

**\*\*Please Note: Items to be placed on the Selectmen's Meeting Agenda must be submitted by 4 p.m. on the preceding Friday\*\***

# MOULTONBOROUGH RECREATION DEPARTMENT

## ADVISORY BOARD

### ***Mission Statement***

The mission of the Advisory Board to the Moultonborough Recreation Department is to provide the public a standard of excellence in programs and services in a cooperative spirit that encourages participation in recreation, sport and leisure activities, while carefully promoting and utilizing recreational resources and facilities available in the community.

### ***Purpose***

The principal function of the Advisory Board is to serve as a communication bridge between the Recreation Director, the Board of Selectmen and the Community and to promote programs and services to encourage support from our community through input and participation.

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### DRAFT MINUTES for December 5, 2011

Present: Al Hume, Harry Blood, Carla Taylor, Celeste Burns, Chris Shipp

Absent: Morgen Gillis

I. CALL TO ORDER 7:00 p.m.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: flag is still missing so no pledge.

III. REVIEW / APPROVAL MINUTES: November 14, 2011

Celeste made a motion to approve the Minutes. Carla seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Al asked Donna about the minutes and she was fine with the wording. Carla asked if she wanted to address the Board and she answered in the negative.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Al read a letter of resignation from Harry Blood effective at the close of today's meeting. Al told him that he will be missed. Discussion then turned to how to post vacancies. Al stated that the BOS knows of it. Chris added that we need to have the position filled asap and we should ask the BOS to put it in the paper. Harry said we need to get it on their agenda. Celeste made a Motion to nominate Morgen as a full member of the RAB. Chris Seconded. [Al voted Aye but not all Members were asked to vote] It was determined that we will also send a letter to the BOS to ask for the two alternate positions to get filled.

- b. Celeste questioned why, in the BOS Minutes, were the Minutes of certain Committees listed and ours are not. Al believes that it's the RSA committees listed only. Carla added that it's the Committees that have BOS members on them.

## V. OLD BUSINESS

- a. MRD Policy regarding age/grade Registrations for Kindergarten:

Celeste stated that this was held over from last month's Agenda. Donna says they are consistent in using Grade as the benchmark. Carla asked if they ever verify with the school. Donna replied that they will continue with the same policy of asking parents but may take it one step further if questions arise again. They are very vigilant in checking for Summer programs because of kids coming from out of town so they do get a letter from schools if necessary. Harry asked about homeschooled children and Donna explained that they do need to be in a grade but that the parents fill in the grade level. Al asked who made the complaint and why are we handling this without a paper trail. Donna explained that several people called but no one made a formal grievance. Carla asked if anyone was directed to come to the RAB but Donna did not handle the calls directly so she couldn't confirm. Carla acknowledged that the MRD took care of the problem and put it to bed but also pointed out that this is the type of issue that festers in Town and it would be better if people were told that if they have a problem to write it down. Al sees it as a continuum of not being consistent. Donna stated that she can't make an announcement without a formal complaint and she can't envision doing anything different without a formal complaint. Harry confirmed that complaint meant something in writing. Chris added that Donna shouldn't have to always say "put it in writing" and should try to make the caller happy first. The biggest issue for him is making sure MRD is pursuing problems once they've been told about them. In this instance parents see a child they know is not in kindergarten and they want the same for their child. Carla agreed and stated that those parents that called got a response so it's resolved. She added that ninety percent of the time Donna will have the same type of response so we are trying to resolve this type of issue for her. Al included that we've tried to establish guidelines and it takes a lot to put issues down on paper so people are just complaining otherwise. Al would like issues to be presented in writing to start the

process. Chris added that even if you request that problems be put in writing you still can't ignore the verbal. Donna clarified that complaints should be in writing as opposed to fielding questions. Harry pointed out that Board members have to be very careful when fielding issues from parents and probably should direct people to the office rather than taking on the role of stating MRD policy.

- b. Al asked for any other old business and Celeste brought up an email she received from Michael Branley that she meant to present to the Board at the last meeting. In a previous meeting Celeste had stated that his after school report used an incorrect figure of 3 people being at drop-in when the MRD wasn't open for drop-in at the time. That incorrect figure was not from his report. It was from an ABC report and Mike's report relied on the figure of 12-15 participants that he received from Donna.
- c. Al showed the members the three ring binder that he keeps in Town Hall that is in the Land Use Room. Each Board has their own book in which they keep Minutes. Al questioned whether the MRD did the same and Donna replied in the negative as they are all accessible online but she is more than happy to store hard copies as well. Celeste doesn't think it should only include Minutes and should include handouts as well if it's part of the permanent record. Al will double check whether they need to be included. Donna has all her Director Reports from day one so can easily include them in the hard copies as well.

## VI. RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Donna handed out hard copies of her report. Basketball is starting. Drop in open, karate is ongoing. Calls from Santa are coming up. Harry inquired about the Pathway and Donna explained that Scott would have more exact information but permission was given to fix the sections that are most problematic for DPW. They're going to cut into it and widen the spots that wash out and are most dangerous. They will be using money that was put aside a couple years ago, \$37, 500 for two years. It will not be the whole phase II and not up to road specifications but will be done the way Scott had envisioned

it. The Pathway Committee met with Mark Morrill at the DOT and he will be putting the granting of permission in writing. When this project first started the engineer and the DOT brought up the barrier but didn't envision the rock issue that came about. And the project would have had to meet the road specs. Chris summed it up by pointing out that DOT gave the waiver after but not prior.

Donna returned to highlighting the Report and stated that MRD is winding down for the end of the year so not much to highlight until next year starts. Karate is on a rotating basis. Winter Days will start in January

Carla then requested that we discuss the previous meeting. She's been on the RAB since the beginning so has seen several situations both where Donna has been disappointed and when the dissatisfied public has come before the Board and in these instances she hasn't felt MRD and the Board were a unified team. We're here to field the public in defense of and in support of the MRD. Carla was looking for some input from Donna and she explained that she needs to keep stress to a minimum due to health reasons and felt she needed to leave. In the past, previous members have been harsh on her and the MRD in their comments and have caused undue stress and she didn't want that meeting to reach that level. She feels these meetings seem to be starting off on a negative tone. Donna does want the RAB to be the bridge but lately it has been questioning every MRD decision and some comments have been personal attacks on her. Al's comments about what she wants for this community shows that there's a misperception in this community. She then brought up an October 26, 2011 Letter to the Editor in the Meredith News that talks about the BRC and Lions Club property. She read several paragraphs of it that attribute opinions to her. She's never discussed Playground Drive as opposed to the Lions Club so for someone to write this information without a conversation with her is wrong. Her frustration lies in the fact that, because the issue is going to town meeting again, the rehab is being held up. She would like the BRC Report honored and Playground Drive fixed now with the only caveat being that if we can put a new field at the Lions Club for less money than Playground Drive then she'd be in favor of it for the taxpayer's sake. From a facilities

standpoint yes, she would love to see the Lions Club built, but the immediate needs are a gym and rehabbed soccer field. Al pointed out that the article is not connected to the RAB and he hasn't seen her being the voice for wanting to get Playground Drive done. Al reiterated his commented that Donna may not get the field or gymnasium for two years and he wants to hear more from her about other options. Donna and Al debated whether Donna has been publicly advocating for playground drive. Chris added that Donna isn't to blame; the entire town already voted on this issue, and it's still not getting done. Donna added that the original concept was to build a new field then rehab Playground Drive and Chris concurred.

Carla then steered the discussion back to the last meeting and brought up a comment made by Donna that she perceived as a threat to the Board. Donna agrees that she would have sought legal advice but it was not a personal threat. Chris acknowledged that it's easy to come into a meeting and talk about coming together as a team but it does seem like we've gone from asking questions to assuming a posture and grilling the MRD on issues. The conversation then revisited the Letter to the Editor. Carla pointed out that our own Minutes have contained similar content to that letter. [Carla was discussing subject matter and not commenting on the opinion expressed in the Letter.] Celeste added that we are rehashing the same issues and should move forward towards a common goal. Chris continued with that thread and agreed that Donna does get defensive in regards to issues pertaining to her department but it may in part be due to the adversarial air in the room. All agreed better communication is a two way street

Donna and Al debated whether the past meetings in regards to the after school program and the issue with soccer were adversarial in nature. Al questioned members to gauge their reactions to the soccer issue. Celeste stated that it was simply a carryover item on the Agenda, Carla added that she was trying to determine how it was handled and whether it was a reaction to hearsay or not and she was not grilling Donna. Chris commented that the subject matter was not brought up to be adversarial but sometimes questioning turns into interrogating. Al added that a couple years ago when

parents came in we created the policy so that you have something to work with so parents can't come storming in with letters that are not part of the procedure. Donna then went back to the Letter to the Editor by stating that when the attacks become personal she needs to react. Al and Carla both counseled her to stand behind the work she's done for 30 years and not take it personally. Carla also compared it to letters put in personnel files in the past and pointed out to Donna that her advice was to let it go as it didn't change anything. Chris asked if we could now move forward as a Board. Harry pointed out that the issues being discussed have been stirred up because of Mike Branley's reports. It has taken a year to get stirred and more is getting dumped on the MRD than at the school. No one asked for the study and this Board should have and instead it came from an outside source. Donna has had 30 years of success and helped a lot of kids. She's never going to be right 100% of the time but the kids serviced are also supported by this department. People only complain about sports and that's what it is. An Agenda item to discuss for next few months might be philosophical issues with the board.

Carla is going to the Sandwich RD Commission meeting tomorrow night.

VII. CITIZEN INPUT - None

VIII. NEXT MEETING DATE AND AGENDA – January 9th

IX. ADJOURNMENT – called @ 8:07. Celeste moved. Chris seconded. Motion carried.