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**Town of North Reading**

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*Parks & Recreation Department*

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**Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes of  
Monday, May 8, 2023  
Town Hall Room 5 @ 6:45PM**

**Attendance:**

**Committee Members:** Rita Mullin (RM), Ron Kern (RK), Sergio Coviello (SC), Billie Luker (BL), Pat Fillmore (PF), Mike Fitzpatrick (MF) (on the phone)

**Staff:** Ashley Leboeuf (AL), Nancy Ursino (NU), Marty Tilton (MT), Maria Brown (MB), Lillian Hartman (LH)

**Tardy:**

**Absent:** Sheila Sturdevant (SS)

**Call to order:** @7 PM; Quorum, called by RK

**The audience of Citizens:** Maureen Stevens (MS)

**LUC:** Rita Mullin (RM)

**Acceptance of Minutes:** @ 7 PM

**RK made a motion to accept the minutes of April 10th, 2023**

**PF made a second motion**

**New Business:** Brownie Troop from Hood School would like to do an Earth Day project. They have 15 Red Cedar trees they would like to plant. They were thinking of IRP or any other suggestions as well as looking for approval if possible.

MB wondering if we need approval to put in red cedar trees. MT states that we have too many trees at IRP, they could possibly put the trees at North Parish. 15 trees is a lot and we may not have space for them. RM suggests the hood school but Brownie troops want to put it in the parks. MT is not opposed but we need more details about the sizing of the trees, etc. LUC and Rec committee's decision on where the trees will go.

Would north parish be ok?

Could we do 5 trees instead of 15?

What size are the trees?

Who will be maintaining the trees?

Who is watering it and where is the water coming from?

MB suggests that next year we have a list before earth day to write down things that we need at the park for them to volunteer to help.

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LH suggested checking with DPW to see if they need trees.

Tabling conversation when more information is provided.

**Old Business: UPDATE:** Nothing to report.

**Other Business: UPDATE:** Nothing to report.

**Other Business UPDATE:** Nothing to report.

**Parks Director Update:** MT is happy to say that the IRP playground is waiting for the finishing touches. We are waiting for the handicap swing and accessibility mats, they are on backorder. MT is very happy with how the playground came out and now that the weather is better the park is already packed. MT is working with LH and Dan the town engineer for proposals for Kid's Spots. It is already on the central registry and combines. A public meeting will be happening on May 22nd for the public to express their feedback and suggestions for the renovations of Kids Spot. Waiting for proposals for the demolition of the parks. The swings will be staying. Kids' Spot is too big for the Parks Dept to do the demolition at Kid's Spots themselves. As part of the project MT will be looking into new fencing and railing to make the park safer. MF suggests making the parking lot a one-way at Kid's Spot. MT is going to touch base with DPW to see if they can make that happen. RK asks if there is something that will cater to children under 5. MT says there will be a section for a toddler section and a school-age section. May 18th is the final day for the proposals to come in for the demolition. The turf project is scheduled to start the day after school gets out (June 22nd) It will be approximately 5 weeks. The new field layout has been approved with the logo and contractors are aware of the time frame. MT will be having a conversation with the North Reading Athletic Director about organizing school sports and which fields they will be using for each sport. MT, MB, and LH found out that we will be getting 50k for basketball and tennis courts and 100k for Kids Spot. Hoping to get all three done at the same time (hoping for after July) but will not be able to start until the contracts are signed. MT is looking into getting a proposal about improving the skate park. Ramps are weathered due to New England weather. Seasonal guys starting May 15th or 22nd which will help out a lot. MT has 1 returner and 2 new quality seasonal employees. Parks are very busy.

**Operations Director Update:** MB states that we are 60k profit, with 74k more coming in from youth sports. Right now at the end of April, in reference to our fiscal year 2023 budget, we are 23k below in revenues which we will make up this month, and we are 150k below compared to budgeted expenses. We are doing really well with permits and fields. Unfortunately, we do not have a turf field this summer but we are trying to accommodate the best we can. Busy and working on grants, everything is rolling. MB is going to be taking procurement classes to assist with grants.

**Recreation Director Update:** NU states that recreation is doing well. Continuing to receive registration for our summer playground programs and other summer clinics. Our memberships

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are at 66, up 10 from our last meeting but we expect to rapidly increase by the end of the school year. We have sufficient registrations for 5/7 weeks to cover the staff's salaries. Staffing for the summer programs we have 5 individuals hired and 3 of whom are returning employees from last year. 2 more interviews last week, and 3 more interviews this week, and continue to receive applications. We have started our inclusion vendor and we are very excited to have this program at North Reading. We have spoken with the SEPAC group and they are very happy to hear about the inclusion programs and excited that we will be training the summer staff with our inclusion vendor. We have added another pickleball session on Saturdays. The gym floor is now being redone in September due to cost. Our fall programs may take a hit but we are prepared to be flexible and figure out where we can play toddler, preschool, and adult programs. NU met with Bob Bracey about summer camp applications and both are on the same page. In our summer playground program, Heidi Veader reached out to home depot and was able to get donations of 80-100 build kits. HV also reached out to Al Pereira and he will be donating his time to Summerscape with his photo booth. Scholarships will not all be met due to Sponsor a Child lacking donations. MB realized that the "Would you sponsor a child" was not on our registrations. It is now back up and running in hopes to get more donations. BL suggests requesting funds from FONRPR to fulfill what money has been lost. NU plans to include the sponsor of a child in the weekly press release.

**LUC:** RM wants to ask MT to help Parks when things settle down. RM states they will be hoping to run a fundraiser a day at IRP to ask the townspeople what their ideas are for the next 20 years and any donations.

**FONRPR:** MS tells us about their annual meetings and their annual election of auction. SS is president, MS is treasurer, MB is clerk, and BL is director. Update on BBQs, the dates are June 21st, June 28th, July 12th, and July 19th. We are going to have a checklist of things and will reduce the menu. No gate fee. MS will put together a do-to list with everything that will need to be done. Heidi Veader has booked all entertainment and sponsors for the BBQs. The weather will be coordinated within the group and if it is decided that no BBQ will occur P&R will send out an email blast and post it on social media. Still brainstorming fundraisers and will discuss more during their next meeting.

**Intergenerational Center:** LH states that this building will be for Youth Services, Parks & Recreation, Elder Services, Veterans, and Public Services. LH explains facilities are evaluating the current master plans for upgrading and space needs over time. They will be setting an agenda for updates throughout the town departments and spaces. They will be identifying which needs attention first and this proposal is a recommendation for a realistic suggestion for what the town needs. LH states that we will be hoping to go from 2,000 square feet to 40,000 shared amongst all departments in the intergenerational center. PF asks about the flex office space in the plans. LH explains how we may want to reconfigure when the time comes about who goes where. RM states that everyone should be stating their opinions on what they want for the center. SC asks

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where we are in the priority of the facility upgrades. LH states that we are in 2nd for priority. BL asks where the Intergenerational Center will be located. LH states that the town is only collecting information on what the town departments need for the space, they have not looked into a location. LH asks if the 40,000 sq ft is something that the board would approve of the square feet suggestion. RK asks if the town grows and will the 40,000 sq ft still be enough. LH explains that there is enough room for additional growth within the 40,000 sq ft proposal. PF makes a motion to approve the 40,000 sq ft intergenerational community center, RM seconded the discussion, 6/7 pass, 1 absent.

**Next Meeting Date: June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ Town Hall Room 5 at 6:45 PM**

**Adjournment: SC made a motion to adjourn @ 8:30 PM**

**BL seconded the motion.**

**Approved: 6 Opposed: 0 Abstained: 0 Motion: PASSED**