

Greater Richmond Recreation Committee- Meeting Minutes Tuesday, September 7, 2021

Members Present: Kirsten Santor, Kate Anderson, Stefani Hartsfield, Kate Kreider, Sheri Lynn

Kirsten- Call to order at 7:04 pm

Stefani- wanted to bring up conversation about Animal Ordinance, feedback from community members, and how it relates to park ordinance and dogs off-leash at park. Opportunity for cross-communication. Kyle Kapitanski should be invited and there's a discussion about newer, more assertive police officer being somewhat aggressive with enforcement of dogs off leash at Volunteer's Green. Ordinance applies both to Volunteer's Green and Brown's Court. This isn't our area but it could come back to us. If there is a change, we should know about it. Future agenda item.

Sheri- Motion to approve previous meeting minutes. Motion seconded by Kate K. Passes with 5 yes and 0 no.

Kirsten- VORAC application has been submitted solely for Richmond as Bolton and Huntington wanted to apply separately but are interested in a future project when timing aligns. Ravi and Kirsten are working on a capital plan project to support the new playground, fixing up bandshell, putting down new mats in case the VORAC grant does not work out for these projects at Volunteer's Green.

Stefani- is Capital Plan on a Google Drive? Where can we access that document? During a Rec meeting we brainstormed together.

Kirsten- Due to open meeting rules we can't all edit it but can view it. Will share with you.

Justin Graham- Would like to put the VORAC application Letter of Interest in the meeting minutes so all can reference. Kirsten agrees.

Kirsten- Recreation box of yard games are in progress. Justin has an intern pricing them out. Justin- Many games are collapsible, Action Now sub-group will take a look at specific items and make decisions within the next week. Get ready to go by end of month.

Kirsten-Volunteer's Green usage plan still in works under sub-group. Justin- Cathy sent us annual usage forms that we could review. Kirsten- Park Use/Event form is on our docket but not actively being worked on. Hand-in-hand with Volunteers Green use form. Kurtis, our intern, has finished up his hours. He did a lot of work on brochure with photos and info-gathering, but still needs some finessing.

Kate A and Kirsten- snowshoes are ready to go at the library. They have trails to increase weight of users and mix of youth and adult. Would need to be Richmond library cardholder to use them. Will meet with Rebecca at library to set up the actual process of checking them out. Let's clarify

that those with Huntington and Bolton library cards could still use snowshoes. Sheri- we should find a way to make everyone aware of the fact that we are a 3-town Rec committee.

Stefani-Can we use our budget to advertise about the snowshoes in the Times and the Bolton paper as well? Will look into it. Kate A- Can do all 3 towns on Front Porch Forum (members of Rec committee posting). Sheri- Make sure to clarify that it is brought by RISE VT funds and the 3-town Rec committee so people are aware that we exist and represent not just the Richmond community.

Justin- Working on processing the "other" and write-in options for survey results. Important to recognize longer comments and categorize those. Some people have written paragraphs rather than a few words in the open slot.

Kirsten- Valuable to have a feedback opportunity where people can reach out about our work as a committee and ideas they have for us to work on.

Stefani- Updates from Community Outreach Group. Summary and next step items from DASH grant. In next stage of funding as it's coming from United Way, and must be spent by September 30th. Working with civic well-being partners. 3-town community outreach and health and well-being position is still an objective going forward. Interviewing stakeholders and prevention networks. UVM partners (run Prosper and other strengthening families programs) will hold structured conversations in each town in small groups to discuss data they have collected and what they want to see differently re: mental health, substance use prevention, and what activities and opportunities can we offer to families. Youth leader will run youth-only ones and then parent and family ones will be run separately. Creating websites for connecting people with needs being met- free one year use of platform? Work through both UVM and United Way. What to apply for in terms of grants for sustainability of this position.

Kirsten- Make sure we are connecting fully to Rec and the work we are doing as a committee rather than the broad work of mental health and community wellness. We are a small committee as well and there is some disconnect between what our two subgroups are doing. Could you clarify more about how this is part of Rec Committee work?

Stefani- In 2017-2018, well-being and recreation conversation was moved in direction of a rec committee. Ravi suggested that we revive Rec Committee and channel that work, specifically trying to set up a paid position, through the Rec committee.

Sheri- Reviewing our Rec Committee goals and seeing some of the work that Stefani is describing working on. Resiliency and well-being is part of that town plan and committee goals documentation.

Kirsten- If we have a position that is focused on substance abuse prevention and recreation and community health, that is impossible to fully realize as one person in one role, so how can we be more specific?

Justin- As mentioned, the term “position” is somewhat of a trigger word at Selectboard meetings. I think we are still pretty far out from having a specific concept of this position. A lot of jargon used and not a lot of work within the community. The word position means-- tax dollars going to something people don't know is necessary or valuable. Using the word “need” means opening a conversation and time needs to go to the communication and structuring that role in a clear way.

Sheri- Our thought was that if all 3 towns committed money towards this position for Rec or other work, then everyone would share that responsibility. People seemed to get onboard (a few from each of the 3 towns) with this concept but it never came to fruition.

Trish Healey- Given volunteer nature of everyone on committee or advising, narrow focus is needed. With grant money available due to COVID recovery, utilizing these funds could help us a lot and give us a specific goal and focus to do. Keeping it narrow and specific could be really valuable.

Sheri- Reviewing the Rec Committee vision and goals, using that to steer, we should try to apply to the goals and vision/mission of committee as well as the Town Plan.

Kirsten- Very broad and challenging to divide it up and have one answer from that document-- it has multiple interpretations.

Stefani- Who is our audience? The funding from DASH was specific to a prevention partner so that skewed the language of the work we were doing to start out.

Kirsten- Audience is all residents of the towns served-- no restrictions on age, background, ability level of participants.

Sheri- We need to have some specific data about what the needs are and what people want and need from us and from the town. The stakeholder meetings Stefani discussed and the survey we recently created can help with this.

Justin- It's possible that if the community data tells us that prevention work is needed for youth, then it may not entirely be part of the Rec committee only, we can also consider partnerships.

Sheri- Agrees with Justin, will take time to figure it out.

Kirsten- How should we move forward? Should we update our working groups and re-organize? Working group model has been really effective but we have not necessarily been capturing new ideas and new goals. Should we rename the subgroups?

Sheri- Would like to engage Huntington residents. Education and outreach for residents.

Kirsten- For all, or just Huntington?

Sheri-As Huntington rep, I'd focus on that, but we'd want a sub-group that supports this across all 3 towns. An education and outreach plan is a lot to take on. Long-term goals and maybe a one-year plan for one group to take on.

Kate A- Many people don't seem aware that we exist and had negative feelings about our survey we sent out because they did not know that we are looking at grant funding. Also finalizing what Kurtis was doing with brochures.

Stefani- We do have data from 2017 survey and the town plan. We should post our meetings and have people aware that we exist and what work we are doing. Snowshoes could be a good opportunity for positive community interactions. I was surprised by the new survey going out and it had additional data and info but since people did not know who we were it was a surprise.

Kirsten- Should we have a Volunteer's Green-specific sub-group?

Trish- We could do something minor at Brown's Court that is doable but maybe nothing too major at this time.

Kirsten- May be valuable to do a bit of a pause and improve our awareness in community before we jump right to doing some work at Brown's Court. Should the grant-writing be part of ed and outreach group?

Trish- There could be some community members who would be willing to support some grant-writing work but may not have time to do a full committee meeting.

Kirsten- We have covered many of the goals from the Town Plan that are listed; not all but many are covered by these sub-committees. I will update these and send them around for committee members to review.

Sheri-- Important to get members of the community to actually come to the work groups.

Justin- Would like to know who will be on the VOREC grant committee or who is the point person for this.

Stefani- Had to leave due to time being past 8:00 pm and left meeting.

Kirsten- We continue to have quorum with 4 members but would like to wrap up since it is past 8 pm and want to honor time.

Justin- Valuable to have a programming liaison, work on youth resiliency work and Community Senior Center work. Not necessarily partnerships specifically but work within the town offices and employees as well.

Kate A- improving access to activities rather than specifically designing/planning them-- Kirsten will work with language to design a sub-group with that name.

Sheri- What did we ask for on the VOREC LOI?

Justin and Kirsten- Asked for \$150,000 based on Selectboard approval which would include new playground, improvements to bandshell, improvements to or replacements of the picnic tables, and some other Volunteer's Green work. Waiting until September 27th to see if we are approved and then next step will begin of grant writing.

Adjourned at 8:17 pm. Sheri made motion, Kirsten seconded. 4 yes and no opposed.