

**BEACON FALLS PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MONTHLY MEETING
JANUARY 27, 2014**

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

CALL TO ORDER

J. Rodorigo called the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Beacon Falls Park and Recreation Commission to order at 7:02 PM.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: J. Rodorigo, B. Egan, J. DeGennaro, S. Ruhl, A. Sirowich, M-E Fernandes

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: M. Zollo

OTHERS PRESENT: Beth Bucciferro from Brighten Your View

MINUTES

B. Egan made a motion to approve the December, 2013 Special Meeting Minutes, as presented. J. Rodorigo seconded the motion. All ayes.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

No comments at this time.

OLD BUSINESS

A. MATTHIES PARK

1. The park is being maintained for winter.
2. There is currently no sign at the park saying that ice skating is allowed. No testing of the ice has been done to date.

B. PENT ROAD

1. Currently waiting for spring ball to start. Field 1 cannot be used until Opening Day.
2. Facilities Applications for use of the fields are due from all leagues by the March 15th Parks & Recreation Meeting.
3. The Baseball and Softball leagues want to redo the batting cages ground.

C. RIVERBEND PARK

1. J. Rodorigo explained the steps that are now being taken, with the funding of the grant for Riverbend, and discussed the recent article in the Citizen's News, which involves acquiring adjacent properties to expand the park.
2. The property acquisitions would allow for additional parking, ADA specific compliant access points, a figure 8 walking path, and possibly bathrooms.
3. The committee working Riverbend is J. Rodorigo, Rich Minnick, S. Ruhl and B. Egan. Lisa Lowe has been hired by the town for the grant writing end of the project.
4. The original plan also included preservation of the Housatonic by eliminating invasive species, a walkway around the park, trash receptacles, seating, and a J hook

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in the river for fishermen, exposing the river's edge, also to improve fishing. The J hook would make the park an easier location to launch a boat, as its intention is to calm and water and slow the river.

D. SPORTS LEAGUES

1. Basketball Leagues are still running smoothly.
2. Baseball and Softball registrations begin tomorrow night and continue through mid-February.
3. Prospect Soccer Travel registration closes on February 1st and Recreation registration is currently ongoing on their website.
4. The Softball League turned in an incomplete Field Use Application, which will need more details for insurance purposes, as well as the insurance certificate. S. Ruhl will advise the league of what is needed.

E. PARK ACTIVITIES

1. A. Siowich reported that the Drawing and Spanish classes finished up. She did not have enough interest to run the Lego Robotics classes, since the teacher increased her minimum from 10 students to 12.
2. A. Siowich reported that there will be a K-5 Zumba class beginning on February 12th on Wednesdays and running into March with a 30 student maximum.
3. A. Siowich noted that the Salmon class may run a couple of extra weeks because they missed several classes due to snow. She will be running some Bakery classes for upcoming holidays.
4. J. DeGennaro noted that Winter Family Swim is starting up on February 4th from 6:00 to 7:30 PM at Woodland. The program runs Tuesday and Thursday nights through March. Some publicity has gone out in town and it seems to be well-received. Prospect Parks & Recreation is running this program.
5. J. DeGennaro reported that the Harlem Globetrotters event with the Beacon Falls Basketball League had 135 tickets sold. Beacon Falls Basketball handled collecting the money, paying for tickets, and distributing tickets, so Parks & Recreation was not responsible for accounting or paying out any funds. The League plans to make a donation of \$2 per ticket to Parks & Recreation.
6. J. Roderigo noted that it is time to contract with a Fireworks company for Family Day and the monies are in the budget for the event this year. The ongoing problem is that the event costs \$10,000 to run - \$8,500 for fireworks, \$500 for the band, and \$1,000 for buses. Each year the fireworks display gets shorter, from 22 minutes to 17 minutes to 14 minutes last year. There are currently only 3 fireworks companies competing for the business and because our budget for the event does not increase, they keep the costs from increasing by shortening the fireworks display.
7. Regarding Fireworks, the question for the board becomes is it worth spending \$10,000 for a 15 minute show. It is one of the biggest events for our whole community and the board needs to assess if it is worth the cost. Would taxpayers be willing to spend another \$2,000 - \$5,000 for a longer show? S. Ruhl asked if another group in town might want to donate funds to the fireworks to keep the event going, as Park Pals did in the past. A. Siowich asked if people noticed that show was short? S.

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Ruhl asked how people would feel if the event was gone? This remains a question for the board moving forward.

8. B. Egan booked 4 concerts so far. Nick Altieri on June 7th (which conflicts with the Fireman's Carnival, so this date will be moved), Angelo on July 19th, Rich Bobinski Orchestra on July 26th and the Kerry Boys on August 9th. The Commission hopes to increase this line item from \$4,000 to \$4,500 because the cost of these concerts keeps increasing.
9. DEEP will be hosting a Family Fishing Class on Wednesday, April 23rd from 6:00 - 8:00 PM for children accompanied by adults. The class includes a Fishing trip which will be at Matthies Park on Sunday, April 27th from 8:00 AM until Noon.
10. The Fishing Rodeo with St. Michael's Men's' Club will be on Saturday, April 26th from 7:00 AM – 11:00 AM.
11. J. DeGennaro will be in touch with Mark Pizzi about summer tennis camps and she will look into Woodland's availability for swim lessons this summer.

CORRESPONDENCE

None.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. On the new website, Beth Bucciferro has been working on the new website and she confirmed that the Commission wants to use the URL: www.bfpr.org. Emails directed to info@bfpr.org will be routed to S. Ruhl as the Chair.
- B. J. Rodorigo will discuss with Denise and Mike Krenesky establishing a PayPal account and a separate checking account for programs which people can register and pay for online. Until that is in place, people can register online and continue to pay by check.
- C. S. Ruhl would like to see a calendar on the website which shows field use for all the leagues with games being played and directions to Pent Road. J. Rodorigo explained that each league sends their own schedule but they have never been put into one calendar for the public to refer to. The schedules were used by Parks & Recreation for field preparation only. The leagues have been responsible for getting scheduling information to their players. B. Egan agreed with this system, keeping the schedule in the hands of the leagues.
- D. S. Ruhl noted that the status of the fields should be posted somewhere, if they are open or closed by the Town Foreman, due to weather.
- E. Beth will work on changes discussed and with the Board's approval hopes to launch the website by the first of February.
- F. J. DeGennaro volunteered to be the point person to update and make changes to the website once it is launched and Beth will train her on how to make revisions.

APPLICATIONS

The deadline for spring Facilities applications will be March 15, 2014. The Softball League application which came in needs more detail.

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GRANTS

- A. J. Rodorigo received information on a Dr. Pepsi Snapple Grant for recycle bins for parks, through the Jurzynski family. The plan is to apply for 10 recycling containers for all of the parks.
- B. The Riverbend grant was discussed above.
- C. The Katharine Matthies grant for a pavilion at Pent Road, which was awarded last summer, has run into some challenges and site specific problems. The original site is located over the septic system and the second choice for a site was located in the setback area for the septic system. Department of Health will not allow the pavilion on these locations. The third location, adjacent to the Sugar Shak and storage area, has run into difficulties do the roofing on both structures. The pavilion company will not warranty the roof if it is trussed to the wooden roof of the current building. Construction companies, likewise, will not guarantee the combined roofs.
- D. Another option which has presented itself is that there is an upcoming Eagle Scout project for a pavilion to be built at Toby's Pond. J. Rodorigo noted that the project could make use of the grant funds, if allowed by Katharine Matthies, as the funds were intended for a pavilion and this pavilion project is moving forward. However, the grant monies must be spent by this May and the timing may not work.
- E. The Commission discussed other possible locations for the pavilion at Pent Road, such as behind Field #2, near parking for Field #4. The original request was to house the Summer Recreation program and provide shading for spectators. This location is not ideal, but could still serve those purposes.
- F. The existing pavilion at Pent Road is not often used, and a new pavilion by the fields could still be used by the groups which currently rent out the pavilion. The 10 year plan would be to close off the old pavilion and turn it into garage storage, moving the garage far away from the playground area, which is a safety hazard. J. Rodorigo will be in touch with Katharine Matthies Foundation to find out the options.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

No bills at this time.

BUDGET

A draft of the proposed 2014-2015 Parks & Recreation budget will be sent to all members for review and comments/questions can be directed to J. Rodorigo or S. Ruhl.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Commission reviewed the 2014 Facilities Application. Aside from the dates, the only change was for non-resident field use. This price increased from \$60.00 per game to \$75.00 per game. **B. Egan made a motion to approve the 2014 Facilities Application with the changes noted above. J. DeGennaro seconded the motion. All ayes.**

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ADJOURNMENT

B. Egan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 PM. J. Rodorigo seconded the motion. All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz
Clerk, Parks & Recreation Commission