

Approved March 2, 2016

Sandown Recreation Commission Meeting  
May 6, 2015

The meeting was called to order by Chairman George Blaisdell at 6:30 p.m. Members present were: Terry Treanor, George Blaisdell, and John Donahue. Absent was Veronica Utman. Also present was Deb Brown, Recreation Director.

The minutes for April 15, 2015, were reviewed.

George Blaisdell made a motion to accept the minutes for April 15, 2015.

Terry Treanor seconded the motion.

There was no discussion000000

The motion was approved, unanimously.

Mrs. Brown has received a letter from TYSL regarding soccer field usage, and cost of field maintenance, which could affect the 2015 Recreation budget. They would like to make a major improvement to the field, and are asking the Town of Sandown to assist, by not charging a rental fee for four consecutive sessions (starting in the fall of 2015 until the spring of 2017). This League also includes members from other towns (not just Sandown). After discussion it was suggested that the rates remain the same for 3 years (6 seasons), or the end of 2018.

Mrs. Brown pointed out that while TYSL is occupying the field for those 16 weeks, it is not possible to rent the building, due to limited parking (this could amount to 6 to 8 rentals lost).

Mrs. Brown asked TYSL to attend tonight's meeting to present the detailed proposed field improvement. They could not attend.

In a conversation with Pete Aliberti last week. He did not understand how the Town was involved with the baseball field, and why Recreation was in charge of making decisions. Mrs. Brown explained that the fields are town-owned. She also decided to write down an explanation of the history and how the field jurisdictions are handled, for him and for others who may not be aware. Mr. Donahue stated that clearing up these perceptions is one of his objectives.

Mrs. Brown brought up the subject of the concession stand policy. She advised that the minimum age limit is already 14. This policy was written in about 1999. Item #2: Recreation Commission approval, and written permission by the Board of Selectmen, is no longer valid. The Board of Selectmen do not have to approve concession stand operations. After discussion and review of rest of the policy, the Commission agreed to re-issue the policy as-is.

Lee Dube, representing the Timberlane Youth Soccer League, joined the meeting. Mr. Dube reported that he has information from David White on what needs to be done to the soccer field. He did not have a formal report and quote, but will provide this along with an insurance binder. Briefly, he plans to do a deep thatch of the lawn, and then a deep core aeration, putting sand down, which should help the draining. The soccer board is ready to move forward. He has forwarded the information by e-mail to Recreation.

Mr. Blaisdell had a question regarding “four consecutive seasons” of waiving the rental fee (as the Town’s contribution toward improvement costs of the soccer field). He stated that we would be more comfortable keeping the rate the same, and extending it out for six seasons (three years). Mr. Dube asked if the rental fee could be waived for two consecutive seasons (an abatement of one fall and one spring)—going into the spring of 2016.

Mrs. Brown explained that when the Recreation budget is presented to the town, it includes that revenue. Looking at the TYSL proposal, this is basically asking the Town to pay for this project. If we are going to ask the Town to pay for this project, it should be in the budget, and it needs to be approved by the Budget Committee, the Selectmen, and the voters. This isn’t money that comes to the Recreation Commission; it is money that is turned over to the town. That money is used as a revenue source and offsets our budget, which would skew our numbers. The budget for this building is a bare-bones budget. For instance, field maintenance (including irrigation, fertilization, mowing, dethatching) runs over \$9000 a year. TYSL is the biggest user of the field. Historically, TYSL has offered to help with the improvement of the fields, which has been great for everybody.

Mr. Dube explained that this is a major expense for which TYSL will have to raise funds; they felt that this would be a way of offset some of that. Mrs. Brown noted that TYSL is paying a lower rental fee than at their previous location, so they were basically saving money already.

Mr. Dube will bring the Recreation proposal back to the TYSL board, and hopefully report back to Mrs. Brown with 1-2 days. Mrs. Brown asked when Mr. White was planning to start working on the field. Mr. Dube said it would be done before the Recreation summer program starts. Mrs. Brown noted that, once she has something in writing from TYSL, she will type up a letter of agreement (for Chairman Blaisdell to sign on behalf of the Commission).

Mrs. Brown has a request from the Baseball Association to have access to this building on an upcoming Saturday – as a backup in case they have rain on their picture date. This is a soccer day. Soccer does not use the building, but the parking lot is full. Mr. Donahue, speaking for baseball, said that parking will not be a problem – if they have to park elsewhere, they will walk. Mrs. Brown also has advised that Town Hall is also open that day.

Mrs. Brown stated that there are 75 chairs kept on the main floor of the Rec. building. There are about 50 more in the basement. She has received a request from a resident to buy some. Mr. Blaisdell suggested that she explain to the resident that we need these for special events and replacements. They are not for sale.

Mrs. Brown brought up the subject of new equipment. During previous playground inspections she has been advised that the small “monkey bars” should be removed. This has been done. There is \$2000 in the budget line. And Recreation has received \$4750 in development donations. She usually purchases any new equipment in the fall when it is on sale. However, she has found a piece of equipment that she has been searching for – at a discounted price. This is a “climber” (moon walk) in the shape of a turtle shell. The current catalog price is \$2800, but the company has agreed to sell this at the discounted price of \$1821 (plus installation of \$785, and shipping of \$228).

The Commission agreed that she should purchase the equipment.

Mrs. Brown stated that the playground is locked, for safety reasons. There is a spot under the large play structure where the chips have compacted and disintegrated. She has contacted our liability insurance company rep asking for clarification of the use of "certified chips" vs. wood chips (the "certified chips" cost about 3 times more). His reply was that while they recommended "certified", they were not a requirement. However, from a safety perspective, they recommend certified (aka engineered wood fiber/chips as the best choice, because engineered chips are:

certified to protect against specific fall heights,  
cut to a certain size,  
contain only pure wood, and  
last longer than the regular wood chips.

If using regular wood chips it will be important to insure they do not contain any hazardous materials such as metal from pallets or construction wood, are not too jagged or large, and are not mixed with poisonous plants such as poison ivy.

He further stated that, between price and quality, they feel that protective surfacing is one of the most important features on a playground.

Mrs. Brown also presented the bulk pricing of chips from P.R.Russell. The certified chips are least expensive of all the materials! She called them and asked for a representative to estimate how much the playground would need. They came today and estimated that we would need two loads (32 yards). Wayne Britton will deliver the two loads at \$100 each.

Mrs. Brown noted that the two picnic tables purchased last year are now on their way.

Mrs. Brown presented approval for payment forms.

Mrs. Brown noted that all interviews for the summer program will be held on Saturday. However the Commission is not scheduled to meet again until May 20. The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen after that date is June 1. This does not leave enough time for background checks and training. She suggested that the Commission meet for 5 minutes on Monday, May 18, at Town Hall, at 6:45 to approve the recommendations.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Veronica Utman  
Recording Secretary