

Merrimack Parks and Recreation Committee Minutes
Wednesday, September 19, 2012
Town Hall Meeting Room

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tom Thornton at 7:00 pm.

Members present:	Tom Thornton	Laura Jaynes
	Chris Christensen	Shannon Barnes
	Jackie Flood	Phil Straight
	Lorraine Lessard	Holly Lewis
	Lynne Wenz	Sherry Kalish

Absent: Don Nevers

There were many public present at this meeting: -friends and family of Bob Kelley.
-Others representing the Dog Park Committee.

The August minutes were unanimously approved with date amendments to the Senior Citizens' Club report concerning dates: Oct. 13 should read: "Fall Fair", Dec. 12th: Indianhead Bus Trip. (SB, 2nd by JF, 5-0-3)
Chris Christensen arrived immediately after this vote.

New Business

3. This agenda Item was moved to 1st place to accommodate the public concerning a Room Nomination for Bob Kelley.

- Marcia Kiestlinger began the discussion to recommend her father, State Representative Bob Kelly for a room nomination in the Town Hall.
- Second to speak was Lon Woods, longtime friend and community service member who had known Mr. Kelley for over 40+ years. He described Bob as "beyond description" who was a dedicated town service member who also served on the Town Charter Commission and MVD, Merrimack Village Water district, as a clerk.
- Jim McSweeney, former Town Manager, again praised Bob with further insight of other services Mr. Kelley performed to the Town. Bob was also on the Budget Committee, Library Board of Trustees. Mr. McSweeney stated that Bob was a mellow and quiet spoken man who ultimately "always had something to say." He would like to see Mr. Kelley's name on top of the "short list."
- Jackie Flood spoke that Bob was indeed a nice person to work with.
- Chris Christensen stated that he would recommend Mr. Kelley on the short list, but further clarified that this Parks and Recreation Committee really had no direction from the Town Council wanted us to do this. Many names have been submitted. Other possibilities could include a road, a park, a playground, or some part of the Merrimack Public Library where he was best known.

After some further discussion, the Committee unanimously voted to recommend to the Town Council that Bob Kelley be considered as a one of the top "short list" candidates for a room nomination.

The motion passed 9-0-0. Shannon made motion, 2nd by Laura. 9-0-0

2. Director's Report:

At this time, Sherry invited Abby Frain, from Home Depot, to speak to the Committee about her program. Abby is a Home Depot Team Captain working with communities on service projects. From what she knows about the Watson Dog Park, her program would be able to help with the fence needs. Home Depot, through Abby, recently completed a Courtyard Landscape project at Elm St. School. Abby further gave the Committee more great news. Home Depot fencing installers will come out to Watson Park to give a free estimation of the fencing, gates, and installing. "Team Depot" needs 30 days to process! Abby was very hopeful that Home Depot can help with the Dog Park.

FYI: Sherry reported that Eagle Scout Joseph Parker is making great progress with his planned Pergola at Watson Park.

- He has received all needed approval from P & R, PWD, Planning Board and the NHDES, with a Water Shoreland Permit.
- Joseph's fundraising efforts with a pancake breakfast raised \$1750.00.
 - The location of the pergola has been approved and marked off by him and Adam Jacobs.
 - His next step is to purchase materials. The PWD has agreed to scrape the 4 inch pad for the cement and then he will be ready to begin the building.

FYI: The Pavilion project is also moving forward. Sherry and Tom attended the last Town Council meeting (September 6), where Tom brought forward the P & R Committee's motions.

- To accept the concept of the Pavilion
- To release \$10,000 from the Watson Park Fund for the Pavilion project

***Both motions were passed unanimously by the Town Council**

- a. Naticook Day Camp had another successful summer with full enrollments of an average of 110 children each week with 88% Merrimack resident. All adapted well to the changes in the facilities. The Dining Hall and Theater are no longer usable due to the declining conditions of those building. They did not pass the Fire Safety inspections.
- b. Skate Park: The school schedule for the Skate Park is back. The park is open 6 days a week; closed on Wednesdays. Check Town Website for all hours.
- c. Summer Concerts- The last 2 concerts were held inside the High School Little Theater. This was recommended by the Town's Health Officer and Fire Chief over concerns about the West Nile Virus Threat. Sherry would like to talk to the Committee about Concert attendance and how it might be done differently in the future.
- d. Bus Trip: There is a bus trip for the Fall Foliage Cruise on the M/S Mount Washington. This will take place on Wednesday, Oct. 3. See Town website for further information.
- e. Vice-President Biden will be speaking at Merrimack Middle School on Sat. Sept. 22. They want to park on Bishop Field. Sherry spoke with Adam Jacobs and he felt a one time use should be fine. The Committee voted unanimously to ok this. Shannon motion, Laura 2nd. 8-0-0

4. Events: Sherry reviewed the dates for the following Fall/Winter events:

- Halloween Haunted Walk – Friday, Oct. 26th, 5 – 8:30pm
- Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting Ceremony- Sun. Dec. 3 – start time 3:00 pm
- Winter Carnival – Saturday, February 23rd, 12 – 3 pm
- Easter Egg Hunt – Saturday, March 23

5. Skating Rink – After considerable discussion, this Parks and Recreation Committee brainstorm about the best location for a Town Ice Skating Rink. Considerations of placing it at Watson Park, Wasserman Park or keep it at O'Gara tennis courts were mentioned. After some research, this item was tabled until the October meeting. Shannon Barnes stated that it is a shame that we have to "restore the tennis courts," instead of maintenance.

Old Business

1. Watson Park

- a. **Pavilion Subcommittee:** Phil Straight reported that the Pavilion concept has been approved by the Town Council.

- Phil also stated that the bids for the Pavilion came in. The Pavilion subcommittee would like to recommend accepting the bid from Bensonwood Timber Frames, Co. of Walpole, NH. It was slightly higher than the low bid, but the company is local and will be better able to meet the needs and expectations for the project. After some discussion, this Committee unanimously voted to accept their recommendation to purchase the Pavilion kit from Bensonwood Timber Frame Co.

Motion passed 9-0-0 Phil motion, 2nd Shannon

- Phil is hopeful that some discussion with the Conservation Commission may help in further fundraising.
- After further discussion and information, the Committee unanimously voted in favor of spending the \$10,000 from the Watson Park Fund on the Pavilion. Jackie thought it would be easier to turn money over to Rotary, as done for Kids Kove and the 4th of July. The other option is to just pay an invoice with the funds. Phil made a motion to follow Jackie's suggestion.

Motion passed 9-0-0 2nd by Shannon.

- Sherry will contact Paul Micali about the best way to distribute the money.

b. Dog Park Subcommittee:

After Lynne gave a brief update progress of the subcommittee, she was very excited to hear of the program available through Home Depot. She has 8 fence bids and hopes to have separate areas between small and large dogs. They are looking into putting loam on the area to hydroseed.

- o The Rules of the Dog Park are complete.
- o Fundraising efforts/ideas continue, with T-shirt sales being a priority at this time.

-After some discussion, the P & R Committee unanimously voted to recommend to the Town Council to endorse the concept of a Dog Park at Watson Park. Lynne made the motion, 2nd by Shannon.

The motion passed 9-0-0

-There was further discussion about the t-shirt fund-raising. Tom had attended several dog park meetings and made the motion to reimburse two subcommittee members for their initial purchase of the T-shirts. Teresa Machado paid in \$697.55 and Michelle Dichiarra paid in \$696.55. Subcommittee treasurer, Michelle Crespo, has kept itemized details. About 60% of the T- shirts are sold. Jackie reminded the subcommittee that all fundraising items have to be reported to the Town Council.

-At this time, the P & R Committee unanimously voted to reimburse Teresa Machado and Michelle Dichiarra at total of \$1394.90 for fundraising t-shirts. Tom made the motion, 2nd by Shannon.

The motion passed 9 -0-0

-Another motion was made by Chair Tom Thornton, to recommend to the Town Council that fundraising monies and donations be accepted for the Dog Park. 2nd by Shannon.

The motion passed 9-0-0

-At this time, Chairman Tom Thornton spoke about the progress of the Dog Park. After going to several subcommittee meetings, he realized that he needed to be more informed about what was going on. He reviewed the protocol of subcommittees and reemphasized that all decisions must come to the full P & R Committee with the support of P & R Director, Sherry Kalish.

Sherry reiterated that town procedures for bidding need to be followed. The Finance Department has a Purchasing Agent, Xenia Carroll, who is responsible for bids on town projects.

Shannon Barnes agreed that to create more efficiency, the full Committee could help support the project, to get it on the “fast track.” Tom stated that the full Committee could help with the “red tape.” He and Sherry would report to the Town Council for the full committee. Jackie suggested that Dog Park treasurer Michelle Crespo work directly with Sherry. Tom commended the subcommittee for all of their time and hard work. The Dog Park subcommittee should still focus on fund raising and rules. Tom remarked that this Dog Park could be completed by May, 2013.

-Subsequently, Chairman Tom Thornton made the motion that the P & R full Committee take over the *operating functions* of the Dog Park subcommittee.

The motion passed. 9-0-0, 2nd by Shannon.

**At this time, 8:25 pm, it was noted that Dog Park chair, Lynne Wenz, left the meeting with members of the public after stating that she would still like to be involved in the dog park.*

2. Budget Ideas:

a. The P & R Committee agreed that Wasserman Park should be a priority on the Budget list. There is a need for an engineering study on the Park’s water systems. \$10,000 was proposed. Chris questioned how best to use Wasserman Park with all of the changes at the facility. At this time, the Dining Hall and Theater are no longer functional. Naticook Day Camp lunches were served at the Function Hall this last summer, with much of the dining equipment being brought up to the Function Hall.

- The Tennis Courts at O’Gara Drive is also in need. There has been discussion with the Town Council and the School Board to keep this area as Tennis Courts.
- Skating rink.

Shannon stated that since the facilities have not been maintained due to budget cuts, things now have to be repaired. The cuts to the P & R budget over the last few years will now cost more. Sherry will need any other CIP requests by Sept. 25th.

3. Field Reviews- Committee members should send in their reviews, ASAP, to Lorraine Lessard for coordinating. Oct. 1 is the deadline.

4. “Adopt a Spot”- Phil would like Watson Park to be part of this program. tabled for a later discussion

Updates:

a. Senior Citizens Club – Lorraine reported that most Fall/Winter activities for the Club are now in place. Beginning with:

1. Fall Foliage Trip to Putney, VT on Oct. 2 - This event includes the bus, lunch, and a visit to the stables of the majestic Friesian European horses.
2. Saturday, Oct. 13 - Merrimack Senior Citizens Club Fall Fair, at the John O’Leary Adult Community Center, 9 am – 3 pm
3. Wed. Nov. 14 – Foxwoods Casino bus trip- \$29 pp, includes buffet lunch voucher
4. Wed. Dec. 12 – Christmas Party at the Indian Head Resort in Lincoln, NH.
5. Monday, Dec. 31 – New Years Eve Day Trip to the Castleton Ballroom in Windham, NH- includes luncheon, show, orchestra, party favors.

Transportation is NOT provided for this.

b. MYA- no rep. Present-tabled. New rep.?

c. School Board- Shannon Barnes stated that there was a joint meeting between the School Board and Town Council. She also mentioned that the High School has a new athletic director.

- d. Town Council- Jackie Flood stated that she thought the joint meeting went well. She was also very glad that the Town Council approved the Pavilion project.
- e. High School Rep. – Holly Lewis- The Committee was glad she attended.

**At 8:55, Lynne Wenz returned to the meeting.*

Comments from the Committee

Phil stated that he is glad to see that the operations of Dog Park subcommittee will now be overseen by the full Committee to help expedite this project. He thanked all members of that subcommittee for their commitment.

Comments from the Public:

None

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm. Motion by Chris, 2nd by Shannon

The next regular meeting will be held on Wednesday, Oct. 17th at 7:00 pm at the Town Hall Meeting room.