



CITY OF DOVER

DOVER RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD - MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: McConnell Center, 61 Locust Street, Dover, NH 03820
Room 220
Meeting Date: Monday, April 13, 2009
Meeting Time: **7:00pm**

DRAFT

CALL TO ORDER: Rich Thorpe called the meeting to order at 7:05PM

ROLL CALL

Present

City Council Liaison: Bob Carrier - Recreation Director: Gary Bannon - Rich Thorpe - Joe Tenuta - Mark Hyson - Pete McKenney - Jerry Newcomb - Jon Towle - Brenda Smith – Suzanne Meadows

Absent - Greg Nesman

APPROVAL OF MINTUES: March 9, 2009 minutes

Changes to March 9 minutes - None

Pete McKenney made a motion to approve the March 9, 2009 minutes. Joe Tenuta seconded the motion, and the motion passed unanimously except for Brenda Smith who abstained because she had missed the last meeting.

CITIZENS' FORUM: A UNH student attended the Recreation Board meeting, no discussion, just to observe and be there for college credit for her Recreation Management course.

REPORTS:

A. Advisory Board:

Joe Tenuta reported that kids were up at Long Hill Park using the park, Joe mentioned it was nice to see someone actually using the park for recreation purposes. Gary mentioned that the biggest challenge to using the park is limited parking spaces and if it's full then parking tends to spill out to the street (Long hill road) which can create some cause for concern because it's a busy street. Joe also pointed out that there is a tree down that needs to be removed. Gary did confirm he was aware of a



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tree down at Long hill that has to be removed. There is also discussion about building a dog park in Long Hill Park with the fees that the Planning Department has that are generated from new home construction.

Suzanne Meadows reported that she was using the converted railroad bed trails (used for cycling) – Suzanne is going to work with the converted railroad bed group – the goal is to connect the trail to trails in Portsmouth and Rochester.

B. Recreation Director, Gary Bannon:

Dog Waste Ordinance – May be moving forward on the City Council Agenda in the near future. Gary sent out the revised ordinance for review. It was modified to keep dogs away from the playing area fields, playgrounds, etc. It does put in some restrictions but it's not as strict as what the Recreation Advisory Board supported which was similar to what Portsmouth has in place where no dogs allowed in the parks at all. The Rec board re-iterated its supports a stricter version than what is being put forward by the city attorney. Shaw's Lane is of particular concern where there are no fences to keep the dogs out. Because it's wide open many people continue to use Shaw's Lane as a place to bring their dogs. At the baseball fields there are fences in place to keep the dogs out. There needs to be some defined restrictions (like no dogs allowed) at parks and fields without fences like Shaw's Lane. The way the ordinance is presently written its going to be difficult to enforce. When it gets on the city council agenda then people, who want a stricter version, need to go to the city council meeting to speak on the issue. Jon offered to follow up with Allan Krans to make it clear that the proposed ordinance is not what the Rec Board recommended initially.

Field Maintenance - Presently trying to sort out which fields will be maintained by the School Department and which fields will be maintained by the Community Services Department. For example, who is responsible to take care of Woodman Baseball Field? There is a discussion going on about preparing those fields for the High School Teams. How much the city should be doing and how much should the school department be doing. Presently, there is no written agreement



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in place. There used to be a verbal agreement that the city would take care of Woodman for the high school teams and that the school department would take care of Bellamy Fields. It's time to revisit with both the School Department and Community Services Department so that fields are being maintained on a regular basis. Basically, identify whose job is it to do the maintenance.

Budget – Gary needs to re-organize the Recreation Department due to budget, presently going to lose one full time supervisor position effective June 30, 2009.

Regarding Gary's position and the article in the paper which indicated that Gary did not agree to a pay cut, it did not mention that Gary did agree to a pay freeze. Two years ago when Gary took on the McConnell Center (on top of what he already does), he saved the city approximately \$40,000 because the city was going to hire someone else to manage the McConnell Center and pay that person about \$40,000 per year. By adding it on to Gary's responsibilities the city didn't have to hire an additional person and saved about \$40,000 per year in salary. When Gary took on the McConnell Center he did not receive any additional pay increase for the additional work. Over a two year period this has saved the city roughly \$80,000 in salary. Gary is presently at the top step of the lowest grade of all the department heads, as a result, he has not been able to have his base pay increased for several years. Gary was not complaining and he stated several times that he was grateful for his job but he simply wanted the recreation advisory board to understand all of the facts from his perspective.

Opening Day Ceremony for Dover Baseball – Saturday April 18th – Speakers include the Mayor, some city councilors, Dover High School Varsity Coach, etc. Rich Thorpe to speak on behalf of the Rec Advisory Board since Gary cannot attend due to helping at the Special Olympics Swim Meet which is at the same time.



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C. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Code of Ethics Development – Submitted a condensed version for review to the Recreation Advisory Board. One suggested change was to remove the words “kid safe” since that refers to a specific background check company and change it to “background check” so that it could be done by any company. There will be a background check required. Change has been made. It will be put on May’s agenda to final review and adoption. Any other suggested changes to be made prior to May’s meeting will be sent to Jerry.

2. Awards Program Review – Board raised \$3,000 to cover the cost of the event. Jon Towle mentioned that the Moose organization is becoming more involved in community events and may be interested in underwriting and hosting the Heyliger Awards event in 2010. The Moose hosted the Dover High Basketball banquet this year and did a good job hosting the event.

D. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Acceptable Use Policy Discussion - regarding Email policy – Gary covered the email policy again and recommended that recreation advisory board members use the city email server but that it’s up to everyone on the board to make their own decision. If any board members have any questions regarding the policy they can discuss with Allan Krans, the city attorney. It was also clarified by Gary that you can respond to Gary via email on anything he puts out to the board, so long as it’s only to Gary and not a blanket email to everyone.

2. The 2009 Fourth of July event to be held on 4th of July at the downtown location (not at the High School as mentioned at the March meeting). The change is due to an ordinance that was recently passed by the city council restricting parking on Durham Road. This ordinance was put in place for safety reasons and without the availability of being able to park on Durham Road it won’t work at the high school. As a result, it was moved back to downtown. Commencing in 2010, it will continue to be downtown but it will possibly end up being a Dover Chamber of Commerce sponsored event. Gary has a person that has come forward and offered to help with the fireworks starting in 2010, she is a Dover resident that has historically worked on the Rochester



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Fireworks with the Rochester Jaycees but since that group has disbanded and won't be doing the fireworks in Rochester any longer she is offering to volunteer to help Gary with Dover's fireworks.

3. Budget - Gary needs to re-organize Recreation Department due to budget, going to lose one full time supervisor position effective June 30, 2009. Hours for seasonal workers may be cut as well. City facilities will be reduced as well; they will be open fewer hours per week. Close earlier during the week and on the weekend. Rates may be increased as well, especially for non residents. For example, \$400 per year to use the pool, \$15 per day to use the pool for non residents. There is a risk that Dover may be pricing non residents out of their facilities with the increased cost, which may result in lower overall revenue due to a drop in non resident memberships. The same thing may happen with Seacoast Swimming whose rates are going to be increased as well. Seacoast Swimming has a history of shopping around for the best deal, Dover is presently competing against UNH and Portsmouth (from a cost basis) for their business.

4. Horne St – A lot of work has been done, dugouts built, a new 10 x 16 concession stand which was donated and built, property has been excavated and prepped for a new batting cage. Trees and limbs from ice storms have been removed. Sheds built for equipment, Slabs have been poured for the dugouts. Presently, they are looking to build a shelter (similar to Hancock Park), picnic tables, and make it a useable park where people can have picnics. Looking to find out what the cost is going to be so they can start soliciting donations to get it built. Initial estimate is around \$5,000. Gary is to get an estimate for the next meeting. The property location is considered to be recreation property, not school property. Rich Thorpe is going to contact Susan Wydra, President of Horne St PTO, to see what their interest level is and what funds may be available. Jerry forwarded contact info to Rich after the meeting.

5. Outdoor Master Plan Update – Gary, Chris Parker, Doug Steele, and Norm Francassa went out and visited several parks to see what the overall condition is and what needs to be done at each park. Part of the visit to the parks was to separate which parks are school property and which are city property. Another part was to start to figure out who is going to do the basic maintenance on the parks and when. Also need to address signage for the parks. For example, there is a nice park



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up at Sullivan Field but there is no signage for it, same at Horne St. Need to address and find a way to get some signage put up. Goal is to get some signs up while keeping the cost down, preferably under \$1,000 per sign. It may be possible that the cost for the signs could be fundraised or donated so that there would be no cost to the city. Mark Hyson asked if there was any update on the MOU about the leagues maintaining the fields. Mark had placed calls to Sharon Lucey but had not received a return call. Presently, the leagues are taking the initiative of doing basic maintenance and special projects on the fields they use, any major changes or improvements require permission from the city.

6. Bellamy Field – believe they have found a short term solution for drainage and field repair improvements. When the work is completed there should be better drainage and a better field. The work is supposed to start in June so that the fields are ready for the football season.

7. Other - Gravel money – none is presently available until the work is done on the Jenny Thompson bath house. St. Mary's paid \$400 for field usage - \$200 went to Softball and \$200 went to Soccer.

E. ADJOURN:

Joe Tenuta made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Brenda Smith seconded the motion.

The motion passed by a unanimous vote and the meeting adjourned at 9:12 pm

Respectfully submitted by, Jerry Newcomb