense this year and includes a campout for the entire staff, where we will teach them to set up tents and cook meals outside. Scouting positively impacts our other programs and also positively impacts our facilities. If Scouts are camping on PRD property, vandals won’t make trouble while they are there. Jeff hopes the NH Rec and Parks Association will endorse the project tomorrow. Jeff would love to see this spread throughout the state and even nationally. The PRD has chartered Troop 8 since 2005, and the Town of Peterborough has been involved with Scouting since 1911, which is one year after Scouting began in America.

IX. Facilities Reservation Report: Lisa’s report was accepted as written.

X. Outstanding Balances Report:

- A. Lauren explained that since the last report, another \$74 was collected on old balances through 2016. A family who had been moved into default sent \$50 after receiving a letter threatening small claims court. A total of \$12,809.30 has been collected thus far, and we still expect to receive the \$2,044.07 remaining due from the three families paying small, regular amounts.
- B. Two families remain in arrears on balances due from last summer's programs. One family owes \$256 and the other owes \$38. Both accounts have been frozen so that these families cannot register for new programs- including pond stickers and pool memberships- until they first pay these balances. The family with the larger amount due has also been notified that they must now pre-pay in full for all programs and services.
- C. Jeff remarked that we are revising our application for financial assistance to mirror the Town's application for assistance. We will have all the necessary data so that we can use their formula to determine eligibility. Applicants will have to provide supporting documentation, such as proof of income and expenses for the past 30 days. When questioned whether we might be criticized for making it difficult for people to apply for aid, Jeff responded that we are a public institution and we try to keep programs affordable, and we try to work with people to establish reasonable payment plans. Conversation led to the idea that if someone is currently known to the Human Services Department, they might be able to indicate that on the application form and avoid having to provide a duplicate of all information to our department. When questioned whether receiving school lunch would be a good benchmark for qualifying for scholarship aid, Jeff replied that the threshold for school lunches is so low that unless a family is completely destitute they do not qualify, and he knows many of our families are not at that level but are appropriate candidates for scholarship aid. PRD scholarships are only available to Peterborough residents. Whether or not families receive assistance with program fees, many appreciate being able to make regular payments when the total amount due is greater than they can pay at once.

XI. Strategic Planning Discussion: There was consensus that it was too late to begin this important conversation. This item will be placed first on the April agenda.

XII. Other:

- A. Jeff asked to share a development that happened this week. He has been meeting regularly for six months with ConVal Superintendent Kimberly Saunders, to work on building a relationship, but he feels that progress has now gone out the window. Jeff made a reservation to use the ConVal high school gym for a softball league clinic this coming Saturday, which includes the involvement of New England College coach and players, as well as separate facilities reservations for our softball and lacrosse youth programs. On Monday, the ConVal athletic director called to say that the school district facilities director wanted to move these reservations to the gym at South Meadow School (SMS). Jeff had followed their reservation process about a month ago, provided our certificate of insurance, and had received confirmation of the reservation, so it was irritating and disruptive to be informed six days before the advertised clinic that they wanted to move us to another location. Jeff still does not

know if ConVal is going to charge us since they do not usually have custodians scheduled on weekends. He also noted that ConVal Volunteers for Youth Sports (CVYS) seems to have ready access to ConVal facilities with their own swipe cards, which makes it seem like the PRD is being singled-out. The situation for this Saturday's clinic has been resolved where the ConVal athletic director will personally come to open the doors for us, and Jeff feels that there is time to figure out the softball and lacrosse field issues. He remarked that when PRC members hear folks saying that the PRD is difficult to work with, he wants them to understand what the schools have done to us. We have pulled out all our recreation programs from the schools except for adult volleyball, partly due to frustrations with this same type of treatment in the past. We had been very reliant on the ConVal schools' facilities in the past, but now with the PCC gym and our relationship with the Dublin School, we have been able to pull our programs from the ConVal schools so they do not have any leverage with us anymore. Jeff noted that if the school budget passed in yesterday's voting, the school district has set aside money for paying us to use our tennis courts and softball fields.

- B. Discussion ensued about how to move forward and whether the PRC can assist. Jeff will try to handle this through his relationships with the ConVal athletic director and superintendent. The request to change the softball clinic venue had been explained to Jeff as related to the fact that the SMS gym can be better secured from the rest of the school than the high school gym. It was questioned whether this might be a response to recent school shootings. When it was pointed out that one of the roles of the PRC is "to help provide high quality recreation opportunities for Peterborough residents," some wondered if this conversation should go beyond the PRD director and ConVal facilities director. Jeff acknowledged that we may be at a point where the PRC should get involved because if he does not have reliable facilities, he cannot offer programming. It was suggested that Jeff have a conversation about this with Kimberly Saunders and then report back to the PRC, opening lines of communication so the PRC can figure out what their role can be. There was consensus that the goal should not be to go head to head in an adversarial way but to correct this and strengthen the relationship and sense of partnership with the schools. Jeff clarified that his issue is not with the athletic director, but with how the school district operates.

- XIII. Adjournment: Andy motioned to adjourn the meeting and Chris seconded. With unanimous approval, the meeting adjourned at 8:34pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Martin,
Minute Taker
March 19, 2018