

Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes November 2009
11/5/09
6:30 pm

Attendance: Jeremy Griffus, Chairman
Sue Laroche
Rupert Cote
Mick Regan
Eric Horton
Dave Yates
Selectman Roger Coutu
Keith Bowen

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm with Pledge of Allegiance.

October Minutes

Sue Laroche made a motion to accept minutes with noted changes. Keith Bowen seconded the motion. Minutes were accepted with changes required 7-0.

Public Input

No public input.

Report of Officers

Nothing to report

Report of Sub Committees

Eayrs Pond Project discussed under old business.

Director's Report

5th and 6th grade dance was held on 16 October with over 400 kids in attendance. No issues were reported.

Soccer ended the last weekend of October. Soccer Directors report is included as Attachment A.

Mr. Dave Yates updated the committee on the proposed Eayrs pond project including the revised plan to include the addition of one (1) tennis court in lieu of an additional volleyball court.

Correspondence

None received.

Old Business

A) Eayrs Pond Project

Selectman Coutu provided a synopsis of what is required to submit a proposed plan to the Board of Selectmen. In addition, he provided an overview of what occurred during the parcel evaluation to determine estimated costs. The parcel was evaluated by a local contractor to formulate the proposed estimate and believes that the estimated construction cost is accurate. Further, he believes that the proposed costs will provide the BOS a solid understanding of the overall project impact to available funds.

Selectman Coutu went on to voice his support of a park in the south end of town however, if there is an overwhelming response against the proposed plan he will vote against the plan and recommend the parcel of land be sold. If no vocal opposition is present then Selectman Coutu will support submitting the plan to the planning board. Further, if public input dictates a change in plan he advised that the proposed plan can be revised by the recreation committee and resubmitted to the BOS. Finally, he noted that from his discussions with local residents the primary concern was the potential attraction of youth which would turn into a local hang out.

Sue Laroche supports the addition of the tennis court due to limited tennis court access in the south end of town. However, she expressed caution with respect to expending all available funds. Mrs. Laroche reminded the committee that if the project was to be approved, ground breaking would not occur for several months. It is important to reserve funding for potential cost escalation; any potential to cut initial costs would be beneficial to the project.

Adding lights to the project was raised by Eric Horton, Sue Laroche indicated that this would attract “unwants” and the intention is to keep the park to daytime use hours.

Mick raised the possibility for the highway department to perform some of the site work; excavation, etc...could potentially save approximately \$22,000 from the initial estimate.

Selectman Coutu explained the work load imposed upon the highway department. This work load is continuing to increase despite level-funded budgets. It was mentioned that two part-time personnel for will be added to assist with town park maintenance over the summer, these employees may be able to assist if other duties are completed.

Mick Regan will ask his friend to modify the plan to include one volleyball court and one tennis court.

Rupert Cote made a motion to take the plan to the BOS. Sue Laroche seconded and the motion passed 6-0. Selectman Coutu abstained.

New Business

a) Soccer Directors Report

Soccer Directors Report included in attachment A.

Rupert Cote expressed his appreciation for Mick Regan's support of the program.

Sue Laroche introduced a motion to accept directors report, motion seconded by Rupert Cote, motion passed 7-0.

b) Camera Classes

Rupert Cote solicited feedback regarding the camera classes provided as part of the summer program. Sue Laroche recommended that the course not be segmented into three separate sessions. She would like to see the class as a 3-week program to provide more detailed instruction.

c) Future Recreation Site

Jeremy Griffus raised the question of proceeding with Robinson Pond project for a recreation facility. Keith Bowen recommended having the recreation facility added into the capital improvement plan to ensure the town is aware of the committees' and town's need.

Sue Laroche indicated her support of Keith Bowen's approach. The committee needs to review the town's need for recreation structures and determine shortfalls. She expressed her concerns with the Robinson Pond site due to its location, access, and rough roads; however, she understands the limitation on available land within the town. Her preference would be to locate the recreation facility at Benson's but recognizes the limitations of such a plan. If the Eayrs pond project does not come to fruition she wants to be clear that the impact fees for recreation should remain with the recreation committee.

Keith Bowen made a motion to keep future recreation site on agenda and revisit the facility when discussion to update the capital improvement plan begins. Motion seconded by Mick Regan. Motion passes 6-1, Rupert Cote opposed.

d) Benson's Involvement

Jeremy Griffus proposed involvement with the Benson's Committee. He would like to see association with Benson's as the overall project contains recreational elements.

Rupert Cote expressed concerns with the committees' involvement due to overall uncertainty with the Benson's process and potential plan changes.

Keith Bowen supports the idea because Benson's will include recreation. He also stated that he believes Benson's is a great community asset. One possibility would be to adopt a piece of the Benson's project to support and develop. He would like to see the committee entering into discussions with Benson's to better understand what our involvement would look like and what is required at this time.

Selectman Coutu indicated that the area near the Hazleton Barn will be dedicated to passive recreation. He supports the idea of working with Benson's. Further, Selectman Coutu recommends the recreation committee approach the Benson's committee to provide a non-voting liaison to advise on recreational matters.

Mick Regan believes we need to ask the Benson's committee if they are interested in our opinions, would like to see the committees' involvement at the request of the Benson's committee.

Jeremy Griffus indicated that he spoke with the Benson's Committee Chairman and was told that any discussions to further our involvement are welcomed. Mr. Griffus requested a motion to direct the Recreation Committee Chairman to enter into discussions with the Benson's Committee Chairman.

Rupert Cote requested that Benson's involvement discussion be tabled until more information regarding the direction of the project is known.

Keith Bowen believes at one point the Recreation Committee had a liaison and believes our involvement would be beneficial going forward.

Selectman Coutu approves of the land adoption idea.

Sue Laroche withdraws the motion regarding Benson's involvement.

Jeremy Griffus will move forward in discussions with Benson's committee. Approval to initiate discussions granted via consensus.

Closing Remarks

None

Sue Laroche moves to adjourn the meeting, Rupert Cote second and motion passes 7-0.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:07 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Eric Horton

