



RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes
August 11, 2020
7:00 p.m.
Zoom Meeting

Present: Stephen Trimble, Chair; Christopher Hardy, Commissioner; Hema Santhanakrishnan, Commissioner; Joe Will, Commissioner; David Martin, Board of Selectman Liaison; Melissa Rier, Recreation Director.

Also in Attendance: Michael Graffeo, Acton resident; Nathan Kleinschmidt, Acton resident.

Absent: Ed Holcomb, Commissioner.

Opening: Steve Trimble opened the meeting at 7:01 PM.

I. Regular Business

1. Review of Meeting Minutes from May 7, 2020: Minutes from the Recreation Commission's May 7, 2020 meeting were reviewed and approved by a vote of 4-0, as amended.
2. Citizen Concerns:
 - a. There have been a few emails to both the Recreation Department and Health Division about people not complying with the COVID-19 guidelines at NARA Park. NARA staff are continuously reminded to follow the guidelines and enforce them to the park users. There are also multiple signs up throughout the park to help with enforcing the guidelines.
3. Reports:
 - a) Fields and Facilities: All fields and facilities are open under the guidelines put out by the state. Melissa reported that there have been a few Picnic Pavilion rentals, but not nearly as many as the past. Rentals are not the typical revenue generator they have been in previous years. All sport leagues have been informed that they can submit permits for their sport, but they need to follow the state guidelines. It is the responsibility of the league/team's representative to communicate and teach their coaches about the guidelines.
 - b) Rail Trails: No updates.



- c) Events: All summer events are cancelled for the 2020 season and have been rescheduled for the summer of 2021.
- d) Community Preservation Committee:
 - *T.J. O'Grady Skate Park:* Melissa reported that the contracts for both the paving company, Allied Paving, and the skate park equipment company, American Ramp Company, have been signed by Town Management. Melissa met with the representative from Allied Paving today to talk about the cement work going in at the skate park. They will be in contact with her soon about scheduling a date for the work. Allied Paving believes they can start the work in either late August or early September. There was no public comment.
 - *NARA Picnic Pavilion Restroom:* Melissa reported that this CPA project has been the most difficult to proceed with due to being short on the funding. Melissa reported that the Recreation Revolving Account can only bring over \$10,000 from a previous fiscal year minus any pre-payments for programs happening in the following fiscal year. Due to the pandemic, Recreation had a very low pre-payment report this year. Both the department and public did not know what the future would allow for recreation, so the community was not signing up for programs, camps, facilities, and more. With having low pre-payments and only allowing for \$10,000 carrying over to July, recreation now needs to give back any money from FY20 that was not used. This amount is about \$35,000. The Recreation Department was looking to see if they could put together a case to Town Management about using this money for the NARA Picnic Pavilion Restroom project. Unfortunately, this amount is still short of what is needed to complete the project so Melissa does not think it's going to these restrooms. However, Recreation is now looking to try and build a case to use it for one of the capital projects that are in the works. Recreation Commission wants to support Recreation in building a case to use the money toward a Recreation project. There was no public comment.
 - *NARA Sports Pavilion:* Melissa reported a large amount of construction work has been under way daily. The north building will be completed this year along with the exterior of the south building. There was no public comment.
 - *Jones Playground Renovation:* Melissa reported that the paving contract with Allied Paving has been signed and the paving of the parking area will happen late this month or early September. Also, the playground equipment had been purchased and is scheduled to be installed mid-



September with a rubber surfacing pour in late-September. Jones playground and parking area will be complete in the fall. There was no public comment.

- *Gardner Playground Renovation:* Recreation has submitted the quotes from various companies to Selby for approval. Selby is reviewing the quotes and procurement laws, and then sending the recommendation of a company to Town Management for approval. There was no public comment.

II. New/Special Business:

4. Pump Track:

Nathan Kleinschmidt, a Boy Scout who wants this project to be his Eagle Scout project, presented the basic plans of having the pump track built at the 70 Quarry Road lot. He anticipates having anywhere between 5-10 gravel parking spaces, with overflow being NARA's upper parking lot, or vice-versa. This group has targeted this lot which is "General Municipal Property" and more easily to be approved by the Town compared to the "Town Forest" which needs more permits that may be difficult to pertain. Nathan mentioned they had visited a few different sites, but feel the parcel by NARA is best suited because of its closeness to other recreational facilities and the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Some of the other sites that they considered were: an area by the Skate Park and the parcel behind Trader Joes. Joe Will asked Nathan if they approached the schools about the location on school property, however, they had previously ruled out this area and really narrowed their targeted location to 70 Quarry Road. Both Nathan and Michael Graffeo stressed that the topography fulfills the need of making a pump track and they wouldn't be removing many trees at all. Joe also commented that it is the Acton Dog Park's back-up location, even though they are focused on the 348 Main Street lot. David Martin does not believe that it will be the dog park location due to the removal of many trees. The location of the pump track is the Board of Selectmen's final decision. Joe moved for Steve, as Chair of the Recreation Commission, to write a letter to the Board of Selectmen in support of the 70 Quarry Road location. It was seconded by Hema, with a unanimous vote for the Recreation Commission to write a letter of support for this location.

5. COVID-19:

Melissa reported that she's trying to extend NARA Camp and NARA Beach operations for an additional two weeks due to school starting on September 14th. She is also trying to put together a remote learning center that would be at the Recreation Center for the students who are participating in the hybrid education model presented by the AB School Committee. All three of these operations will only work if seasonal staff can extend their work with the Recreation Department. Melissa is still working out the details but hopes to release the plans to the public soon.



Melissa then spoke more about the Recreation Revolving Account and trying to figure out a plan to present to Town Management on the \$35,000 that needs to be returned to the Town's General Fund. The Recreation Commission wants to support the Recreation Department on where the department sees the money would be a good fit.

6. Acton Dog Park

The Recreation Commission worked together at writing a letter of support recommending to the Board of Selectmen the 348 Main Street site for the Acton Dog Park. Steve Trimble will be sending the letter to the Board of Selectmen this week.

III. Consent Items:

None

Adjournment: At 8:13pm it was moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved 3-0. (Chis left the meeting early).