

Park and Recreation Commission Meeting
January 13, 2016

Attendees: Bobby Beagan, Jim Marotta Paul Griffin, Dick Williamson; Guests: Christine Faucher, Bob Haarde, Jim Kelly Jack Ryan, Ian Rusk, Heather Turner: Laura Lunig

Minutes from November 30, 2015 approved with corrections.

Public Comment: Ian Rusk commented on the cancellation of the Fiske Triathlon that has been held at the Atkinson Pool for a number of years. Mr. Rusk shared his thoughts on reinstating this event and his concern that if cancelled it would not return. Ms. Lunig said the previous Park and Recreation Director decided not to hold the event this year out of concern for the tragic accident that occurred at the event in 2015. Ms. Lunig stated the department was going to take a year off from the event and revisit the thought of holding a triathlon sometime in the future.

YMCA Discussion - Jim stated that he asked the YMCA not to attend the meeting tonight. He stated the Commission still wants to discuss and gather information regarding the idea of bringing a YMCA to Sudbury. He stated the YMCA reached out to him with general interest and the Town Manager was aware of this interest. The YMCA offers vast services and has partnered with other communities to share resources. The Park and Recreation Commission is interested in learning more especially as they consider the costs associated with a new or renovated community center.

Jack Ryan, Fairbank Task Force, attended the meeting because he thought representatives for the YMCA would be in attendance. He and others on the task force were interested to hear from the YMCA about how it would partner with the community center. Jack stated he is concerned because the roof at the Fairbank Community Center is not getting any better. The Town meeting article for a new roof at the center was voted down a few years ago and the Fairbank Task Force was established to look into a new Community Center. He stated the existing building will not last much longer. He felt it was great to look at other options, but also felt it was important to keep looking at a new community center for Sudbury. The Fairbank Task Force has already voted to go to Town Meeting for architectural fees. The current plan is to renovate the existing building by adding on to the other side of the building. He felt it was important for the Task Force to keep moving forward because the current building is not getting any better, but to also keep investigating other options such as the YMCA.

Jim Marotta stated he was in agreement, but wanted to assure Jack that the YMCA does offer programs for seniors and he doesn't think the YMCA will conflict with Park and Recreation programs. He also stated that he feels Jack needs to present the operating costs of a new center to show how those costs will impact the Town budget.

Heather Turner stated that she has experience with seniors and the YMCA Parkinson's Classes. She stated the YMCA can and does offer many programs for seniors.

Bob Haarde, Selectmen, stated the idea was for the YMCA and Park and Recreation to work together, not compete against each other. He didn't think the Senior Center would go away.

Paul stated the cost of the new community center is what is driving the thought process to consider bringing in the YMCA to town. The overall cost of a new or renovated building is still not clear and might be prohibitive to the residents.

Jack agreed and stated they are still working on the operating costs. He requested the Park and Recreation Commission keep the Task Force apprised of meetings with the YMCA so they can keep the lines of communication open as both of these issues are discussed over the coming months.

Bob Haarde said we need to think about the best way to get the Task Force article passed at Town Meeting in addition to continuing discussions with the YMCA.

Jim M. said the YMCA offers a 14 step survey to study the needs of the community and how they could partner with the community. Jim said the surveys are done all the time by YMCAs.

Dick W. commented the projected cost of a new Fairbank building is currently estimated at 22million. He said that renovation would cost around 12 million to bring the center up to code.

Paul felt the Task Force and Park and Recreation Commission should look to see what kind of increase in their taxes the seniors and residents are willing to pay for a new community center.

Review of Increase in Fees for FY17 - Laura presented information on field permit fees and why she felt an increase was needed in order to balance the budget for FY17. The Field Enterprise Budget was over spent last year due to unexpected expenses and Laura stated her concern for this year's expenses also. The fees have not been increased for a number of years and the goal she has as the interim Park and Recreation Director is to present a balanced budget for FY17.

Jim said that the Town Manager was supposed to attend the meeting tonight to discuss this issue but was unable to attend due to illness.

The Commissioners questioned the expenses in the Field Enterprise budget and did not feel comfortable raising the fees without more information. A big concern for the Commissioners is the portion of the Park and Grounds salary that has been paid out of the Field Enterprise budget. The Commissioners would like to discuss this issue with the new Town Manager before they decide on any increases.

The Commissioners discussed the possibility of outsourcing the maintenance of the fields to a vendor. The Commission will look into this option to see if it is fiscally beneficial to the town. They are currently unhappy with the condition of the fields.

Laura offered that the Commission could decide to just increase the field rental fees for non-residents at this time. Jim M. stated that if necessary the Commission will hold another meeting just to discuss the Field Permit fees, but first they will need more information and hopefully be able to discuss their concerns with the new Town Manager.

CAIC - The Capital Budget for FY17 includes two Park and Recreation items. The first is additional poured surface for the Haskell Playground, which the Commissioners felt could be delayed. New poured surface was added to the playground last fall as a result of a donation. The currently playground has two areas that are covered by wood chips but the majority of the playground is poured surface. The other item is

replacement of the Featherland tennis courts that were removed last year due to safety concerns. The Commission felt the CICA should move forward with this request.

CPC - Davis Field plans. Bobby Beagan stated he didn't think the request would pass without a plan for a traffic study.

Misc. – The Commissioners approved the articles for the Revolving Accounts (Teen, Youth, and 53E1/2) that will be on the consent calendar for FY17.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.