

## **Merrimack Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes**

**Wednesday, May 15, 2013, 6:30 pm**

**Town Hall Conference Room**

Attendees: Tom Thornton      Laura Jaynes      Dan Dwyer  
Chris Christensen      Lorraine Lessard      Michelle Cushman  
Shannon Barnes      Lynne Wenz      Melanie Lesmerises  
Sherry Kalish

Absent: Holly Lewis

The meeting started at 6:30 pm.

- The April minutes were accepted with a correct spelling change for Melanie Lesmerises. Motion by Shannon, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chris 5-0-4
- Dog Park Concept: update by guest DPW director Kyle Fox.
  - Kyle was invited to this meeting to clarify and discuss the goals for the Dawg Pawk at Wasserman. Kyle referred to a storm water control map created by Merrimack local resident, civil engineer, Don Provencher. Mr. Provencher has done a lot of volunteer and pro bono work for future plans/ideas at Wasserman Park. If park size is under 1 acre, this project can avoid having to obtain permits from DES & EPA.
  - Kyle emphasized by local ordinance, any land disturbance has to have a BMP. Then the plan has to be recommended by P & R, approved by Town Council and worked on by the DPW. All members agreed that this Dawg Park should be build right the 1<sup>st</sup> time.
  - After considerable questions and discussion, Dan Dwyer asked about leaving the tree stumps rather than destumping the area. Would that be more feasible and less costly?
  - Kyle suggested the use of bark mulch for the area. Lynn Wenz spoke against this due to a variety of reasons. The subcommittee is recommending sand with stone dust?
  - Questions from the Dog Park subcommittee were asked such as Gary Watson what are the Town's needs for the Dog Park. Lynne answered his questions. Much work has been completed by the subcommittee. New Dog Park member, Christine Lavoie, introduced herself as wanting to help. She has had much experience creating Dog Parks in other communities.

After some question and discussion, the Committee thanked Kyle Fox for attending and giving his time.

### **Old Business**

#### **3. Director's Report: Sherry Kalish-**

- Town Yard Sale is scheduled for Saturday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> at Watson Park. (rain date: June 23<sup>rd</sup>)  
Tables are available at \$15/table  $\frac{1}{2}$  price for non-profit.

- Summer Concert series: The Merrimack High School Band has been added for Wed. June 5<sup>th</sup>. (see on-line schedule)
- Pavilion Update: This project has proven to be more challenging than expected. People are already asking for reservations. Sherry requested advice from the Committee on how to proceed with this. Chris recapped how the Abby Griffith Park works. Reservations would be required through the P & R office. However there is no-fee for residents; \$75 for the day for non- residents. Picnic areas outside the Bandstand are first come first serve; no reservation or fee required. The Committee felt we could revisit this decision at a later time if things need to change. Lorraine spoke about her concerns about trash. People do not take their trash out. She felt the area could use more barrels.  
--After considerable discussion, Chris Christensen moved to use the same management practices used at Abby Griffith, for use of the Pavilion at Watson Park. 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shannon Barnes, 9-0-0
- Naticook Day Camp: Sign ups continue to go well. Monday, June 23<sup>rd</sup> is first day of camp, August 16<sup>th</sup> is last day.
- Wasserman Park: The Function Hall is now being used at the Dining Hall for Camp. There is a new vent in the kitchen. The refrigerator is being moved from the Dining Hall to the Function Hall. Dan spoke of plans to demolish the Dining Hall are expected to be this fall after summer camp. The Town Council is working on this.

#### New Business:

- ❖ Sub-Committees: Chairman Tom Thornton asked to speak about the role of Sub-Committees. The Pavilion sub-committee has accomplished its goals and is now disbanded. He felt that the goals of the Dog Park sub-Committee have been accomplished and that they were no longer needed. The sub-committee can still meet to organize fundraising, but that they need to present all information to the P & R Committee through Lynne Wenz, who continues to be a full-time committee member. She can continue to serve as liaison, but should report directly to the Committee with all information. He thanked the sub-committee for all of their time and efforts, but this project has become very time consuming.
  - Under the P & R by-laws, as Chairman, Tom Thornton, made the motion to recommend disbanding the Dog Park sub-committee.
  - Laura Jaynes seconded the motion. There was further discussion. Laura reiterated that the sub-committee has

accomplished its goals and that all Dog Park activities **have to go through the P & R Committee** to be finalized. Now that the Dog Park site has been moved to Wasserman Park, the Town can finish the Park based on what the recommendations of the full-committee. Laura felt that there is a time and a place for sub-committees and that this group's help was complete. She was disappointed at some of the negative thinking about the Dog Park: "We are all volunteers, doing the best we can. The Park and Recreation Committee have many projects to work on. We cannot just work on the Dog Park." Shannon Barnes also thanked the sub-committee, but it was indeed time to move on to other things. Their task is done.

- After further discussion, the P & R Committee voted to disband the Dog Park sub-committee. 5-2-2

Updates from the following:

- a. Senior Citizens Club: Lorraine Lessard- Lorraine was excited to announce that there will be a Scrabble Club starting up at the Senior Center. As events coordinator, Lorraine is doing a fabulous job lining up the 2013 Trips and Events. She has created a Merrimack Senior Citizens Club- Trips: e-news, available through the P & R website.

Featured items for upcoming for 2013 include:

- ❖ May 21: Scrabble Club
- ❖ May 30: Picnic - sponsored by the Merrimack High School
- ❖ June 22: Town of Merrimack Yard Sale - Watson Park
- ❖ July 7 Tanglewood - Boston Pops/Vince Gill
- ❖ July 17 Casablanca by the Sea - Portland, ME
- ❖ August 5 Summer Picnic - Senior Center
- ❖ August 14 Broadway and the Feast - Fosters-York, ME
- ❖ Sept. 12 Plymouth, MA - Getaway Tour
- ❖ Oct. 15 Italian Festival - Luciano's - Wrentham, MA
- ❖ Oct. 19 Fall Fair - Senior Center
- ❖ Dec. 7 Christmas Dinner - Senior Center

- b. MYA - Melanie Lesmerises: Melanie stated that registrations for spring and summer programs are complete. MYA elections results: Terry Benhardt: President, Michelle Walters: Secretary, and Kristen Tevepugh as acting Vice President.
- c. Town Council: Dan Dwyer stated that he is glad to be on P & R. He is excited about Dog Park location at Wasserman Park. He would like to finish this, as quickly soon as possible.

- d. School Board: Shannon Barnes: The MHS class of 2013 will be graduating on Saturday, June 15<sup>th</sup>. There are many other events going on including the "Rockin' Ribfest."
- e. Merrimack High School: No rep. present

Comments from the Committee:

Chris thanked the Dog Park sub-committee for all of their time and efforts. He stated "keep the vision."

Laura asked to be put on the June agenda for the Lake Naticook Conservation Association (LNCA) regarding the issue of the invasive Milfoil. Laura is resident of the lake and treasurer of the LNCA.

Comments from the Public: There were many members of the Dog Park subcommittee in attendance.

- ❖ New dog park sub-committee member, Christine Lavoie, was disappointed that she just joined a sub-committee that was just disbanded. She is an enthusiastic Dog Park advocate who has a lot of experience working on dog park plans. She still plans to be involved and has already initiated a "Bark for your Park" grant to be eligible for monies for such things.
- ❖ Gary Murphy- Also a Merrimack resident, Mr. Murphy introduced himself as the "Home Depot" point contact person. He is enthusiastic about helping in any way with the Dog Park project.
- ❖ Meghan Farrell, also a Dog Park sub-committee member, is working on a large fundraiser in August for the Dawg Park.

Chairman Tom Thornton thanked them for all their time and patience. The subcommittee can certainly continue their work, but should communicate only through the P & R Committee (Chair Tom Thornton, or Sherry Kalish) directly.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm. Motion by Shannon, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chris.

The next regular meeting of the Parks & Recreation Committee will be held on **June 19, 2013 at 6:30 pm at the Town Hall Conference Room.**

Respectfully submitted by Laura Jaynes, secretary.