

MINUTES
RECREATION COMMISSION
04-07-21

APPROVED 04-21-21

CALLED TO ORDER: 6:45 P.M.

PRESENT: George Blaisdell, Heidi Dyer; John Donahue, Darren Hudgins, ex officio;
And Recreation Director Deb Brown
ABSENT: Jennifer Dangas

There were no previous minutes to review.

A discussion was begun about the sign to be replaced at the Roy L. Miller Field. This is the sign that was destroyed when a pick-up truck crashed into it. The town's insurance company recently added a bit more money to be paid out. This was coming from the truck driver's insurance company. There has been frustration regarding the value of the sign regarding the gold leaf paint and proving that it is gold paint and not just gold paint. One of the quoters has provided information as to why the gold leaf is so much more expensive stating it take about 6 times longer to do the copy because of the work involved. It takes about a quart of paint to do the copy = \$144 (approx.) It takes around 25 books of the gold leaf at \$68 per book (\$1,700.00) and approximately 4 hours plus or minus, to paint the copy and 3 days to do the gold leaf. Shop labor is \$97.75 per hour. The insurance company said if the town wants to pay to have the gold leaf paint verified, and pay to do so, they will accept that as proof. Mrs. Brown said she will take a piece of the sign to White Street Pain and Nassar Jewelers to see if they could possibly verify. Mr. Hudgins indicated he will also be talking to someone about a sign.

There was also discussion regarding the possibility of going with an electronic reader board on the sign so that the sign could be in use for 12 months out of the year and not dependent on the weather as it has been. The cover cannot be opened when there is more than about ½ to 1" of snow because it opens from the top down and is unreachable. The area is also not maintained for snow removal.

Mrs. Brown spoke with Eversource regarding this. It would be the responsibility of the department to set up the sign for use electrically. There needs to be a pole installed that will be a minimum of 16 feet high for clearance into Griffin Hill. Once that is accomplished Eversource will bring power over. There is no charge to do so if less than 300 feet. It is. It was requested that Mrs. Brown get a quote for doing the rec dept. side of things.

A discussion was also begun regarding possible pavilion. Mr. Blaisdell and Mr. Hudgins had earlier looked at a different placement for it and felt that over in the shed area of the parking lot may be better than directly behind the building. There was also an agreement between developer Hoytford Hills and the Planning Board that \$40,000 would be coming to the recreation commission as part of the developer's requirement to provide recreation. This was agreeable to the Commission when it attended the Planning Board meeting in March. The money will not come in all at once but rather as partial payment each time a certificate of occupancy is issued for one of the units.

Lions Club member Eric Oleson (also a selectman) joined the meeting as a member of the public. He is looking for input regarding a Lions Club Spaghetti Dinner. A discussion was begun regarding the serving

of food within the recreation building. Mrs. Brown stated she had also had a request from the seniors to begin holding their monthly pot luck luncheons. Members did not allow the preparation of offsite food and having no way of knowing what anyone who was preparing food was doing for precautions. Mrs. Brown had checked with many other recreation departments in the area and not one of them was allowing food to be brought in. Mr. Oleson stated that he will be the only one preparing food, has a background in food preparation and no one else will be in the building with him during preparation. The Commission felt this would be acceptable as it is a controlled environment with safety precautions in place.

The recreation director reported that this is her first week back. There are many tasks that need attention as this is the time of year when outdoor facilities are coming on-line to be used. Things will be a behind for a while until she can get caught up. .

A discussion was begun regarding the funds that were encumbered to do the gutters on the building. Mr. Blaisdell noted that the windows had all been recalked. He has some concern about where the downspouts will be dumping out the water as it could cause a freeze condition during winter. This will be investigated. He thought they may need to be buried. It was noted that the gutters were not meant to prevent the windows leaking but rather the water from getting into the basement.

A non-public portion of the meeting under employee matters was set to take place. Mrs. Brown said she had requested it. She invited Mr. Oleson to stay since she will also be speaking to the Board of Selectmen and she is waiving her right to have this held in non-public.

At issue is an item that was placed in her job description and that was not brought to her attention prior to her agreeing to return after the furlough ended on April 5th. The change centered around there being an addition to the description stating she could not take vacation time during the summer program. Mrs. Brown stated she thought this was not right. She has been taking a week during the summer program, in July for the past 16 summers. She said she has two coordinators who are mature adults. One has been with her for 15 years and one for approximately 10-12 years. Both are professionally employed in different school districts full time during the school year. One is a teacher in Exeter and one works in the special education dept in the Timberlane District. She said without their experience and dependability she would not have been even to attempt running a summer program last year and was one of the few towns that did offer a summer program.

She noted that in addition, she takes this vacation every year with her entire family which includes 8 adults who arrange their work schedules so they can have the time together with her 9 grandchildren. They have taken the 4th of July week off for the past few years and other July weeks prior to that. It is the shortest week of the summer program and has the least number of campers, sometimes only 30 or less. She noted that she also provides the following during the week she is offsite: Office phone is forwarded to her cell phone and she returns calls and always those from parents. She checks and responds to her emails at least twice daily. She is on the phone with the coordinators at 7:30 each morning and again mid-morning, early afternoon and at the close of the day. The coordinators know they can call, text or email her with any concerns (as do staff at town hall). She noted she does not submit to be paid for this work-related time: she just wants her staff to know she is there for them for

any reason. She is also 1 hour away and would return should there be anything that requires her physical presence.

There was discussion regarding the feasibility of continuing with this practice. Mr. Hudgins said he will bring it up to the BOS. Mrs. Brown said that she wants to meet with the BOS. Mrs. Dyer stated she knows of places where staff can't take time off but under these circumstances it would be better to include the requirement if a new person were to become director.

Submitted by:

Deb Brown
Substituting for Recording Secretary