

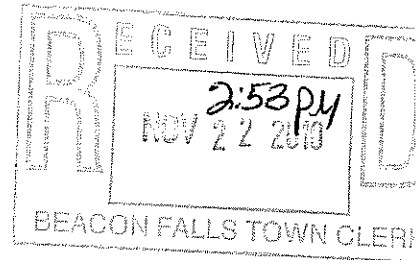
BEACON FALLS PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

MONTHLY MEETING

NOVEMBER 15, 2010

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SUBJECT TO APPROVAL



CALL TO ORDER

L. Swanson called the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Beacon Falls Park and Recreation Commission to order at 7:03 PM.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: B. Egan, R. Kunz, J. Rodorigo, S. Ruhl, A. Sirowich, L. Swanson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: S. Osowiecki

OTHERS PRESENT: Scott Szturma and Adam Laput from the Robert A. Cole Baseball League, and Brian Miller of Turner Miller Group.

MINUTES

B. Egan called for the approval of the October, 2010 meeting minutes, as submitted. J. Rodorigo seconded the motion. All ayes.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

See below.

NOMINATIONS OF ELECTED OFFICERS

J. Rodorigo nominated Lisa Swanson for Chairperson. B. Egan seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. All ayes.

L. Swanson nominated Robert Egan for Vice Chairperson. S. Ruhl seconded the nomination. There were no other nominations. All ayes.

OLD BUSINESS

A. MATTHIES PARK

1. J. Rodorigo reported a Veterans' Day ceremony was held at the park.
2. The Eagle Scout project is progressing and work is taking place on the bridge and picnic area.
3. J. Rodorigo is getting estimates for materials to submit to the Katharine Matthies Foundation for bridges over wetlands around the pond.

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B. PENT ROAD

1. Fall Leagues have finished and the park has been winterized and weatherized. The town crew is cleaning up equipment during these winter months.
2. J. Rodorigo is obtaining quotes for signage at the park.
3. Scott Szturma presented a proposal for improvements to the Pent Road Recreation Complex from the Robert A. Cole Baseball League. The league would take on these improvements, with approval from the Parks & Recreation Commission, at their own expense. The proposed list was discussed.
4. Field #4 now has dugouts, which worked well during Fall Ball, but require some type of roof. Design of the roofing needs to be decided and reviewed.
5. RACBL has drawn up a proposal for a building which would serve as a press box, storage facility and meeting area on Field #4. J. Rodorigo will look into electrical capabilities at Pent Road for such a building.
6. Other improvements in order of importance included: warm up mounds on Field #1 and #4, a flag pole for center field of Field #1, and warning tracks on Field #1 and #4, which are required by Little League safety regulations.
7. The commission was agreeable to the flag pole and J. Rodorigo will look into what can be done about warning tracks.
8. RACBL also needs to have access to the light switches in the fall. Lighting is located inside the Sugar Shack and RACBL did not receive a key to that facility, so lights for Field #1 could be turned on during play.

C. SPORTS LEAGUES

1. Basketball League has begun practicing and space is very tight for the league.
2. Prospect Soccer and flag football has wrapped up.
3. Subsidies have been distributed to the basketball, soccer and football leagues.

D. PARK ACTIVITIES

1. A. Sirowich reported that she is running the following after school programs: Drawing, Lego Fungineering and Salmon Raising. All of these classes are full.
2. Zumba will be returning to Beacon Falls on Tuesdays and Thursday evenings at 8:00 PM at Laurel Ledge, starting on Tuesday, November 30th, with A. Sirowich as instructor.
3. The Running Club has several members and is doing well.
4. Flanders Nature Center will be offering two one-day after school programs: Students will make birdfeeders on November 23 and wreaths on December 7. Response to these programs has been good.
5. A. Sirowich will begin the process for the Holiday Lights Contest, which the commission has agreed to run again. Details will be forthcoming.

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NEW BUSINESS

- A. Brian Miller introduced himself to the commission as the Town's Planning Consultant, who is currently updating the Town Plan of Conservation and Development, which was last completed in 2002. The purpose of his visit was to gather information on the town parks and seek input from the commission on their vision of future needs for the parks over the next decade.
1. With regard to Matthies Park, Mr. Miller was provided a copy of the TPA Master Plan for his records.
 2. The commission discussed the desire to expand the facilities at Pent Road to offer most playing fields and a larger track.
 3. The commission also mentioned the need for an indoor community facility which could house Parks & Recreation activities.
 4. With regard to Toby's Landing, the commission did not comment, as the property is under the direction of the Board of Selectmen and they briefly spoke about the plan to link Riverbend Park to the State Greenway project.
 5. R. Kunz mentioned the need for both active and passive recreation facilities, with the passive recreation geared toward attracting an adult population.
 6. J. Rodorigo provided his opinion of three fundamental problems facing the Parks & Recreation Commission:
 - a. Parks & Recreation does not have a point person employed to take care of the day-to-day operations of the Parks and Recreation activities.
 - b. The parks, particularly Matthies Park, are under funded. Budgetary restrictions have led to deferred maintenance and neglect.
 - c. The town crew has responsibilities for the entire town and various priorities. Parks & Recreation is not in charge of their direction in maintaining the parks.
- B. Mr. Miller summarized what was discussed and asked that the commission provide him with additional suggestions by email. He also asked the commission to provide him with an inventory of the park facilities.

CORRESPONDENCE

- A. The commission received a thank you letter from Pop Warner football for their sports subsidy check.
- B. There were two notices from the Board of Selectmen's Office regarding use of the conference room and the Senior Center.

APPLICATIONS

No applications are pending. The commission again discussed that applications from independent leagues, other than RACBL, Beacon Falls Girls' Softball and Valley Fusion, will be charged fees for use of the Pent Road Facilities.

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GRANTS

- A. J. Rodorigo is collecting estimates for submission to the Katharine Matthies Foundation.
- B. No STEAP monies were awarded to Parks & Recreation this year. The town received some monies for STEAP for Blackberry Hill. State budget cuts have greatly affected their funding.
- C. There is a grant pending for after school programs through the Eli Whitney Museum, with Connecticut Community Foundation.

PAYMENT OF BILLS - None.

OTHER BUSINESS

The 2011 meeting calendar will be submitted and voted on at the December meeting.

BUDGET

- A. The balance of the unrestricted checking account is needed. The commission requested to receive a monthly report on this programs account, which holds the funds for all pay-for-play Parks & Recreation activities. The commission has not been receiving this information from accounting.
- B. The commission reviewed an updated copy of the year-to-date budget, focusing on the following line items: Building Maintenance, Spray, Clay and Fertilizer, Grounds Maintenance and Tools & Equipment.
- C. It was noted that the Sports Subsidies were taken out of the wrong line item in the budget, which must be corrected.
- D. The concern from the commission is that monies were not spent this fall to maintain the grounds and buildings, and the town crew is not being directed to address maintenance issues.
- E. An example is that there has been no money spent from the Spray, Clay and Fertilizer line item. If no fertilizer was purchased, was any fertilizer spread this fall as part of winterizing the fields?
- F. The town hopes to have the 2011-2012 budget prepared and approved by the first week of May, 2011, so work on the upcoming budget will begin soon.

ADJOURNMENT

J. Rodorigo made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 PM. A. Sirowich seconded the motion. All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,


Erin A. Schwarz, Clerk, Park & Recreation Commission

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