

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD**  
**Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**October 3, 2018**

**Call to Order**

6:00 pm: Chairman Shute called the meeting to order

**Present:** Jeff Shute, Chairman; Dwight Barnes, Nate Brown, Terry Crotty, Jeff D'Agostino, Tom DuBois, Brian Fisher, and Amy Harrington, Members

**Absent:** Tom Buffington, Bryan Giard and Ernie Rober, Members

**Also Present:** Nick Lawrence, Director, Kevin Hill, Assistant Director

Chairman Shute called the meeting to order.

**Minutes - September 2018 Meeting**

**Motion:** N. Brown moves the minutes as written

**Second:** D. Barnes

**Vote:** Yea 7\*, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

*\*J. D'Agostino was not present at the time of this vote*

**Citizens Comments**

None

**Passenger Van**

Chairman Shute updated that Parks and Recreation has purchased a 27 passenger van in good condition with 202,000 miles on it. The vehicle uses diesel fuel, can accommodate up to two passengers in wheelchairs and requires a CDL to operate. This van will replace the white passenger van, which will be repurposed to a cargo van, replacing the red cargo van. The red cargo van will be retired as it will not pass inspection. The 27 passenger van was purchased for \$6,500 through an online auction. T. Crotty noted that the State surplus auction is happening soon if the Red Van were able to be dropped off by Friday. B. Fisher asked whether the Department's transportation would be limited until there is a CDL driver online, Chairman Shute responded that they will not repurpose the white van until the other is fully online. D. Barnes asked for an explanation around how the purchase came out, noting some may be surprised. Chairman Shute responded that Nick and Kevin have been looking at new vehicles as they knew the Red Van would not pass inspection. They felt this was a good opportunity and so the decision was made quickly. T. Crotty noted that he has connections in this industry and, though it does sound like a good deal, if Parks and Recreation knows a purchase is coming due he may be able to help plan ahead.

**Sub-Committee Discussion**

An outline of roles and key focus areas has been drafted for the Board's review. J. D'Agostino had concern that the description of roles wasn't exactly in line with what he understood and what he has recruited Soccer volunteers to be involved in. He felt that more responsibility and empowerment would go to the parents and volunteers, allowing them to take control and ownership of the given area. He felt the drafted description was more for parent assistance than running of the program. B. Fisher noted the importance of having the Parks & Recreation staff directing volunteers who can actively assist, as opposed to lead. He noted that flexibility will be key and that how the Sub-Committee structure works for soccer may be entirely different from baseball, etc. T. Crotty asked what the Commission Member role will be, J. D'Agostino felt that it would be to report back to the Commission and liaise between the volunteers and the Department Administration.

Members were comfortable with moving beyond the verbiage and assigning roles and will revisit the description at a later time. A. Harrington volunteered to work on wordsmithing the job description. Initial Sub-Committee

assignments include:

Baseball/Softball - D. Barnes, T. Crotty & T. DuBois

Soccer - J. D'Agostino

Old Home Day - T. Buffington & A. Harrington

After School Clubhouse/Summer Camp - T. DuBois, T. Crotty & D. Barnes

Special Events - T. Buffington & A. Harrington

Hoops Classic - N. Brown, T. Crotty & B. Giard OR N. Lawrence & K. Hill?

Basketball - N. Brown, T. Crotty & T. Buffington

Senior/Adult Programming - B. Giard & E. Robert

### **Soccer Report**

J. D'Agostino reported that overall the Programs are going well. Communication from K. Hill has been going well and participants have complimented the new field space and equipment. D. Barnes asked whether Jeff and Kevin were in touch with the coaches on a regular basis? J. D'Agostino responded that there have been some struggles with the new curriculum at the 5/6 grade level, they have modified some of the lesson plans. Coaches have asked for technical videos. Chairman Shute asked how using Hartford Brook was working, J. D'Agostino voiced concerns that there will be a shortage of space next season with the size of the group of kids coming up through. He suggested re-analyzing the Hartford Brook development plan to consider pushing the softball field back even further. T. Crotty noted that, in this case, the cement for the softball dugout pads has already been poured and that there was as great a need for field space for baseball and softball as there may be soccer. It was brainstormed that perhaps there is a private landowner in Town who may be interested in allowing use of their field in exchange for a tax write off. B. Fisher commented that a Madbury League did something similar and that it may be more palatable an arrangement for someone if it were only for practice space overflow.

J. D'Agostino noted that he spoke with a member of the Fair Association regarding potentially using the new Sheep Barn building space for Futsal this Winter, it was thought the Fair Association may be targeting that space for heated storage rentals.

### **After School Clubhouse Update**

K. Hill updated that Nick was speaking to the School Board tonight presenting more of a proposal for use of the Cafeteria as an alternate facility location. Since the last Commission meeting they have hired three staff, one with availability five days per week, two have availability two days per week. They have been able to move ten children from the waitlist, leaving the waitlist at twenty-three. B. Fisher asked about the plans for the cafeteria, K. Hill responded that the plan would be to have a staff member who is also employed at DCS to stay at the School with older kids as gap supervision around enrichment programs and other activities. T. Crotty asked whether use of the cafeteria would relieve the last of the pressure on the waitlist, K. Hill answered that no, staffing is still the primary obstacle.

K. Hill asked whether Members had given more thought to the pay wage scale and increasing the starting wage? D. Barnes commented that it seems the low starting wage is making the hiring more difficult and recommended starting staff at \$10/hour with a corresponding compression of the remainder of the scale. T. DuBois spoke that the fee for the program is very reasonable, he noted that for Summer Camp the cost for a full day program in Deerfield (\$125/week) is less than half of area daycare rates. He felt that a slight increase to fees to support a higher staffing wage would be viewed as reasonable. D. Barnes asked that the staffing roster and hire dates be reviewed in order to analyze the impact of a wage adjustment. J. D'Agostino suggested a mark to market by contacting area programs and T. DuBois noted that Deerfield's program includes many other additives like transportation, field trips, events, etc. T. Crotty asked that the Sub-Committee look deeper and return to the Commission with a recommended course of action. He stressed the importance of doing the homework to make an intelligent, comprehensive decision. B. Fisher asked that the Sub-Committee also look at what the break-even point for staffing is, for example does hiring three staff bring added capacity of twenty five students? Members agreed that the Program has a need for policies and documented direction.

N. Lawrence returned and reported that the School Board proposal is still in the works.

K. Hill updated that the After School Clubhouse kids put together an Arts & Crafts display at the Deerfield Fair and won a 1st place prize. They plan to do something fun with the proceeds. J. D'Agostino complemented staff on the vegetable garden project this year, Members agreed it was a great addition to the Program.

### **Tailgate Trick or Treat**

Flyers have been posted, K. Hill noted the ability to print these in color with the purchase of a color printer. Parking passes are being distributed and there is signage announcing the event in front of the GBW Building. A. Harrington asked whether the GBW sign specified "Deerfield Residents Only"? Kevin and Nick will look to include something to catch the eye. Chairman Shute confirmed that the Police will be able to secure a Detail Officer at a rate of \$60/hour and a 4 hour minimum. Members agreed that, for \$240, it was worth the added cost. Commission Members will primarily be responsible for parking of cars, the 8th Grade will be running concessions as a fundraising opportunity. Members agreed to line the field for parking on Saturday at 2p, and volunteers will arrive on the day of the event by 11:30a.

### **Basketball Registration**

N. Brown opened by saying that he does not feel that increasing the Registration fee for participants wanting to receive a basketball would be a good idea. He noted that a lot of money was invested in the Soccer program this year, with new goals, new balls, etc., and that Basketball participants should receive something as well. B. Fisher suggested buying basketballs for only the new incoming players, noting that his children have amassed quite the collection of basketballs over their years of play, he felt the money would be better spent elsewhere in the program than on kids who have accumulated three or more basketballs already. If not buying basketballs for the players, N. Brown felt that program balls were needed, Members discussed the storage limitations.

D. Barnes presented the Basketball Program finances for the past two seasons. In 2017/2018 the Program lost \$440, and in 2016/2017 the Program lost \$360. The main Program costs include basketballs, referee, payroll, scorebooks and uniforms. Last year there were 111 players in the program. D. Barnes recommended increasing the registration fee by \$5 to attempt to get the Program to a level of break even. If Parks & Recreation were to purchase a \$15 basketball for 100 players, this would add \$1,700 to the budget. Historically \$800 has been spent on the purchase of balls, so the additional \$900 would need to be absorbed elsewhere. B. Fisher recommended budgeting for the purchase of 4-5 balls per team, plus balls for new players with an option for older players to purchase their own at a discounted rate. Members discussed raising the Registration cost by \$5 for the younger levels and \$10 for ages 3/4 and above. B. Fisher expressed concern that raising the fees may be met with pushback, similar to what was experienced with baseball. Chairman Shute reminded that anyone seeking a scholarship to participate in the Programming can approach the Parks & Recreation Director where a confidential conversation will be had and scholarships awarded at the Director's discretion.

### **DPR Financial Reports**

D. Barnes has been working with spreadsheets to make the Financial Reporting more professional. He spoke with the Town Administrator regarding how the Revolving Fund ("80 Fund") is accounted for and learned that the in/out cash flow of the 80 Fund can go through the Town's reporting software. He will be working with the Town and Parks & Recreation Administration to establish line items and begin building reports by program, sport, event, etc. T. Crotty volunteered to assist with that process. T. Crotty added that it would be helpful to have a profit/loss summary for various activities, for example he would have incorrectly assumed the Sports Memorabilia auction at Old Home Day was unsuccessful, when in fact it brought in \$400. Having that documentation will help Sub Committees to plan for the following year.

### **Electronic Notification System**

T. Crotty suggested that the Commission look into the cost of establishing a One Call type notification service, similar to that used by the School. B. Fisher asked if there is a concern with the current communication methods? T. Crotty responded that he used to receive direct emails to know when something was happening, now with social media, he feels less is hitting him directly, but that the capability is there. J. D'Agostino echoed that Communication has been a complaint from the Community. B. Fisher spoke that he's not convinced that

responsibility falls to Parks & Recreation, if someone wants to know something, they have the responsibility to call and ask, or to otherwise seek out the information. T. Crotty volunteered to do more research and get more specific information around the cost of adding such a service.

### **Full Calendar Year Planning**

T. Crotty spoke of the need to establish a timeline for event preparation through the full calendar year. He pointed to the Basketball Registrations as an example where the Department was looking to launch the Registration before the Commission held its October meeting, the item could have been included in the September agenda had there been a timeline. He suggested some sort of Operational Calendar. J. D'Agostino agreed, noting that project management is all about working backwards. D. Barnes spoke that he is working on a template for the upcoming Baseball season and that Kevin and Nick are working on completing a master calendar, documenting all of the things that need to occur so that they can stay ahead of the event cycles.

### **Other Items**

D. Barnes spoke that they recently completed a baseball equipment review and found approximately fifty sets of catchers gear, twenty-four masks and some forty to fifty chest protectors. The plan is to complete a purge of equipment at the end of the next season, reducing the storage needs. Additionally, he has been attending the Lamprey River League meetings and there is information that needs to get out to coaches. There will be an upcoming vote on whether to change the levels of play, eliminating the AA league, and they are considering doing league-wide evaluations for all teams. Input from Deerfield coaches will be useful.

### **Citizens Comments**

Katie Libby asked that the Commission increase communications, especially around major decisions like the Van. She voiced concern that she had many questions, that probably have valid answers, but without presenting the decision to purchase the van in a clear and transparent way, it feels to her like a poor decision. She was concerned about the lack of CDL drivers, N. Lawrence indicated that the Department is looking into hiring drivers through Dail Transportation. Chairman Shute spoke that the need for the van originated from last year's Holiday Lights Tour and the desire to be able to offer more senior programming, including handicap accessible transportation. It was noted that the costs associated with Kevin or other Parks & Recreation staff getting their CDL license would be paid for out of the revolving fund.

### **Adjournment**

**Motion:** N. Brown moves to adjourn the September 2018 meeting

**Second:** J. D'Agostino

**Vote:** Yea 8, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

**Next Meeting Wednesday, November 7th @ 6:00pm**

*The Minutes were Transcribed and Respectfully Submitted by Katherine A. Libby, Recording Secretary.*

*Pending Approval by the Parks & Recreation Commission*