

MINUTES

Recreation Commission Meeting

11/20/2014

Meeting convened in the Selectmen's Meeting Room at 7:05 PM.

Recreation Commission: Joyce Cannon, Paul Tucceri, Paul Aries, David Reilly. Absent: Elizabeth Phillips, Lynn Connors, Ann Delaney

Recreation staff: Nicole Banks

Commission Reports: No reports.

Public Comment:

Resident, Bob Phillips

- Concerns about refund policy and asking for flexibility of paying up front, and there are no refunds. Provided an example of Clapboard Tree School 6 week program in fall. In the past Bob fills out permit form and if he has to cancel for bad weather he was not charged for that field time. He also reserves Morrison baseball field for a 3 week summer program.
- Asking Board to consider a resident fee that is less than the rate for an out of town team.
- Bob gets requests from residents to run birthday parties. Brought up that organizations bring in outside contractors to run clinics. The Commission would like to discuss this further.
- The proposed changes to the fee schedule both affect his programs and Bob indicated he was the only one who pays to reserve these fields.
- The first fee change is School Street Field. Bob went to School Street diamond when he was displaced from Morrison during construction. Bob indicated he maintains the condition of that field. Bob asked the Commission to reconsider the rate for the field as this field is in disarray.
- The second fee change is Morrison Baseball. Bob feels the tripling of the rate at Morrison Field is unreasonable. Bob has a history of running a baseball camp at Morrison for 10 years. He has decreased the session from four to three weeks during the summer. He used to go to Sheehan and it was too hot for the kids. He wants to continue to use Morrison because of the amenities (shade, water) and when it gets to be 90 degrees, it is too hot for the kids. He also likes that the Fire Station is there in case of emergency. He wants us to consider the rate.
- His baseball program at Morrison is considered a camp. Bob goes through the board of health and gets the proper permits. Bob feels he puts less wear and tear on the field due to the ten and under age group. The kids love playing on Morrison.
- Bob also mentioned items regarding the condition of the field. He raked, cut grass, brought infield mix. Feels the clay is a harder surface.
- Bob also mentioned that he uses Russell Downes during the summer for batting practice.

Westwood Little League President, Rob Gotti

- Rob Gotti spoke about the history of the energy and effort put into Morrison Field. He expressed appreciation for the designation of Morrison as an elite field and fully supports the proposed fee. There is a lot that goes into that field. The Riley Tournament brings great comments and envy. The field was built to revitalize the interest in baseball. Rob wants to keep it that way. There is still more to do at the field. The snack shack plan needs to be revisited. Many of the amenities referenced were a result of what the WLL did to promote the improvement to the field.
- There is significant wear of the pitcher's mound due to camp program participation of younger kids who can't pitch off the rubber. WLL maintains the fields in an effort to keep the field in shape. Sponsor and snack shack money goes to improvements.
- Paul Aries asked how many tournaments have been held there. Summer teams as part of suburban youth baseball league, hosted some playoff games, and a district tournament. District semi-finals held there as well. Westwood, Canton, and Needham hosted the tournaments as well.
- Is the hosting of the games being paid by WLL or are we getting fees from the incoming tournament. It was confirmed no fees were paid the Town of Westwood.
- Question: do the other towns charge their little leagues to use the fields for tournaments? Rob said they don't.

Mike Jaillet, Town Administrator attended and he feels the tripling of the fee is too much. The town provides budget money to maintain the field. Mike made note that this is a town field.

Birthday rental fees should also be reviewed and evaluated.

Mike Jaillet asked that we develop a plan to manage the field use policy and worry about fees at a later time. Fee increases of this proportion should have public forum review prior to establishment.

Approval of Minutes: Dave Reilly made a motion to approve minutes. Seconded by Joyce Cannon. Unanimously approved 4-0.

Field Facility Policy This will be tabled for our next meeting.

Public Safety Task Force/Islington Substation Plans Morrison tennis court plans. Mike felt pushing this agenda will take away the momentum from the town for the fire station expansion. Need to focus attention through the avenue of the task force. As an interim, we can suggest putting lights up when the Islington tennis court gets eliminated. Recreation Commission will look at the presentation of options for the tennis courts.

Deerfield Redevelopment Plans Money was approved for design funding. Public forums were held for sport groups, abutters and other stakeholders and feedback was gathered. DPW will put together bid documents. The softball league feels they will need three fields. Soccer is a big user as well. The design will accommodate soccer, but three softball fields will be tough to accommodate in the space available. Fencing to protect the kids from poison ivy was recommended. Plans will evaluate the walking path as well. Another idea came up regarding the putting up of a walking trail. Next meeting is December 3, 2014 at 5:00PM at Carby Street.

Report of the Recreation Director:

Winter 2015 program brochure is scheduled to go out next week.

Debriefing document was compiled for next year's Westwood Day. The additional golf carts were a significant help. Key staffing changes were made. Staff was paid to support the work effort and cleanup. DPW and custodial help was a huge plus. Budget number allowed us to do more. A suggestion was raised to add a thank you in the Westwood Press to our sponsors.

FY 2016 BUDGET - Budget request for fiscal year 2016 was submitted. Department is working on the recreation facilities maintenance. Items with an asterisk will be transferred over to facilities. The Recreation Department is creating an inventory of facility financial responsibility. Process, oversight and budget needs to be reviewed. DPW work order system is being used, but Recreation Department is unaware of certain expenses that they are expected to pay.

Revolving fund cannot have full time salaries. Because of the way the recreation department has grown, the full time salaries will transfer to the General Fund but will be reimbursed by revolving fund.

Capital Request Review - FY15 projects that we didn't act on was the Morrison Basketball court. That capital project was moved out a year. Pool capital project plans are underway which include locker replacement, deck tile refurbishment, UV sanitation system. We will need to close the pool during spring break in April to get this work completed.

NEXT MEETING - To be determined. Tentative December 11, 2014.

ADJOURN - Motion to adjourn by Paul Tucceri , seconded by Dave Reilly. Unanimous 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Tucceri