

First Draft Harvard Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes

Monday February 6, 2017 @ 7:30 PM

Location: Volunteer Room/ Town Hall

The meeting was called to order at 7:33pm. All Commission members were present except for Steve Victorson who was traveling and Frank Culmone who arrived after the minutes were reviewed and voted upon.

The 01.09.17 Meeting Minutes were reviewed, revised and unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote. The 01.23.17 Meeting Minutes were previously distributed and with one minor spelling correction were also unanimously approved by a 3-0 vote.

Continued Parks and Rec restructure discussion Meeting invitees included Tim Bragan, Stu Sklar, Ken Swanton. Wyona began with a summary statement addressing the Commission's previous written concerns about the creation of a director position. Tim Bragan was then given an opportunity to share his vision for a Parks & Rec Director. Tim offered his past success in building the Town of Sterling Recreation Director position and sees the same opportunity to bring recreation activities together here in Harvard. Considerations in Sterling included significant committee turnover, the job started off as a part time position, reported to Town Administrator and included the hiring of a local resident. Tim explained that he had spoken to Superintendent Linda Dwight and she was willing to transfer her Community Education funding and the oversight of all programs except Bridges to the Parks & Rec Commission. Tim and the BOS have a shared vision to make Harvard's Parks & Rec look similar to those found in Sterling and Littleton. The BOS is looking for P&R to approve the concept in preparation of writing up a warrant for the April Town Meeting. Details to answer the question posed of "How will this new position be funded?" received a reply from Tim that approximately \$55,000 would be taken from the school budget and repositioned to the Parks & Rec.

The group engaged in compromising dialogue responding to favorable responses from the selectman. Ken Swanton handed out typed answers to questions generated from our last meeting. Discussion and subjects ranged from funding the position, past misunderstandings, overtime pay incurred by beach personal last year, closing of the beach, staffing needs at the beach, who has the final authority for beach safety (Bob O'Shea), would the current commission liaison role continue (Doug) and the important strategic issue of addressing transportation needs to events around town and at Devens (Wyona).

The selectman agreed that the Commission would decide the needed responsibilities for the position develop the job description and be active in the hiring process. The dual reporting position could work like the one currently held by Liz Allard. Resident John Lee remarked that the director must also provide park responsibilities. The discussion ended with a consensus that the concept made sense but no actual vote was taken. The commission was invited and will attend the BOS meeting on 2/7/17.

Field updates

Harvard Youth Baseball/Softball (HYBSA) Officers Steve Mirarchi and Paul Cohen were introduced. Steve indicated that the mound work on Ryan Land 1 was completed but he has not received the invoices for the work. The HYBSA had 3 requests that they are asking the commission for approval.

1). HYBSA would like to move the outfield fences at Ryan Land 1 back 15 feet so they can be more compliant to the Cal Ripken League standard. Currently at 185 feet from home plate they desire permission to extend the fence to 200 feet.

2). HYBSA would like to attach a dark green windscreen (nylon mesh fabric) on the Ryan Land 1 outfield fencing.

3). HYBSA would like to promote seasonal sponsorship advertising with (3x5ft) or (4x4ft) signage on the inside of the fencing and windscreen for the 2017 season starting April 1 through October 31st when the signage would be removed.

Questions asked by the commission were all well answered and it was recommended that Steve and Paul join Doug and meet the new Director of the DPW soon after he starts his position in March. Three votes were then taken:

1). Doug motioned to "Allow the HYBSA to move the Ryan Land Field #1 fence back to be 200 feet from home plate" provided the DPW has no maintenance issues. Ed seconded the motion. 4-0 Vote to approve.

2). Doug motioned to "Allow the HYBSA to place a windscreen on the outfield fence at Ryan Land Field #1. Frank seconded the motion. 4-0 Vote to approve.

3). Doug motioned to "Allow the HYBSA to place sponsorship signage on the interior side of the Ryan Land Field #1 outfield fence. Ed seconded the motion. 4-0 Vote to approve.

Donnie Phillips, representing the Ultimate Club came before the commission to inquire about securing sites for some early season Ultimate practices. He explained last year's field usage and wanted to communicate with the commission on his club's need. The club has not received their game schedule yet and Donnie has not spoken to the Harvard Youth Soccer (HYSA) or the Bromfield Athletic Director (AD). The commission instructed Donnie to get his league schedule, contact HYSA & AD for scheduling coordination and let Doug know the results. Doug had no Eagle Scout Project updates.

Budget updates: Frank reported that the Muni Report had ski revenue of \$10,200 but didn't match registration enrollment. Frank noticed several items had been improperly coded into the revolving fund rather than the general fund. He will decide if reclassifying each item is necessary after some additional review.

Beach updates: With Steve away there was no beach update at this meeting.

New Business: Wyona reported that the Pond Commission is planning to raise the pond water level beginning the first week of February.

New event requests: Wyona reported that she has updated the website for the 2017 fishing season. First request received for an Oct 14th tournament. Spring season will be from April 1st to June 11th and Fall season set for September 9th to October 29th.

Next Meeting(s): 2/7 with Board of Selectman and 2/13 regular meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 10:08pm.