

Colchester Parks & Recreation Commission
April 7, 2008 – 7:00 p.m.
Colchester Elementary School

Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Chairman Sean O’Leary, Jay Cohen, Norm Kaplan, Chris Ferrante, Eric Kundahl Jody Barr, Lynne Stephenson, Clint Williams, Lynette Dimock

Members Absent: Ken Wright, Steve Ashe

Others Present: BOS Liaison Greg Cordova, Selectman Stan Soby, Nan Goodchild, Chris Goodchild

1. Call to Order: Chairman O’Leary called the meeting to order at 7:13p.m.

C. Ferrante motioned to add Item **G. Discussion of commuter lot expansion** to agenda Item 7. New Business, seconded by J. Barr. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

2. Citizen’s Comments: L. Stephenson said that the senior team that has requested permission to play in the town league for Olympic training purposes was unable to get a team together.

3. Acceptance of Minutes of the March 3, 2008 Regular Meeting and March 27, 2008 Special Meeting: N. Kaplan motioned to approve the March 3, 2008 Regular Meeting Minutes making the following corrections:

- Page 2, Item 7a), last sentence, change *lights* to *speakers*.
- Page 3, Item 7f), *William* changed to *Williams*
- Page 3, Item 8, change *L. Dimock* to *L. Stephenson*

The motion was seconded by C. Ferrante. All members present voted in favor with C. Ferrante abstaining. MOTION CARRIED.

J. Barr motioned to approve the March 27, 2008 Special Meeting Minutes, seconded by C. Ferrante. All members present voted in favor with N. Kaplan and L. Stephenson abstaining. MOTION CARRIED.

4. Reading of Correspondence: None

5. Committee Reports:

- **Facility Task Force:** The Facility Task Force has not met. There is netting on R3 that is in bad shape. The task force will need to look into replacement costs of the net or if the net is no longer needed because no men teams play on R3 when kids are playing on R4. Chairman O’Leary asked that the task force take into consideration the future use of the fields.
- **Finance/Administration:** A lot of calls have been received about the fields not being open. The high school team is going to have to play games in Montville because of the fields still being closed. Chairman O’Leary said that the high school teams are tied to a set schedule and have legitimate complaints. He urged that the Park and Recreation department find ways to have the fields ready earlier next year. J. Cohen explained that the fields have been too wet to even get a machine on them to turn over the infield. The possibility of leagues contributing to the purchase of tarps for the fields was discussed.
L. Dimock is concerned that there is not clarification that when the fields are not in use it means all of the grass areas.
J. Cohen, S. O’Leary, C. Williams, and S. Ashe met to review program assistant position. The full-time position has been withdrawn. A new job description will be written. Chris Fonda will be leaving and that will be considered when writing the new job description. A meeting was held

about the Club Yeah. Town daycares will need to be met with to assure they do not feel they are being hurt by this program.

- **Programs:** L. Dimock met with groups about the lighting of the town green at holiday time. The groups were not in favor of planting a new tree but are in favor of removing the small tree. Ideas of lighting included a spot light on the big tree as well as bringing in a large donated tree. L. Dimock would like the lighting of the green to be a bigger celebration and feels that using a donated tree could be made into a contest. Unfortunately, while the groups support the lighting of the green they are not willing to assist in the fund raising for lights.

- **Skate Park:** N. Goodchild reported that on behalf of the kids who would like a new skate parks she has been looking at designs. The designs are \$50,000 and fund raising is going slowly. Various types of concrete and solar lighting are being researched. She would like the park to be eco friendly. The kids would like the park divided up into components based on types of skateboarding as well as BMX bikers. Various fund raising is being looked at such as a pasta dinner and a battle of the bands.

6. Old Business:

- a. **Refund Policy:** J. Cohen reported that customers like the new refund policy, refunds have actually went down, and the number of registrations have increased. C. Ferrante motioned to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the new program refund policy be implemented effective July 1, 2008, seconded by E. Kundahl. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

7. New Business:

- a. **Special Events Policy Review:** The Board of Selectmen received a complaint regarding the increase in field use fees from the baseball clinic that is held. Chairman O'Leary said that the fee was increased to discourage the use of the fields. Selectman Soby said that while the rationale is fine the impact of the baseball clinic not being held has to be considered. The kids would not have the opportunity to attend the clinic. J. Cohen said that the organizers of the clinic were informed of the fee increase at the end of last year's clinic. L. Dimock questioned why the commission was not approached first instead of going to the BOS. C. Ferrante commented that it is a well attended camp but that there have been numerous complaints that Colchester kids are shut out by kids attending from other towns. Chairman O'Leary said that the clinic is being charged a resident rate for using the fields even though on leagues the nonresidents are being charged more. G. Cordova said that in the future if there is a group that will be affected by a policy change the commission should consider inviting them to a meeting to explain the change. E. Kundahl motioned to send the special event fee policy intact back to the Board of Selectmen, seconded by J. Barr. All members present voted in favor.

- b. **Lighting Fees Review:** The lighting fee and the calculation used for charging were reviewed. The Board of Finance has asked that the fees be increased but have not given a specific amount. The discussion included:

- Lighting fees have not gone up since June 2006.
- Lights are currently under warranty but future maintenance costs need to be considered in the fees that are charged.
- A plan needs to be developed that can be passed on to the organizations such as a percentage above the rates will be what is charged each year.
- The concession stand electricity cost is not being past on to those who use it.
- The finance subcommittee will develop a calculation basis for the electricity use.

- c. **CT Thunder Facility Use Request:** The commission denied facility use to the CT Thunder.

- d. **Permanent Agenda Item for BOS Liaison:** Selectman Cordova was asked to report back on a regular basis on recommendations the commission makes to the BOS.

- e. **Concession Stand Cleaning Deposit:** There have been problems with the concession stand being left a mess and staff having to clean it. A cleaning deposit will be determined and included in the bidding process.

- f. **Pave Recplex Trail (R5 Corner):** The trail washes away each year. Paving would prevent the erosion. The manpower hours taken to do the paving now would save hours in the need for future repairing.

g. Discussion of Commuter Lot Expansion: Tree removal has begun. There is large While Oak tree in the middle. If the tree is not removed 18 parking spots will be lost. The tree roots could destroy the surrounding pavement. S. O'Leary motioned to recommend to the Board of Selectmen that the large tree be removed for the expansion of the parking lot, seconded by E. Kundahl. All members present voted in favor with L. Dimock abstaining. MOTION CARRIED.

8. Parks & Recreation Director's Report: J. Cohen reviewed the report. E. Kundahl motioned to accept the Park and Recreation Director's Report, seconded by C. Ferrante. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

9. Parks & Recreation Program Coordinator's Report: The report was distributed. There was negative feedback on the Easter egg hunt. L. Stephenson motioned to accept the Program Director's Report, seconded by L. Dimock. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED.

10. General Comments: None

11. Adjournment: C. Ferrante motioned to adjourn, seconded by E. Kundahl. All members present voted in favor. MOTION CARRIED. Chairman O' Leary adjourned the meeting at 10:05 p.m.

Dawn LePage, Clerk