

Richmond Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes
April 4th, 2023

Members Present: Mark Fausel, Sheri Lynn, Kate Kreider, Kirsten Santor, Kathy Costello

Community Members Present: Jack Lazarowski (Senior center member), Duncan Wardwell (Assistant to the town manager), Lisa Miller (Planning Commission member), Jessie Heiser (Richmond resident), Keith Osborne (New Richmond town planner).

Minutes Taker: Kate Kreider

Meeting started at 7:01 PM

Brief introductions of members and individuals from the public.

7:04 PM: Non agenda items: Sheri asked committee members if they are comfortable with having their comments regarding ideas for the website posted publicly. General consensus that members are okay with this. Sheri removed the names from the comments when she compiled them.

Possible agenda item for next month: Sheri mentioned receiving an email from Kirsten about a company called Play and Park Structures. This company is seeking applications from groups who would like financial help with their playground structures. This is a for profit playground structure company that currently has a promotion where groups/towns can apply for financial assistance with purchasing new playground equipment. More information and discussion on next agenda.

7:09 PM: Approval of minutes from March: Kirsten motions to approve the minutes. Sheri seconds. No discussion. Unanimously passes, March minutes approved.

7:10 PM: Park Use Reservation Updates: Duncan reviewed new reservations that he has received. No discussion or comments regarding the reservations. Duncan said we can always reach out if we have comments or questions that come up. Duncan mentioned that he has a public google calendar in addition to the spreadsheet that he sends to us. He uses the google calendar to also keep track of the reservations and to avoid scheduling conflicts. He is willing to share the google calendar with committee members as well if we would like to view it.

7:13 PM: Volunteer's Green Clean up Day Planning May 6th: Sheri shared the announcement that she wrote up for advertising the clean up day at Volunteers Green and recruiting volunteers. General committee consensus is that the announcement looks good. Discussed the ideas we brainstormed last meeting regarding the work that needs to be done during the clean up day. Sheri asked Duncan if we could get more mulch for the playground prior to this clean up day. Duncan responded that we should wait until we have the playground inspected so that we know how much mulch is needed, so we will not have additional mulch in time for the clean up day.

Discussed materials that we will need for the clean up day: rakes and shovels for raking the mulch and shoveling the extra sand (committee members can provide); rags, buckets, and biodegradable cleaning solution for scrubbing/cleaning the benches and picnic tables (Mark can provide); broom for sweeping out the bandshell (committee members can provide). Discussed using some of our Recreation Committee budget to purchase scrub brushes. Discussed what to do with debris that we pick up from the field/trails. Natural debris on the trail can just be thrown in the woods. If we end up with a lot of natural debris from the fields/playground then Duncan stated that we could probably ask someone from the town to pick it up and remove it. Kate volunteered to get some green up trash bags from the town center before the clean-up day.

Sheri mentioned pulling out the lawn games that our committee purchased so that people can use them. Sheri asked Duncan about accessing the games in the concession stand and Duncan stated that he has access to a key to unlock the concession stand where they are currently kept. Kate asked Duncan if the town has someone who does a spring cleaning of the bathroom facilities. Duncan stated, yes, there is someone who cleans the bathroom facilities regularly throughout the season that they are open.

Sheri mentioned bringing some snacks/drinks for community members and having some material about the committee. Kate volunteered to also bring some snacks/drinks. Discussed having a table and printing out some general feedback forms for community members to fill out if desired. Discussed outreach regarding the event. Committee members will post the announcement on the Front Porch Forums for Bolton, Huntington, and Richmond. Will post once within the next week and then post a second time closer to the clean up day. Discussed putting posters up about the event as well. Duncan offered to put a poster at the town center, post office, and library. Sheri and Kathy volunteered to put up a poster at their town offices too. Sheri will use the announcement she created to make a poster. Mark suggested that maybe next year we expand the event to all three towns and do a clean up at a recreation/park area in Bolton and Huntington as well. General consensus among members that this is a good idea.

7:37 PM: Town Website Recreation Page Discussion: Recreation committee members sent ideas to Sheri regarding the purpose of the website page, who we are trying to reach, and what recreation opportunities are available throughout the three towns. Sheri compiled this information. Discussed that the general consensus is for our website page to target local community members and visitors to our communities through what we include on the web page and how we organize it. Of course anyone can access the website from anywhere and see the information. Discussed being thoughtful when adding information to the website page and keeping in mind that we would like it to be a resource for local community members.

Sheri reviewed the recreation activity ideas that were submitted by committee members. Discussed whether or not it would be appropriate to list Browns Court on the website due to neighbors concerns in the past regarding use of the property. Mark suggested that the area should be listed since it is a town property. Kirsten suggested that we can limit how much

information is listed about Browns Court on the website. Kathy suggested that we could just list the parks and recreation areas for each town and we don't necessarily need to put a lot of specific information.

Discussed whether or not to list local swimming holes/potholes. Mark stated that a lot of these areas are on private lands and there are health and safety concerns as well. Kirsten suggested that we could state on the website that there are swimming areas in the towns but not provide specific locations, only list health and safety information to inform the public. Mark added that there should also be a note asking the public to be respectful of private property. Members discussed that it does make sense to list the other river access points that are safer for swimming and launching boats, tubes, etc. Also discussed Bolton climbing areas briefly and the consensus was that the areas could be listed briefly on the website without a lot of detail. People who climb are going to use other resources such as CragVT to find specific climbing information.

Jack asked where the committee landed regarding whether or not to put for profit businesses on the website. Briefly discussed profit vs non-profit businesses and if/how we want to list them on the website. Discussed just putting a link to the business on our webpage for profit businesses, and putting more detailed information on the website for the non-profit businesses. Mark mentioned that we can get permission from the companies so that the link goes both ways, so the companies' pages would also have a link to our recreation page. This would increase the number of visits to our page as well as the businesses websites. Mark suggested that we should at least make sure that the businesses are okay with us listing a link to their website. General consensus among committee members is to include limited information on for-profit businesses on our Recreation web page. Sheri mentioned that we will need to check with the Richmond town manager to make sure that we are allowed to include for-profit businesses on our web page. Duncan suggested not to worry about including every possible recreation related activity and business we can think of because people won't read through a lot of information. Most likely people will check other specific websites related to what they are interested in doing.

Discussed if we should list school playgrounds on the website. Kate suggested including them but putting information stating that the school grounds should not be used during school hours. Mark expressed some concerns about encouraging people to go to the school playgrounds and recreation fields but sees the benefit of people knowing what is available. Kirsten suggested putting general information about the amenities that schools have but not specifics. Kathy mentioned that we may need permission from the schools before we could post information on our webpage. Kate stated that she is fine with not including schools on the web page if other members feel it is not appropriate. General consensus is that members were leaning towards not including schools on the web page.

Larger themes that emerged during the discussion of recreation activities were: water, winter, and recreation areas/parks. Kathy asked about including the senior center and Sheri stated that we will have a link to their website on our web page. Jack agrees that a simple reference to the senior center with a link would be good. Next steps: Kirsten will think about the best way to

organize all of the committee members' ideas/information so that we can continue to work through this and make decisions about how to organize our web page and what to include. This topic will be revisited and discussed further at our next meeting.

8:30 PM: Update Regarding Meeting with Richmond Zoning Administrative Officer: Sheri, Kate, and Mark met with Tyler Machia to learn more about the zoning regulations at Volunteers Green. Information regarding this meeting was emailed to committee members prior to tonight's meeting to provide members with updated information. Current flood regulations do not allow any new structures at Volunteers Green, only repair or 1:1 replacement of current structures. Mark mentioned that Richmond's regulations are much stricter than they need to be, and the Planning Commission (of which he is a member) could possibly revisit the regulations and discuss/think about possible changes to the zoning regulations in the future.

8:32 PM Recent Panel on Conservation and Recreation: Sheri briefly mentioned the recent panel discussion related to balancing Conservation and Recreation. Kate offered to forward the link to the MMCTV recording of the discussion to committee members so that they can watch it if they would like.

8:35 PM: Motion to Adjourn: Kathy motioned. Sheri seconded. Meeting adjourned.