

Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC) Meeting
Roland "Beaver" Jutras Recreation Building
Minutes of June 5, 2019
Approved

Attendees: Andrew Dunbar, Chair; Kate Coon, Vice-Chair; Ryan Griffiths, Secretary;
Andrew Brescia, Michael Strand,
Jeffrey M. King, Recreation Director; Lisa Koziell-Betz, Program Coordinator;
Bill Taylor, Peterborough Selectman;
Peterborough resident Tim Selby;
and Lauren Martin, Administrative Assistant and Minute Taker

- I. Call to Order: Andy D. called the meeting to order at 6:37p.m.
- II. Approval of Minutes: A brief discussion was held on whether minutes can be approved when a quorum of members who attended that meeting are not present. When this possibility was affirmed by Selectman Bill Taylor, Kate motioned to approve the April 3rd minutes as written. Ryan asked for clarification on the Boy Scout troop trailers, which Jeff affirmed will be fully maintained by Troop 8 without expense to the Town. Andy then motioned to approve the minutes as written. Michael seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.
- III. Pump Track Discussion:
 - A. Jeff introduced Peterborough resident Tim Selby, who contacted Jeff regarding the possibility of installing a pump track at Adams Park. Jeff described how he and Amherst Recreation Director Craig Fraley had done a seminar on this topic a couple of years ago. Amherst now has a pump track. Jeff explained that we used to have dirt piles by the old "Morris Field" (a former t-ball field near Picard) on which youth used to ride bikes. Referencing the video link he had shared with the electronic agenda packets, Jeff explained that a pump track is basically a dirt BMX course with enough hills so that momentum and gravity take you around with little pedaling.
 - B. Tim described that the former ice rink space behind the tennis courts is where he and Jeff have been discussing placing a pump track. The area is roughly 50 X 100 feet and all or most of it could be used. The track would be made from heavy clay-based loam that is firmly packed, and upon which berms and rollers would be built. There is probably enough space for tabletop jumps, but Tim pointed out that the key will be to keep everything small with no more than a one or two feet gain or loss across the length of the track. Tim feels mountain bikers and BMX bikers would use this extensively. Jeff had asked Tim to begin some initial investigation. The Mathewson Company suggested removing the current pavement in that area to allow for better drainage, but Tim believes digging a center trench and installing decent sized drains that angle all the water to a couple of primary drains would be sufficient. One hundred cubic yards would allow for a 5" base and plenty of material to shape the track. Kate asked if there was a concern about water draining off the entire hillside. Jeff described that the rink is at the base of an old sledding hill that includes a low spot with a berm that sheds water to the west. The proposed track would have a 1.5 to 2% grade from east to west. The design Tim is proposing has an outer track with pumps and berms and two inner tracks (one on the east and one on the west) that each fill half of the total area. He noted that it will be important to place catch drains that will funnel water and shoot it out the west side. Jeff remarked that we currently have similar drainage with a perforated pipe under the tennis courts. If we do not put in drains, we will have to look at grading the course. Andrew B. asked about wear and tear on the course. Tim responded that

the surface is dirt, so it needs to be sprinkled with water every so often and not much else. Jeff noted that in Amherst they occasionally use their infield groomer, so we could do the same. It was remarked that perhaps an occasional event could be scheduled for using remote control cars on the track. For erosion reasons, we might want to plant grass. Ryan asked if we can find out what Amherst Recreation's maintenance costs are for their pump track. Tim responded that other places he has been to say maintenance is practically nonexistent if the track has been installed well with a well packed surface and proper water drainage. Amherst hired a professional company to design their track, but Craig recommends against spending big money like they did to hire someone for the design. Tim has discussed the site design with Bob Taylor of Taylor Land Services. Mathewson Companies is offering \$8 per cubic yard delivered for the loam with strong clay concentration that is ideal for this type of track. They would honor that price for the life of the track, if we were to need more material in the future. Discussion ensued about how the material can be delivered without compromising the pool. Jeff proposed having trucks drive around the back of the tennis bang board. Jeff expects that long term maintenance will be limited to trimming and occasional grooming with our infield groomer. Andrew B. asked if we can bring the users in to the process by asking students to submit different designs. Jeff responded enthusiastically that we used that process when designing the skate park and can absolutely do this again. For research, Jeff had taken students to visit three different types of skate parks over a few months, but he pointed out that there are not a lot of these pump tracks in the area. Michael suggested that high school students might get involved by measuring what goes into figuring out the berms. He questioned where the public interest for this came from and if there would be a high use for this track. Tim replied that there are 30 – 40 kids in the families with which he regularly goes mountain biking, adding that mountain biking is one of the fastest growing sports in the country. He remarked that we are seeing the development of trail systems and this is a logical piece of that. Jeff agreed that this is an up and coming thing and would be quite an attraction. He had planned to bring this idea to the PRC anyway, but then Tim approached him and they began gathering information. Jeff noted that the poles for lights are still there so it would be possible to re-establish lighting there, if there was a demand for that. Tim added that we could create an overall bike park in the future, with switchbacks up the hill behind the bathhouse.

- C. Jeff described how a pump track would be the perfect project for using Isabelle Miller Fund monies, since it involves creating a new facility and a new program opportunity that does not currently exist. Jeff had told Tim in their initial discussion that he thought the PRC would be happy if we could create the track for \$5,000 or less. Tim remarked that if the Isabelle Miller Fund covered \$5,000, he thinks he could raise an additional \$2,000 - \$3,000 through interested parties, like the Greenfield Trails Association, who are heavily involved with mountain biking. Tim felt that lighting would not be necessary in the beginning but might be nice in the fall. Jeff affirmed that lighting is something the Miller Fund could cover later. Those expenditures come from Jeff's recommendation and the PRC's approval, and there is no further approval process required since we gross-budget Miller fund money every year. Jeff noted that we still have to do the PCC gym floor and other work at the PCC. Andrew B. questioned the Town's liability and if we needed to get our insurance company involved. Jeff said that Amherst is insured by the same company Peterborough uses and he's not aware of any additional impact on the Town of Amherst's insurance. Patrons would bike at their own risk. We can recommend using helmets and pads, but we cannot require them or we would then take on liability. Jeff commented that the Town of Peterborough's insurance covers the PRD.
- D. Stating that he has never visited a pump track before, Andy D. suggested tabling the discussion at least until the next meeting so we could get more definite costs, investigate the maintenance implications, and visit the Amherst track. Jeff pointed out that we would like to take advantage

of the weather to develop the track this summer. Michael suggested setting a hard deadline so we do not put it off too long, and Ryan asked that we create an **Action Item to narrow down the pump track costs and design for the next meeting**. Ryan asked about the current status of the PRD maintenance crew, and Jeff responded that while the Public Works grounds crew continues to be a separate group, they are working cooperatively with the PRD maintenance workers. We helped them get the local cemeteries cleaned up for Memorial Day and they helped us at Cunningham Pond. Jeff reiterated, however, that from Craig's and Tim's experience, the pump track will have very limited maintenance needs. Ryan asked if we could use some dirt that is free from around town, and Bill remarked that everything the Highway Department ditches off the sides of roads is free. Tim summarized that we should look into having the DPW help minimize costs, and to keep in mind that although we may see other tracks with six-foot-tall berms, he is proposing small berms. Jeff noted that the key is to find balance so that we do not overthink the process so much that we never do it. When it was suggested that someone serve as the lead person for doing research, Jeff said that he can work with Tim to get as much as possible done by the next PRC meeting. Andrew B. offered to contact ConVal to see if students might participate in the design. Tim suggested that a section might be saved for students to design in the fall or as a summer project, and said he knows many mountain biking teens who are not part of ConVal but whom he is sure would be pleased to participate in the track design. Kate acknowledged that this effort ties in beautifully with the strategic plan and might be a great way for us to develop stronger contacts. Andy D. moved to accept Jeff as the lead on the project while he delegates tasks as needed to the PRC and PRD staff, and to come to the next meeting with a proposal including all the information we need to make a decision. Kate seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously. Lisa proposed that the PRC give Jeff their questions by Friday June 14th, and Jeff affirmed that he will base his tasks off the PRC's questions.

- IV. The Scoutmaster's Troop 8 Report and Senior Program Report were accepted as written.
- V. Reorganization of Committee:
 - A. Andy D. welcomed new PRC members Andrew B. and Michael, and thanked the entire committee for serving Our Town.
 - B. After opening the floor for nominations, Michael nominated Andy D. for Chair. Kate seconded the nomination and it was approved unanimously.
 - C. Kate nominated Ryan for Vice-Chair, which Michael seconded. Ryan nominated Kate for Vice-Chair, which Andrew B. seconded. With three votes, Kate was elected as Vice-Chair.
 - D. After reviewing the responsibilities of the PRC Secretary to conduct written correspondence on behalf of the PRC and to lead the committee in the absence of the Chair and Vice-Chair, Andy D. nominated Ryan. Michael seconded the nomination and Ryan was elected unanimously.
 - E. Andy D. provided background information on the PRD, which began as a volunteer effort in the 1930's. He explained that the PRC's position is to assist and support the PRD staff and department, and to bring input from residents to the PRD. Andy D. urged committee members who are contacted by a member of the public to acknowledge them quickly and then let the PRC know. Andy D. stated that he would like his email address published on PRD brochures so that he can take questions and/or criticisms.
- VI. Strategic Planning Report:
 - A. Kate offered some history, remarking that the Town had been hoping for awhile that we would embark on the strategic planning process. In February of 2018, Deputy Town Administrator Nicole MacStay presented "Strategic Planning 101" to the PRC. Kate has a personal interest in strategic planning and offered to take the lead, meeting periodically with Nicole to fill her in on

our status. She explained that we knew it would take one to one-and-a-half years to complete, and that there is no tight timeline by which we must complete the process.

- B. We have done the lion's share of the data gathering so far. Kate began by leading separate "SWOT" sessions to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats with the PRC, PRD regular staff and PRD seasonal staff. Franklin Pierce University student Andrew Schadt approached us looking for real life experience with strategic planning. He served as a paid intern looking at all the PRD facilities and properties, which had not previously been pulled together and mapped.
- C. The big effort that we just completed was the survey to the whole Town. Residents had been asked to offer input in 2000 or 2001 as part of the development of the Town's master plan. In 2011, 622 residents were again polled and approximately 100 responded. We were more ambitious this time, trying to get the survey out to everybody. We mailed over 2,000 postcards with the address for the online link to the survey and a QR code to everyone in the PRD database. This includes people whose only apparent association with the PRD has been to pick up Cunningham Pond stickers. The survey link was pushed on the Town website, the PRD website, and was promoted in the PRD summer brochure and the Monadnock *Ledger-Transcript*. Survey postcards were made available at the River Center and were sent home with every student at Peterborough Elementary School. We had postcards and paper surveys at the May 14th Town elections, and seniors participating in programs at the Peterborough Community Center (PCC) were offered paper surveys. We received 289 responses, which is almost triple the number of responses from eight years ago.
- D. The final step will be to take all this information and use it to create a strategic plan. Andrew Schadt will begin working on data analysis, looking for trends and themes. Some groups use focus groups as part of this step, but we have not discussed whether we will do that. Approximately forty people indicated on the survey that they would like to be contacted about additional opportunities to be involved in the strategic planning process. It was suggested that focus groups might be based on where people are, such as at the playground or pond, or they might come out of the data. Ryan remarked that we should digest the information before deciding on focus groups. Kate noted that we can share the password to Survey Monkey, which organizes data into charts, so the PRC can begin to see what is in there. Kate will identify themes and sub-themes and will link them to the SWOT analysis. Ryan proposed that discussing this data should be the single aim of an entire meeting, and Kate responded that it is often recommended that this final step be held in a day-long retreat. Kate offered to suggest a structure for how we look at the data. She identified an **Action Item for July that everyone will read the survey results and make responses based on the guiding cover sheet she will provide.**

VII. Director's Report:

A. Monthly Financial Report:

- a. Noting that the new budget begins July 1st, Jeff called attention to handouts on the Expenditure Status Report and Revenue Status Report. The look of these sheets will probably change due to the Town's upcoming move to new financial software. The Town's software was very outdated and had been a problem for years. We will be getting trained on the new system next week and all the coding will change. The Revolving Fund Report will look very different because the new system will handle codes differently.
- b. Budgetarily, Jeff stated that we are doing really well expense-wise. We are almost at 100% revenue-wise, largely because of the sale of non-resident pond stickers. This year, stickers have been picked up more slowly than usual due to all the spring rain and cold temperatures. Jeff remarked that we still have end of year journal entries to complete and

supplies to buy. We have been under budget every year for the last sixteen years. One area of revenue that has not quite gotten to where we would like it is pool revenue. Much of this is weather dependent. We thought we would sell more season passes and have fewer walk-ins, but it has proven to be the opposite situation. We do really well with kayak and stand up paddleboard rentals.

- B. Personnel: Jeff noted that we have hired 44 people for the summer. The list of staff and their hometowns was included in the agenda packet. The ConVal graduation is affecting us in a big way and has caused us to change our training schedule.
- C. Facilities:
 - a. Jeff shared that the weather made this an extremely difficult spring and seems to have been the worst in recent memory. Every recreation director across the state has been pulling their hair out, particularly about spring sports. This weekend is the New Hampshire Youth Lacrosse Association (NHLYA) festival at Souhegan High School for all youth lacrosse teams in the state. Jeff stated that we are trying to grow our referee corps and he was extremely psyched that three local kids trained this year to become referees. Conversation ensued about whether our hosting a referee training might attract more individuals in the area to become refs, but Jeff declared that folks from the seacoast, Lakes Region, Manchester, Concord and Nashua do not want to come out here. Referee training is generally done through NHLYA and through U.S. Lacrosse.
 - b. There is plumbing we have to do in the bathhouse. Because PRD Maintenance II worker Ray Eaton is not a plumber, and because we have so many water-related things in the bathhouse and pool, Jeff feels we need to budget for plumbing in the future.
 - c. The tennis courts have more cracks. A quote from Advantage Tennis is included in the agenda packet. Jeff explained that cracks are becoming a more frequent problem because of the extreme weather we have been having. We have four tennis courts with lines also marking them as eight pickleball courts. They have spider cracks which grew worse this winter. Jeff stated that if we do not stay on top of this, it would cost half a million dollars to do new tennis courts. When questioned whether we requested any other quotes, Jeff explained that a few years ago he called three vendors about resurfacing the tennis courts. Advantage Tennis worked well with us and they know our courts, so Jeff contacted them again. They will just work on specific cracks. A couple of years ago they did a more major fix which included a fabric surface and new paint.
 - d. The Summer Teen Challenge staff have cleaned and organized the camping room in our storage shed at Adams Park.
 - e. Last weekend the park was mobbed due to the beautiful weather and the fifth annual Swing Into Spring adult softball tournament, which had an unprecedented 13 teams participating. It was also the “Packoree” and crossover for the Cub Scout pack, bringing over 100 people to Cunningham Pond. Approximately 40 Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts camped overnight.
 - f. Jeff announced that the new water fountains have been installed at Adams Playground and at the tennis courts and we have already received positive feedback from the public.
 - g. Adams Pool:
 - i. Jeff described that the filter media for the pool need to be replaced every five to ten years. He did not anticipate this would be so expensive at \$10,000. The cost of caulking was as expected, but the painting fee was high because of deferred maintenance. Ryan asked if we could set up a capital reserve fund for pool maintenance. Jeff responded that he suggested this idea the year after the pool renovation, but the Select Board wanted to pay off the bond first. Jeff remarked that

there is nothing cheap about the pool. Guarino's Pool Service came today and discovered a broken pump and leaks that will probably cost \$3,000 to be repaired.

- ii. Ryan asked that since we have been under budget every year, could we put that extra money into maintenance instead of back into the Town's general fund? He noted that when we defer these important maintenance costs as they occur and then have bigger maintenance costs because the issues were deferred, we take a hit. Michael agreed, referencing the concept Bill had shared publicly earlier this year that a percentage of dollars saved might go into a Recreation maintenance fund as a reward for doing a good job with our budget. Bill explained that most departments come in under budget and all that money goes into the Town's general fund to offset the tax rate for the following year. We would need a town-wide vote to see if a percentage of the unused budget could go back to the department. The Recreation Department portion of the Town budget is small. Ryan asked Jeff what about the cost incurred because we deferred pool maintenance, to which Jeff responded that \$35,000 will be included in the FY2020 budget for painting the pool. Bill remarked that this is a total town-wide issue that is coming to light right now. Jeff stated that painting the pool should be planned every five years. We delayed, however, so this fall when the job is done it will be seven years. We might be able to paint the pool two or three times before sandblasting if we stay on top of this schedule. The cost to paint is roughly \$7,000 versus \$40,000 to sandblast before painting the pool. Bill remarked that the Town and townspeople are learning a hard lesson that kicking the can down the road is not saving money. When asked how we can stop this from happening and protect ourselves, Jeff responded that in the budget process this year we gave the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Committee a tour of the pool for the first time. It was very helpful to be able to educate the CIP Committee by showing them what we have and what we do. They walked into the pool and filter room to actually see them. Jeff noted that we had a capital reserve fund for the pool a long time ago - around the time he arrived at the PRD - but the Town had not put any money into it so it was eliminated. Bill pointed out that what matters now is how we go forward. We now have historical data on pool maintenance costs, so we can budget the maintenance needs of the pool.

VIII. Program Report:

- A. Lisa's written report was accepted, but she added that we are seeing a huge uptick on registrations for summer programs. Swimming lessons are starting to fill. Both sessions of Summer Teen Challenge are full with waiting lists, which has never happened before.
- B. Jeff and Lisa shared the news that Crotched Mountain is closing their pool at the end of June and will then hold discussions about its future. Crotched was the primary lifeguard training resource for this area. We are good for this year but will have to guide our lifeguards to explore new opportunities for training and recertifying next year. They might need to go to indoor pools in Milford or Keene. Lisa commented that this was the toughest year for hiring lifeguards in many years. Jeff added that we are also going to have to look at what this means budgetarily. We typically pay our lifeguards significantly higher than other towns, but now some towns are paying more than us. We will have to pay competitively next year.

- IX. Other: Andrew B. asked if there are plans to refinish the playing surface inside the PCC. Jeff responded affirmatively, referencing the Action Items regarding PCC lighting, heating and cooling. He stated that we hope to do the project in late summer or early fall. We cannot simply resurface the floor because humidity causes it to expand and contract. We also have to install a system for air conditioning and dehumidification. The project will include taking up the entire

floor, tightening it, sanding it down to the bare wood, and repainting for a high school sized basketball court, pickleball courts, and a volleyball court. We have budgeted \$100K of Isabelle Miller Fund monies for the project.

- X. Other:
 - A. Additional reports in the agenda packet were accepted as written.
 - B. Rather than meeting on July 3rd, which would be the next regularly scheduled meeting, there was consensus to postpone the July meeting to Wednesday July 10th.

- XI. Action Items:
 - A. Regarding extra duties relegated to the PRD by Town Administration, Jeff called attention to the Special Event Policy and Application that was included with his Director's Report. He explained that the Town has asked us to coordinate various special events in Town. He encouraged the PRC to look through the documents, stating that he is a little concerned about what we are getting into. Special events would include Children & the Arts Day, the Memorial Day parade, and The Thing in the Spring. Ryan asked if we have the manpower to do this and questioned who comprises the Special Events Committee. Lisa responded that it will be up to Jeff to determine the members of the committee, which will include representatives from the fire department, police department, and public works. Jeff added that many towns have Recreation oversee special events, but he is not sure if we have the staff for this. **An Action Item was identified for the PRC to read these documents and comment on them for the next PRC meeting.**
 - B. Ryan remarked that some Action Items have been kicked down the line. In February, we talked about discussing asking the Town to fund PCC operations. Jeff explained to the new members that the PCC has to pay for itself through the Recreation Revolving Fund. Ryan said we need to put this on the agenda and actually discuss it. Jeff said we could address this in the fall when we begin the budget process, if we put a line item in the tax-supported budget for the PCC. Ryan suggested we first have a discussion to see if this is what we want to do. Jeff feels like the public has the impression that we nickel and dime everyone who uses the building. Ryan agreed that people feel they are being double taxed. **Ryan asked to have the discussion on the funding of PCC operations become an agenda item for the July meeting.**

- XII. Adjournment: Andy D. motioned to adjourn the meeting and Kate seconded. With unanimous approval, the meeting adjourned at 8:42pm.

The next PRC meeting is scheduled for 6:30pm on July 10, 2019.

Respectfully submitted,
Lauren Martin
June 11, 2019

Attachment: Action Items List 6/11/19