

Richmond Recreation Committee Meeting
April 2nd, 2024

Members in Attendance: Sheri Lynn, Kate Kreider, Mark Fausel

Members of the Public: Jeanne Agner (3 Parks Committee), Lisa Miller (Selectboard)

Meeting Started at 7:07 PM

7:07 PM: Non-agenda Items: None

7:08 PM: Approval of March 5th minutes: Mark motions, Kate seconds. No discussion, minutes passed unanimously.

7:08 PM: Updates From Recent Selectboard Meetings and Discussion: March 18th Selectboard meeting: During this meeting, Sheri and Kate discussed the lack of committee members and asked the Selectboard what their thoughts are regarding the future of the Rec Committee and its structure. Several selectboard members voiced that they feel that the Recreation Committee's structure as a three town committee should remain unchanged and encouraged current members to do some recruitment for new members. There was also some discussion regarding the mission and goals of the Recreation Committee. Sheri shared our work plan and what our recent priorities have been. Sheri feels that our current goals and mission are still appropriate. Kate agrees. There may also be some additional priorities/goals that come up related to the work that the 3 Parks Committee is doing and future recreational structures in town.

April 1st Selectboard Meeting: Sheri shared that during this meeting, the Selectboard and the 3 Parks Committee made a plan to organize/host a recreation summit in town focused on Volunteers Green. This will allow everyone on committees related to recreation to work together to discuss the questions regarding the floodplain and what structures could be relocated to the higher ground at Volunteers Green like the playground . Members of the public will also be welcome and this would be a good opportunity for community members to share their thoughts regarding Volunteers Green.

Lisa mentioned that during a recent selectboard meeting, Fran talked about her time on the Recreation Committee in the past. Fran suggested that having some type of office/administrative recreation support would be very helpful. Jeanne mentioned that the possibility of a part time town Rec director has been discussed during the 3 Parks Committee meetings. This could either be a paid position or a volunteer position. Jeanne suggested that there needs to be a specific job description for a Rec director. Sheri mentioned that when she first joined the Recreation Committee, we had an individual (Justin) from RiseVT who did a lot to help support our committee, but this was only a short-term program.

Sheri pointed out that if we can't get at least two more members to join the Recreation Committee this spring, then the committee will not be able to function (have a quorum which is

three members of five in attendance) until more people volunteer to join. Kate and Mark agree that this is a concern. Lisa stated that it sounds like having a paid Rec position would be really helpful, even if it's for very limited hours, and that person should have authority over a recreation budget. Maybe there's a potential of getting grant funds from the state for a position? Mark strongly supports having a paid Rec staff person, and that person could help give the Recreation Committee support and direction, and the Recreation Committee could also support that staff person. It would improve communication and collaboration related to recreation as well. Mark is happy to help move the idea forward of having a paid staff person. Sheri suggested that Mark could possibly work on identifying what the role of a paid staff person or volunteer would be. Mark was agreeable to that.

Lisa stated that one of the biggest needs of any organization is communication, and having a point person for Rec would be great. Mark feels that there's plenty of people who would be willing to step in occasionally and help out with specific recreation needs. Lisa stated that often people just need to know when and where and they will show up to volunteer.

Jeanne stated to Mark that Fran Thomas would be willing to help him with writing a job description for a Rec staff position. Lisa suggested that someone could talk with Josh about the need/possibility of a Rec staff member. Mark mentioned that he would like to talk with Josh about recreation sometime anyway and he's willing to reach out to Josh. Mark also mentioned not being clear when it comes to budget and who makes the decisions to spend money. Kate mentioned that during the recent selectboard meeting, the Selectboard confirmed that the Recreation Committee does not have any authority over money/funds. We can make suggestions for how funds are spent, but we do not have control over any budgets.

Mark wants more clarity and a clearer direction for the committee and recreation. Lisa stated that she feels that Josh would welcome that discussion and a rec staff member or volunteer would probably help lighten his load. Kate and Sheri and Jack will write up recruitment material and work on recruitment. Sheri will draft a notice to post on the web and Kate offered to edit it. Mark will work on writing up a Rec staff description with Fran and meet with Josh and give us feedback during our next meeting. Jeanne asked if someone needs to make a proposal to the Selectboard for a Rec staff member, and who would make this proposal? Lisa supports someone having a conversation with the selectboard about a paid recreation staff member and putting forward a proposal.

7:42 PM: Continued Discussion of the April 1st Selectboard Meeting: The Selectboard chose May 13th, 6-9 PM for the Recreation Summit. During the Selectboard meeting they also presented a spreadsheet that listed the ARPA money that has been committed to projects and what is remaining to spend. They have a strategy to make sure that the money is obligated in time. Sheri noticed that there is \$100,000 listed for the match of the playground cost if we don't get the grant, which we did not get. On the spreadsheet it said that there was uncertainty if the whole price of the playground is included in the 3 parks \$450,000 budget, or only half. Sheri will email Josh and suggest that the unallocated \$100,000 on the ARPA spreadsheet go toward the

playground so that the 3 Parks Committee will have enough funds to pay for half the playground and the other proposed rec structures.

7:47 PM: Collaboration with the 3 Parks Committee and Update on Playground Structure:

Sheri reviewed Kirsten's recommendations regarding a new playground if the new structure is in the same location as the current one. Jeanne stated that she is aware of Kirsten's recommendations and that she has learned a lot about flooding and mitigating flood damage. Jeanne mentioned that during the summit she feels that there should be a discussion regarding whether or not there should be another playground in the same location and discussion of other possible locations. Lisa mentioned that the use of Jersey barriers may not be effective at lessening flooding damage. Lisa pointed out how the flood water undermined the stone and flag at Volunteers Green and it fell over. Sheri feels that the Rec Summit will be a good opportunity for community members to give feedback. Lisa stated that the challenge is figuring out what questions to ask, the more specific a question, the more useful the answers will be.

Sheri discussed the possibility of asking Duncan for another playground inspection to be completed by Vermont League of Cities and Towns. We believe that the playground was not inspected after the December flooding repairs. Kate and Mark agree that it would be a good idea to ask for another inspection. Jeanne also supports having another inspection done. Sheri will reach out to Duncan and request an inspection.

Sheri asked Jeanne if there are any other updates from the 3 Parks Committee that she would like to share. Jeanne stated that the deadline for her committee to submit proposals to the Selectboard was extended until October, however her committee hopes to get proposals to the Selectboard earlier because a lot of the items need to go out to bid and that will take some time. Jeanne mentioned that they have their proposals for Browns Court pretty much wrapped up at this point. Jeanne stated that one challenge is figuring out if they present their recreation proposals in pieces as they have them finalized, or wait until they have everything finalized and then present everything to the Selectboard at once.

Mark suggests that the 3 Parks Committee moves forward with the recreation items that they are fairly certain on, and they can always leave some of the smaller, less essential items until they know whether or not they have the funds remaining for those. Jeanne stated that she feels that her committee is almost at that point, but the problem is that they don't know how much money they'll need for Volunteers Green and what the priorities will be, and they don't want to be left with insufficient funds for the things identified as most important. They want to wait until the Rec Summit, after which they'll have more information regarding Volunteers Green and what the priorities are there.

8:02 PM: Discussed reviewing our work plan priorities and strategies. We will review this during our next meeting and update our priorities as appropriate. Reviewed action items for next meeting: Sheri and Kate will work on recruitment, Sheri will reach out to Duncan to request a playground inspection, Mark will write up a job description for a Rec staff position and will reach

out to Josh to meet with him. Lisa suggests getting on the agenda for the selectboard to discuss the possibility of a Rec staff position after we have a job description.

8:09 PM: Kate asked if we're going to try to do a spring cleanup at Volunteers Green again this year. Sheri said no due to lack of committee membership and the timing didn't work out very well last year, it was really busy at the park that day. Kate agrees that it makes sense to not do it this spring. Mark mentioned that he will try to attend some other committee meetings this month to learn what they are doing and coordinate/communicate with other committees.

8:12 PM: Motion to adjourn by Mark, seconded by Sheri. Meeting ended at 8:13 PM