

Peterborough Recreation Committee (PRC) Meeting  
Pavilion at Adams Park  
Minutes of September 2, 2020  
Approved

Attendees: Kate Coon, Chair; Rob Fox, Vice Chair; Andrew Brescia; Brendan Bohl;  
Residents Roxanne Loudin, Michelle Rourke and Tina Kriebel;  
Lisa Koziell-Betz, Recreation Director; John Kohlmorgen, Program Coordinator;  
and Lauren Martin, Administrative Assistant and Minute Taker

- I. Call to Order: Kate called the meeting to order at 6:33p.m.
- II. Approval of Minutes: Brendan motioned to approve the August meeting minutes. Rob seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.
- III. Director's Report:
  - A. Adams Playground:
    - a. Because Tina Kriebel had come expressly for the purpose of discussing the possibility of reopening Adams Playground, Kate asked that Lisa address this first. Lisa explained that we closed the playground at the end of March. The original Stay At Home and then the Safer At Home guidelines for Outdoor Attractions required cleaning surfaces every two hours and screening participants with the five or six COVID-19 risk questions. Lisa stated that we did not have the necessary staff or cleaning materials to comply. She asked Town Administration about the possibility of posting a "play at your own risk" sign, but that idea was not approved.
    - b. On August 27<sup>th</sup>, the state guidelines changed. Because some were confusing, Lisa checked the CDC guidelines, which now recommend "normal routine cleaning" without requiring disinfection. On Monday, Lisa proposed reopening the playground to Town Administration. At first, she had considered offering restricted hours, but now she suspects that funneling all interested families into reduced hours might create overcrowding. Signs would be posted that the facility is not sanitized, though we could probably clean it once a day. Lisa stated that it is our goal to reopen after Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>. John distributed printed copies of the current CDC guidelines about the re-opening and care of playgrounds, which Kate then read aloud.
    - c. After furnishing a printed copy for the official record, Tina Kriebel read aloud a letter she and her pediatrician husband, Dr. Greg Kriebel, had submitted to Kate and Lisa via email on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>. The letter listed reasons they support the immediate opening of the playground. Tina added that a sign could be posted stating the facility capacity. A brief discussion ensued about area towns whose playgrounds have been open, which many Peterborough residents apparently visit. Lisa noted that some officials may feel that it is not mandatory for their towns to follow "guidelines."
    - d. Lisa explained that because the state guidelines now defer to the CDC guidelines, we can now consider this change to reopen the playground. When resident Michelle Rourke asked if there have been specific guidelines for playgrounds, Lisa affirmed that the Safer At Home guidelines for Outdoor Attractions specifically state that outdoor playgrounds are included in that category. Lisa affirmed her intention to open the playground, possibly as early as this weekend. We will have to post signs, but we can make our own and laminate them. It was decided that hand sanitizer should be set up at each entrance. Lisa explained that while we still screen employees for COVID, the recommendation to screen playground patrons has now been eliminated.

- B. Adams Pool: Lisa remarked that the sandblasting and painting was finished in late July and the pool looks great. The pool needs to be filled with water to address the remaining filter issues, so that will have to wait until the spring.
- C. Cunningham Pond:
  - a. Despite initial complaints about the new reservation system for 2020, Lisa stated that most people appreciated that we found a way to keep the pond safe and limit traffic. Every day we have turned away people with out of state plates, and we have seen people driving by slowly with their GPS systems, clearly looking for a place to swim. Residents are now upset that the gates will be closed completely after Labor Day, but we cannot staff the pond and it would get overcrowded if gates were left open.
  - b. One family sent a note thanking us for providing safe access to the pond, enclosing \$100 for our scholarship fund. Lisa extended a huge thank you to the PRC members and four residents who volunteered, who helped at the gate and made this summer doable.
  - c. The septic system was pumped, and a new roof was installed on the cottage. John has submitted water samples three times for the state test for bacteria, such as e coli. The acceptable standard is a level below 88. The water at our boat ramp tested at 11, and the level at the beaches was one.
  - d. Lisa shared statistics on this summer's pond usage: 2,325 reservations were made; households utilized the take-your-chances drive in opportunities at the end of each reservation time slot 468 times; and households walked in or arrived on bicycles 277 times.
- D. Pump Track: The Friends of the Peterborough Bike Park will fundraise again to add material that will make the piles higher. They would also like to build a system of switchbacks on the old sledding hill behind the pump track, for advanced riders.
- E. Two new basketball hoops valued at \$200 apiece were given to us by an anonymous donor. Lisa said they were installed immediately and have been getting lots of use and enjoyment.
- F. Peterborough Community Center (PCC): Lisa stated that town buildings are still primarily closed, and the PCC is not taxpayer supported. Dublin Christian Academy has used the PCC gym for many years in the fall for their volleyball program. We agreed to let them rent it again this fall because their use generates significant revenue. They will take care of cleaning for their own group and will open all the doors while they are there, to allow fresh air to circulate. Whenever other rentals are requested, if we can plan enough time to clean before and after we will try to accommodate them. The Peterborough Garden Club will rent the PCC for their fall meetings. At the end of September/early October, Lisa will send another proposal to Town Administration for PCC use in November and December.
- G. Fall Programs: John joined Lisa in listing fall program opportunities, noting that everything is being planned to take place outside.
  - a. The Senior Program has begun meeting outdoors on the PCC lawn, with participants bringing their own chairs. Seniors have resumed Bingo, Kraft Korner and Senior Lunch outside.
  - b. John will be teaching a Staying Home Alone safety class for kids from eight to eleven. A Toddler Dance class will be held on Ecco field. John has set up online classes where kids can learn magic and how to make balloon animals at any time they choose.
  - c. For adults, John will be leading an Outdoor Walking Program with local hikes, and an Introduction to Kayaking and Stand Up Paddleboarding class at Cunningham Pond. Members of Trout Unlimited will be teaching an Introduction to Fly Casting class for those interested in fly fishing. Another class will teach a low stress method for adults who would like to learn how to ride a bike themselves or learn how to teach children to ride.
  - d. Andrew suggested setting up a bocce tournament at the bocce court at the PCC.

- H. Dog Park: Lisa remarked that she and John would like to assemble a committee to begin discussing the development of a dog park. They had each submitted proposals as part of the interview process for the Recreation Director position. At that time, the only available Town land seemed to be Evans Flats, though that is now apparently being considered for a housing development. There is land on Burke Road, which Lisa feels is too far out of town to be desirable for this purpose, but the little-known camping area at Cunningham Pond might be worth exploring. She will set up some Zoom meetings to start the planning process. There was agreement that with no other dog park within 45 minutes, there is a definite need for this here. Lisa added that a proposal will have to be approved by town vote, but we can begin the process. She will post on Facebook that we are looking for people interested in serving on this planning group. Lisa and John will check land availability in town and will draw up basic designs. The group can tour the land being considered, and the plan would be presented to Town Administration and ultimately to the voters. Roxanne Loudin suggested talking about space to the Monadnock Conservancy and the couple who bought Cranberry Meadows Farm. Kate noted that approximately two years ago, townspeople brought this request for a dog park to the PRC and PRD.
- I. Cunningham Pond:
- a. When Kate opened the floor to questions and comments, Tina Kriebel returned conversation to Cunningham Pond. Because it has been so well used this summer, she asked if it could remain open to give people an outdoor recreation opportunity. Lisa stated that we do not have staff to supervise the gate, and that after posting a request on Facebook and the Town Dispatch, only four residents volunteered to help. Recognizing that only the PRC members had seen Lisa's written Director's Report, Lisa read aloud section III a., which explained why we suspect the pond would quickly become overcrowded from people beyond our local area. Lisa mentioned that there are four different populations to consider for pond use (dog owners, long distance swimmers, boaters and beach goers), and no matter which time we might offer a limited opportunity, we would be excluding some of the interested groups. Tina responded that we do not have a lot of things people can do during the pandemic and since the pond is a tax supported resource and is well utilized, could we try to consider this further?
  - b. Andrew questioned if we could meet in the middle and try to staff the pond just on weekends. Agreeing that it might not have to be an "all or nothing" proposition, conversation began exploring how to offer limited availability. Rob acknowledged that there are clearly a lot of logistics to consider, and that he has noticed the number of people at the pond in the past couple of weeks has significantly dwindled. If we offer limited hours, he questioned if that might not result in funneling a lot of people into a smaller window.
  - c. It was discussed whether to continue with reservations or allow first come, first served entry with a cap of fifteen cars. John and Lisa explained that the limit of fifteen cars was reached after real data showed that figure seemed to provide the largest reasonable group without overcrowding. Lisa had empowered staff to use logic and common sense to make decisions, such as allowing an occasional extra car to enter if there was only one occupant. Kate questioned if a single person could handle the gate, and Lisa responded that we could choose to cease offering boat rentals. Tina thought the public would appreciate having access to the pond, even if boats were not available and the hours were limited.
  - d. Lisa and Kate agreed that we cannot leave the gates open and unattended. Rob added that folks from other towns might not be as considerate about taking home their own trash. Michelle suggested allowing gate volunteers to be first on the list for the next pond opening. Kate expressed her willingness to volunteer but said she does not want to burden the PRD by keeping the reservation system going. Roxanne remarked that

people might be more willing to volunteer if they knew this might be the only way to keep the pond open. Lisa offered to develop a revamped schedule, and many of those present offered to be part of the solution by volunteering.

- e. Andrew reminded the PRC that, before COVID, they had discussed enlisting help from ConVal students and the Monadnock Conservancy in investigating whether the marine life at Cunningham has been impacted by human usage. Anecdotal evidence was offered, but Andrew asked if this can be explored with a scientific method. Kate affirmed that we could come back to this if it turns into an action item. Andrew stated that he would like to keep this in the lineup.

IV. Filling PRC Vacancy:

- A. Michelle Rourke and Roxanne Loudin both confirmed that they were interested in filling the PRC position vacated by Michael Strand when he moved out of town. Kate invited Michelle to tell us about herself.
- B. Michelle explained that she is fairly new to Peterborough, having moved here last November from Hudson. She was very active in the community in her former town, most notably with twelve years of involvement with youth sports. She served on boards for football and cheer, and she helped start the Hudson lacrosse program. Michelle's involvement included fundraising and lots of interaction with the school board, select board and recreation committee. When Lisa asked if it would make a difference to Michelle that a lot of the youth sports in Peterborough are not run by the PRD, Michelle replied that Hudson was almost exclusively about youth sports and she really likes it that the PRD has more to offer. She started reading PRC meeting minutes before they moved here. She would love to get involved and this is what she knows.
- C. Roxanne had introduced herself at the August PRC meeting and did not care to add anything more.
- D. Kate suggested moving into nonpublic session to discuss the filling of the PRC vacancy. Brendan motioned to enter nonpublic session according to RSA 91-A:3II(a). Rob seconded the motion. With a roll call vote, the committee entered into nonpublic session at 7:35pm.
- E. The committee reconvened public session at 7:57pm.

- V. Adjournment: Kate motioned to adjourn the meeting and Brendan seconded. With unanimous approval, the meeting adjourned at 7:58pm. The next PRC meeting will be Wednesday October 7<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Lauren Martin  
September 8, 2020