

Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC) Meeting  
Roland "Beaver" Jutras Recreation Building  
Minutes of February 5, 2020  
Approved

Attendees: Andrew Dunbar, Chair; Andrew Brescia; Michael Strand; Rob Fox;  
Lisa Koziell-Betz, Recreation Director; and Lauren Martin, Administrative Assistant and Minute Taker

- I. Call to Order:
  - A. Andy D. called the meeting to order at 6:30p.m. It was agreed to wait to approve the January meeting minutes until Michael arrives.
  - B. In follow-up to a question from the last meeting, Andy D. and Lauren explained that leaving a single tennis net in place throughout the winter was intentional, since folks have been seen playing tennis outdoors whenever the court surface is dry.
- II. Regular Agenda Items:
  - A. Jan. 23, 2020 Press Release from R. Bartlett: Lisa was congratulated for her appointment as the Recreation Director.
  - B. Department Program Reports:
    - a. Skiing: Lisa reported that the ski program was a huge success, due to the efforts of coordinator Susan Hallock, along with a team of experienced chaperones. Susan and Lauren transported students in the PRD vans. Susan and Lauren are now making plans for a spring session of Stroll and Bowl, where we walk students from PES to Bowling Acres for bowling and pizza. Because Lisa will not be able to walk far this spring, this program might have otherwise been cancelled.
    - b. Daddy-Daughter Dance: The dance is not happening this winter because we do not have the staff to do it, but it will be held in May as a Family Spring Fling Dance. There has been a lot of positive feedback from the public about the change to a more inclusive event, though a few families have also expressed their sorrow that the special dance for dads and daughters will not happen.
    - c. Summer programs: Playground Program and Summer Teen Challenge (STC) are open for registrations and already have a number of kids on their rosters. The first four-week session of STC is 1/3 full, and the second session is over 3/4 full.
    - d. Spring programs: Youth lacrosse and youth softball registrations opened on Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>. Lisa will meet next week with Larry Pimental, the volunteer Peterborough Cal Ripken liaison.
    - e. Men's pick-up Futsal: This winter program for men over 35 continues to go strong. Futsal is similar to soccer, with a denser ball that does not bounce as much and can be ricocheted off the walls.
    - f. Dog obedience will begin again in the spring.
    - g. Monadnock Drum Caravan (African drumming) continues year-round each week with a small, regular following.
    - h. Easter Egg Hunt: Lisa will meet with Pelagia Vincent next week to begin planning for the annual egg hunt and scavenger hunt in the Depot Park area.
  - C. FY 2020/21 Budget Proposal:
    - a. Lisa stated that the Budget Committee meeting to review the proposed PRD budget last night went really well. There was no PRC representation at the meeting. We had originally been told the Recreation budget was the only item on the agenda, but other issues were also discussed that night and Lisa was asked to cut short her presentation.

Our proposed budget is 3.25% over last year and continues to go forward in the approval process. The budget includes replacing kayaks and staff raises of roughly \$1.50.

- b. Lisa has already reached out to former seasonal staff to inform them that she is the new director and that she is putting in for raises. Michael suggested that it would be good publicity to include this information in a press release, if the budget and raises do receive formal approval. Lisa clarified that Lauren, Linda Paris and Gloria Schultz were already at the high end of their appropriate pay ranges, so there will be no change to their rates. Lisa stated that we were paying low, but now we will be competitive with the rates neighboring towns pay their seasonal staff. Lisa will ask Finance Director Leo Smith for copies of the Recreation budget, as it stands now.
- c. Dump truck: We had initially planned to spend \$65,000 on a replacement dump truck. The large, black Buildings and Grounds truck in our parking lot is only four or five years old, has 43,000 miles and has a 3/4 -ton bed. DPW will give it a thorough work up and we may spend \$10 – 11,000 to bring it up to snuff, but then we will be getting that truck. DPW will allow us to use their one-ton when it is occasionally needed.
- d. Lisa clarified that the 3.25% budget increase does not rely on taking money from the Revolving Fund, which had been previously discussed as one option for balancing the budget. Because addressing the PCC building envelope is likely to be expensive, Lisa is happy to leave the Revolving Fund as is, for now. Michael stated that it is good to know we can use the Revolving Fund if we need to, but it is also good that we do not need to do that right now. He spoke to Seth McLean, Assistant Public Works Director, who seems to understand we are a department that is facilities driven. Lisa remarked that General Fund monies cannot be used for something other than their originally approved use.

III. Approval of Minutes: Michael motioned to approve the January 8<sup>th</sup> minutes and Andrew B. seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

IV. Regular Agenda Items (continued):

- A. Bleacher Lawsuit update: Lisa remarked that we are gathering related documents, as requested by the plaintiff's counsel.
- B. Program Coordinator position: Lisa has received approximately 50 applications thus far and the deadline is not until Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>. She thinks more than one person should review the applications and said that Selectman Bill Taylor has offered to help. Brief conversation ensued about how to whittle down the list. Michael urged Lisa not to overthink the initial resume review phase and agreed to be available by phone or email for a half-hour or hour conversation.
- C. Senior Program Report was accepted as written.

V. Action Items:

- A. Strategic Plan- Kate Coon was not present to offer any updates.
- B. Peterborough Community Center (PCC) lighting- Bill Taylor was going to report back, after getting an update from Town Administrator Rodney Bartlett. Michael reported that Bill had been dealing with the budget all day and has gone home.
- C. Extra duties relegated to the PRD- Lisa said this is an ongoing issue.
- D. SAU invoice for field usage- Lisa does not know if this was paid or not. She noted that the Town budget process is taking precedence over everything else right now.
- E. Town taking over PCC operations- Lisa stated that we did talk about this, but it will not happen this fall.
- F. Capital reserve fund for maintenance- Lisa noted that there is agreement that this can be done, but it will not happen this year.

- G. Cunningham Pond cell phone signage and panic buttons at the pool and pond- Both Action Items will be addressed in the spring.
  - H. Investigating portable lighting for the PCC- Andrew B. explained that he experimented with a temporary option of pointing lights at the walls, but it made no discernable difference and he feels there is nothing more to be done. This Action Item is now closed.
  - I. Decision to cease chartering the Scouting units- Lisa has asked Nicole for an explanation of the reasoning behind the decision, but she has not received anything yet.
- VI. Financial Side of Summer Programs Registration:
- A. Lauren has identified two aspects to preventing family account balances carrying over beyond the end of the summer programs. First, she is monitoring new program registrations each week and is reaching out to families with a balance over \$75 to establish a written payment contract. Second, she is organizing the contracts to make it easier to check if families are keeping to their agreed upon payment schedules.
  - B. Andrew B. questioned if a summer raffle could be established, with the prize being a credit toward summer balances. There was also discussion on establishing an early paid-in-full discount. Because many families have already signed up and paid for this year, Lisa suggested we revisit these ideas for summer 2021 programs. Andy D. thanked the PRD for efforts to prevent the accrual of overdue balances.
- VII. New Agenda Topics:
- A. Boy Scouts:
    - a. Lisa explained that on January 17<sup>th</sup>, ConVal Facilities Director Tim Grossi sent an email stating that the Boy Scouts have made their third strike by abusing a South Meadow School (SMS) classroom. Two Scouts had erased part of a teacher's inspirational quote on the whiteboard, changing its meaning, and had also drawn an inappropriate picture. Despite heartfelt letters of apology from the Scoutmaster and the two culprits, Tim said the troop may no longer meet at SMS. As their current charter organization, Lisa explained that the Recreation Department has to ensure they have meeting space. She has offered to move pickleball on Thursday nights if the Scouts need to meet at the PCC, though they would still need to pay the standard rental fee. Lauren (the troop's unit commissioner) and Andy D. (the troop's charter organization representative) both said they have not heard any updates on the troop's meeting location plans.
    - b. Andrew B. questioned whether we should tell the troop that scouts' behavior may jeopardize our relationship and there is no guarantee the PRD will continue to charter them throughout the rest of the year. All four Scouting units which the PRD currently charters are looking for new meeting space and a new charter partner. When Andy D. remarked that one of the issues the troop is facing is storage, Lisa added that she has told the pack and troop they must empty their storage area at the Henderson building (storage building at Adams Park) by March 9<sup>th</sup>. Andy D. asserted that the Scouts have done a lot of good things for the Town over many years, through regular community service and many Eagle Scout projects.
  - B. Aquatic Assessment Project at Cunningham Pond: Referencing last month's minutes, Andrew B. requested creating an **Action Item to assess the impact of human usage on the aquatic life at Cunningham Pond**. Andrew B. will check in with the current Office of Community Development Director, Pete Throop, who will be taking on a full-time role with the Monadnock Conservancy in early April. Andrew B. would also like to approach ConVal High School to engage students in the project.
  - C. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU):

- a. Andy D. explained that a previous PRC chair had developed an MOU with the Town. He questioned whether the current PRC would like to have an MOU with the Town to serve as a method of communication and to clarify the PRC's authority. It was questioned whether the PRC is a symbolic committee, and there was interest in specifying their responsibilities in clear terms. Rob asked if we have a mission statement. Andy D. replied that we cooperate with the Recreation Department and speak for the residents of the Town, conveying residents' wishes and being their voice to the PRD. Adding that the PRC is an advisory group, Andy D. stated that he thinks the Committee's role should not be decided for us, but we should decide for ourselves. Andrew B. stated that it seems our role is primarily to support the director. Andy D. remarked that ultimately, we report to the townspeople who elect us.
  - b. When questioned who would vote on an MOU, Andy D. replied that he thinks the Town would have to vote on it. There was consensus that the Committee does not want to waste their time. Lisa expressed her appreciation that Michael was able to review the budget with her and offer feedback. Andrew B. remarked that in the future, when he has time to become more active, he would be interested in offering to submit press releases and focus on public relations and storytelling. Michael noted that we are apparently the only legacy elected recreation board in the state, and that other towns appoint their board members.
  - c. Andy D. shared two pages from the Town of Peterborough Volunteer Handbook (which Andrew B. read aloud), which list the purpose and charge of the Recreation Committee. Lauren will copy these pages for the PRC members tonight.
  - d. Andy D. noted that, as the PRC Chair, he used to sit in with the Town Administrator for the Recreation Director's annual review. This has not happened for the past couple of years. He stated that if we don't know where we are going, we'll never get there. Michael suggested we consult Lisa on what would be helpful to her, and that we can be more strategic in what we do and leave things better. Michael proposed that **developing an MOU defining the PRC's responsibilities should be part of the strategic plan.** (This is being added to the Action Item of the Strategic Planning Process.)
  - e. Conversation ensued about how townspeople know they can bring concerns to PRC members, and whether or not the public realizes they can attend PRC meetings. There was consensus that **after the new Program Coordinator is hired, we should hold a public event like a barbecue where people can meet the Recreation Director, Program Coordinator, and the PRC.** A date will be set at the March PRC meeting, with the intention of holding this event before Memorial Day. Noting that requests for PRC members to attend or participate in Recreation activities seems to come piecemeal throughout the year, Rob asked if **Lisa could create a calendar of annual issues and responsibilities when she needs PRC assistance.**
- D. Lacrosse Referee Clinic: Following up on an item from last month's agenda, the PRD suggested to our lacrosse coordinator, Terry McNamara, that he offer Peterborough as a location for lacrosse referee training. Lisa will follow up with Terry to see if there was any interest.

VIII. Adjournment: Andy D. motioned to adjourn the meeting and Michael seconded. With unanimous approval, the meeting adjourned at 8:17pm. The next PRC meeting will be Wednesday March 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
 Lauren Martin  
 February 12, 2020