

Minutes of the Lyme Recreation Commission

Held October 25, 2010

Approved November 22, 2010

In attendance: Dina Cutting (chair), Richard Jones (Selectboard representative), Tom Yurkosky (member), Robert Couture (member), Peter Mulvihill (member), Steve Small (Athletic Director)

In attendance from the public: David Celone, Grace Tecca, Madeline Mulvihill, Ben Barrows, Michele Couture

Topic of Lyme's Requirement that all Recreational Athletes wear mouth guards

- Ben Barrows made a presentation advocating a discontinuation of the requirement that Lyme athletes be required to wear mouth guards. Ben's principal arguments were: 1) very few states require mouth guards any longer because they have not been found to meaningfully thwart concussion injuries. Indeed only Vermont and New Hampshire require them at the high school level. Larger states have all discontinued the requirement. At the middle or lower school level they are recommended but not required by the Upper Valley Recreation Association. 2) Mouth guards represent a cost and a hassle for Lyme recreational volunteers and coaches. Parents would still be free to provide them if they wanted to. 3) Mouth guards present an impediment to communication and free breathing. 4) Mouth guards present a potential hygiene issue.
- Steve Small noted that Hanover, Lebanon, Orford, Thetford, Plainfield and Kearsarge all require mouth guards at the middle and lower school level. Steve reported that it would not be impossible for referees to police a mixed policy with different requirements mandated by different towns, but several Recreation Commission members expressed concern about the potential for confusion should Lyme choose to be an outlier on this issue.
- Chairperson Cutting reported that Lyme's insurance company does not require mouth guards but "highly recommends" them.
- NHIA (NH Interscholastic Association) requires mouth guards at the high school level still. Several Commission members expressed reservations concerning the potential litigation exposure for Lyme should it elect to second guess this assessment and should a bad accident occur.
- Dave Celone reported an anecdotal incident involving his son and the loss of a front tooth by a student from Orford during a soccer game. There was further discussion differentiating the risks of mouth injury from concussions.

- Several Commission members expressed a concern that should Lyme drop the mouth guard policy, its athletes would not be properly inculcated for the high school requirement.
- Peter Mulvihill motioned to keep the mouth guard policy of Lyme unchanged, Dick Jones seconded the motion which was unanimously carried. It was suggested that if Ben Barrows wanted to change the policy he might want to lobby at the high school level first.

Pumpkin Festival

Michele Couture reported on the preparations for the upcoming Pumpkin festival. She indicated that \$250 of private donations have been raised thus far for the event. There has also been generous corporate support by Mascoma Savings Bank, Rich Insurance and others. Michele may seek to purchase weights for the event which could be used year after year.

Bike Path Sub Committee

Dave Celone reported on the preparations to approach several key landowners whose permission will be instrumental in linking a bike path from Post Pond to the Lyme Common. These preparations have included: 1) the recitation of covenants to govern the path, 2) a revised less invasive path route and map, 3) renderings for proposed privacy screens, 4) testimonials from other landowners and 5) a letter of support and a pledge to enlist volunteers to maintain the bike path by Lyme's Conservation Commission (this is in the works).

Dave requested that Lyme's Recreation Commission provide a twin letter of support to the Conservation Commission's letter and Dave further requested that Lyme's Recreation Commission formally ask Lyme's Selectboard to support the bike path project also. The Recreation Commission unanimously agreed to Dave's request. Dina Cutting agreed to bring the recommendation to the Selectboard and to draft a letter of support.

Athletic Director's Report and Recommendation on Fees

Over the course of several years it has been observed that Lyme's Basketball program has been challenged to carry itself financially based on the fees charged players. Smaller teams and high referee costs contribute to this result. It has long been the policy of the Recreation Commission to seek to assure that all of the Town's athletic programs overall carry the costs of these programs based upon participation fees. In order for basketball to independently carry itself there would have to be a significant jump in annual fees to bridge the funding gap. After considerable discussion the Recreation Commission struck upon a middle ground calling for a slight increase in the soccer fees (soccer is a large program) from \$20 to \$25. This move would permit an otherwise smaller but still large increase in basketball fees from \$35 to \$45 per season. The Athletic Director and the Commission believed that this change would permit Lyme's athletic programs to carry

themselves overall. The Commission noted that Baseball had just undergone a fee increase last year. The motion for this fee increase was made by Dick Jones , seconded by Peter Mulvihill and unanimously carried.

Post Pond Recreational Area

A minor infestation of Milfoil has been found at Post Pond adjacent to the boat landing and on the far southwest cove of the Pond. The NH DES has dispatched trained divers to remove it manually, and this effort has been supported by local volunteers on the surface carefully removing any potential plant debris. Blake Alison is investigation potential long term solutions to the problem based upon the experience of other lake communities with Milfoil and based upon available science.

The Recreation Commission has agreed to place protective fencing at the oxbow in Trout Brook adjacent to Route 10 which was just repaired by Jim Jenks for the benefit of the Town and the State Highway. Commission member Peter Mulvihill agreed to install the split rail fence to be donated by Robert Couture. The installation was pledged to occur in conjunction with the annual effort to prepare the on-ground ice rink at Post Pond's parking lot.

Post Pond Beach and Field Refurbishment Project

Lyme's Selectboard submitted a formal letter requesting that NH DES come to Lyme and review a 20 acre parcel located on the southwest cove of Post Pond to consider its suitability for meeting Lyme's wetlands remediation requirement under the Dredge and Fill Permit provisionally issued to Lyme last December. Selectboard representative Dick Jones reported that the BOS have been advised by Town Council that the proposed parcel on the southwest of Post Pond should meet the instrument requirements under the wetlands mitigation regulations. Rod Finley of Pathways Consulting has reviewed the wetlands regulations and visited the proposed tract and has a similar view. Dina Cutting reported that Jeanie McIntyre of the Upper Valley Land Trust may have a parcel owed by a private individual who might be willing to put said parcel into conservation trust. It was an open question whether such a parcel could be designated to fulfill Lyme's mitigation requirement.

Scenarios should the DES reject Lyme's second tendered parcel (Chaffee was previously tendered) were discussed. They might include: 1) appealing the DES' rejection of Chaffee to the Wetlands Council, 2) marrying the new southwest Post Pond parcel with still another smaller parcel owned by Lyme (this would involve greater costs), 3) electing to improve the Beach at Post Pond only which would not require mitigation given its smaller size. The Commission agreed to await a decision by the DES on the southwest parcel first.

The Recreation Commission's request to the Selectboard and the Budget Committee regarding an increase in capital reserves totaling \$40,000 remains outstanding (see last month's meeting's minutes) to provide for the repair of the tennis courts, the scheduled

increase in the reserve originally contemplated under the Post Pond Park refurbishment budget, and finally for the added cost of identifying, surveying , inventorying and documenting an alternative wetlands mitigation parcel to meet Lyme's provisional dredge and fill permit.

Tom Yurkosky

Tom will have served for three years when his term expires this February. Tom plans to step down at that time. Tom requested to remain on the Recreation Commission's sub-committee in charge of overseeing the Post Pond park refurbishment project. All members of the Commission supported this continued authority in a unanimous vote.

Peter Mulvihill