

Recreation Committee Meeting December 6th, 2022

Members Present: Kate Kreider, Sheri Lynn, Mark Fausel

Others in Attendance: Duncan Wardwell (Assistant to the Town Manager), Jessie Heiser (Lives on Esplanade)

Meeting called to order at 7:08PM

Non-agenda Items: None

Approval of Minutes from November: Mark motioned to approve the November meeting minutes. Sheri seconded. No discussion. Minutes approved unanimously.

Committee Meeting Schedule: Briefly discussed meeting format and possibly moving to all virtual in the winter. Duncan updated the group that in the middle of January the state regulations are set to change and we will no longer have the option to hold fully remote meetings. The committee would still have the option of hosting hybrid meetings, or fully in-person. Sheri raised a concern about driving to the town center in inclement winter weather because she lives in Huntington. Duncan and Kate stated that they live close and can usually come to the meetings in-person. Sheri liked the idea of keeping the meetings hybrid, and Kate and Mark agreed. The committee will continue to hold meetings in a hybrid format. Reviewed the upcoming year and meeting dates. Dates as of this time are as follows for 2023: January 3rd, Feb 7th, March 21st (due to conflict with town meeting/voting), April 4th, May 2nd, June 6th, skip July, August 1st, September 5th, October 3rd, November 7th, December 5th.

Write-up for the Annual Town Report: Sheri asked when the write-up is due for the annual report. Duncan was not sure but believes that it is due in early January. Sheri and Duncan will try to find last year's write-up to use as a template for creating the one for this year. Kate offered to help with the write-up if needed.

Google Feedback Form: Reviewed the open-ended feedback form that Duncan created for the Recreation Committee page on the town website. General agreement that the form looks good and is fine to post on the website. Mark suggested for the form link to be put up on the Huntington and Bolton websites. Sheri will reach out to Huntington, Duncan will reach out to Bolton.

ARPA Use Suggestions List and Feedback: Duncan shared that the ARPA committee wants feedback from all of the town committees regarding their thoughts on the collected suggestions that are pertinent to their committees and the committee's top priorities. Reviewed the ARPA data related to recreation briefly. Sheri suggested that committee members review the list more thoroughly and in January we will discuss this in more detail. At our January meeting we can

come to a consensus on what our priorities are and then give that feedback to the ARPA committee. All in agreement.

Recruitment of New Members: Sheri shared the write-up that Kate previously used for recruitment on Front Porch Forum. General agreement that the write-up sounds good. Kate will update/edit the write-up and then share with Sheri to review before posting on FPF.

Priority Work Plan Areas:

Volunteers Green Funding for Maintenance and Improvements: We need to identify repairs and maintenance that are needed and then prioritize them. Then we need to identify which fund source is appropriate for each need (ARPA, Capital Plan using reserve funds, Conservation Reserve Funds). We need to develop a list or spreadsheet with the various improvements needed at Volunteer's green and what the funding source will be.

Capital Plan: We discussed how to move forward with asking the selectboard to start a Capital Plan. Duncan stated that if we give him an amount of money that we would like the town to set aside annually for Volunteer's Green, then he can reach out to the finance director and present what we want to the Selectboard. It is too late now to start the Capital Plan for the upcoming fiscal year, but we could get it started for the following year. Sheri raised the issue that we will need to wait until our next meeting to vote on what amount of money we will request from the town annually for the Capital Plan because the vote needs to be publicly warned. It will be put on the agenda for our next meeting. Sheri suggested that we shouldn't ask for funding for a new playground through the Capital Plan because replacing the playground is urgent and cannot wait 5+ years. She suggested that we choose some other Volunteer's Green improvements to be completed using Capital Plan funds. Kate and Mark agreed. Mark suggested that some work at Brown's Court would be a good focus and other projects at Volunteer's Green, such as putting in a pavilion and new picnic tables. Committee members will think about what some improvement priorities are for Volunteers Green that would be appropriate for Capital Plan funding and will discuss further at our next meeting.

Public Engagement Process regarding changes to Volunteers Green: Discussed starting a process to engage the community starting this winter regarding how community members would like to see the playground improved. We discussed having a public meeting to get feedback about what the public wants to see. Mark suggested doing a public meeting in March. Kate and Sheri agree. Mark suggested adding other improvements we would like to see as well in addition to the new playground for the community to review. Sheri is going to reach out to Kirsten to help plan the public meeting presentation in a way that will give us good, focused feedback (having specific suggestions for structures and improvements, etc.).

Volunteer's Green Community Clean-up Day in the Spring: Discussed scheduling a clean-up day on a weekend in May. Committee members will need to compile a list of tasks that need to be done during the clean-up day. Possibility of also doing a clean-up day in the fall if needed.

Ongoing Minor Upkeep and Maintenance at Volunteer's Green: Duncan stated that committee members can email him if there are any minor maintenance needs that we identify at Volunteer's Green. Kate mentioned that an ongoing list may be helpful so that Duncan doesn't get multiple emails about the same needed repair and others can see what has been done. Duncan stated that he will work on creating a form where we can add small items that need to be repaired. This will give us a good view of the long term maintenance needs at Volunteer's Green and will provide documentation of what needs to be done and what has been done. Discussed that having people walk through Volunteer's Green from time to time to identify maintenance needs would be helpful. Mark agrees. Kate offers to help with walking through the park and identifying needed repairs/maintenance. Duncan also suggested that he or other town employees may also be able to walk through the park occasionally and assess the needs. Committee members agree to work in collaboration with the town employees to identify, document and complete maintenance needs at Volunteer's Green.

Outreach and education: Discussed that our committee is already doing a lot of outreach and education. We have created the general recreation feedback form and it will be posted on the website. This winter we will start a process of community engagement and feedback regarding what updates/changes the community wants to see at Volunteer's Green. We are working on recruiting for volunteers and committee members. Mark suggested that we could reach out to schools and to the Senior Center when we have upcoming volunteer events.

Priorities for Our Next Meeting: Committee members need to think individually about what the Volunteer's Green improvement priorities are regarding use of ARPA funds and Capital Funding. We will vote on an amount of funds to ask the selectboard to put aside annually in a Capital Fund. Members will review the ARPA feedback related to recreation more thoroughly. Mark suggested looking at the survey data from the town plan work regarding recreation. Duncan will try to find the survey data from the town plan. Sheri will send the link to the VOREC grant application for our review. Kate suggested that we could also look at the data from the community survey that our committee completed in the summer of 2021.

Mark Motioned to Adjourn, Sheri seconded, all in favor. **Meeting adjourned at 8:37pm**