

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD**  
**Parks & Recreation Commission**  
**February 3, 2015**  
MINUTES

**Call to Order**

6:00pm: Chairman Shute called the meeting to order

**Present:** Jeff Shute, Chairman; Julie DeCosta, Amy Harrington, Ken Heckman, Jack Hutchinson, Brian Layton, Ernie Robert and Melissa Robertson Members

**Also Present:** Joe Manzi, Parks & Recreation Director

**Minutes of January 2015**

**Motion:** J. DeCosta moves the minutes as written

**Second:** M. Robertson

**Discussion:** J. Manzi clarified that the play structure from Utlitplay will have a handicap swing, this should replace the term(s) "ADA Accessible" from the January and December 2014 minutes.

**Vote to approve as amended: Yea 8, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries**

**Citizens Comments**           None

**After School Program**

M. Robertson shared that she has been contacted by three separate families in the After School Program who are worried about the quality, staffing and general direction the program is headed in. Issues with discipline, use of time, and tutoring by unqualified staff were topics of concern. One family shared that they have their child(ren) attend just one day a week in order to keep a spot on the active roster for emergency situations. The families spoke that they were concerned the decline in the After School Programs would carry over into the Summer Program.

J. Manzi responded that he could not be more proud of the After School Program and its staff. The program serves more than 100 children and he believes that many families value the reading and homework time that is built into the afternoon as it can relieve the work to be done later at home. Staff meetings are held daily and there is constant training, J. Manzi has no concern for the tone or atmosphere of the programs. E. Robert asked what the daily attendance and staff numbers were, J. Manzi answered that typically 60 students attend each day and there are six to eight employees, the target student:staff ratio is generally 10 or 12:1. J. Manzi felt that the issues concerning the families needed to be identified and better clarified so that they can be addressed.

J. Hutchinson suggested that the Commission start by reaching out to the dissatisfied families and set up a time for them to discuss their concerns directly with Joe. M. Robertson volunteered to reach out and to be present for the conversation. Members agreed that if the families are uncomfortable speaking with Joe directly they can meet with a smaller subset of the Commission.

**Playground Update**

The playground equipment has all arrived and a date for the community build will be set in the coming weeks.

J. Manzi will email copies of the install plan to members for review. The build is expected to be relatively small in scale, the depth probing that was done at the site all looked good.

**Deliberative Session Review**

J. Manzi updated that the Deliberative Session was generally uneventful. J. Hutchinson spoke that it will take some work to get the Town's budget passed over the default budget. Chairman Shute spoke in support of the Warrant Article to establish a revolving account for Police, Fire and Rescue special detail work. Creating the pass through account is important as it would cost the Town nothing and all it to recognize some additional revenue for special details.

**Bicentennial Field Updates**

J. Manzi updated that he misspoke previously about which portion of the Batting Cage repair costs would be covered by the Insurance Policy, the \$1,000 deductible was the Department's responsibility. He has not heard back from the Girl Scouts on their interest in doing a Service Project at the field. K. Heckman suggested that J. Manzi explore a sponsorship opportunity with AQ Fence in exchange for a reduction of the cost to repair the Batting Cage. J. Manzi will ask.

#### **Joe Stone Scholarship**

J. Decosta will be circulating the Joe Stone Scholarship applications to the area High Schools, in the FORUM and in the March Communicator. A submission deadline of May 1st will be targeted and updated documents will be put online. She will look into once again utilizing the Coffee House as a fundraiser and J. Manzi reminded that the Commission had considered using part of the \$10,000 Department donation toward the scholarship. J. DeCosta added that there may be opportunities to do work at the Fairgrounds in the Spring as fundraising.

#### **Winter Carnival**

J. Manzi spoke that the basic schedule for Winter Carnival is in place and the only outstanding item is to determine who of the Commission is available to help that day. E. Robert and B. Layton will head up the Freese Pond skating area and J. Manzi's materials will include language to say "...as ice conditions allow." E. Robert thought it would be best to do the snow removal at Freese's Pond a day or two in advance of the events. J. Manzi will speak with the Fire Department about watering down the skating area. The Fireman's Dinner will be held that Friday evening. Events at the gazebo will run from 11a - 3:30p on Saturday, ending with the football game. Parks & Recreation has challenged the Fire and Police Departments, but no response has been received just yet. J. Manzi will send a spreadsheet for Members to sign up for volunteer time slots at the Gazebo on Saturday.

#### **Hartford Brook Field Projects**

Members reviewed the tax map for the Hartford Brook lot and took into consideration the proximity of water sources and layout of the fields. K. Heckman suggested that, rather than having two baseball diamonds, the area might have one diamond and another area segregated for fielding or pitching facilities and that each team could work through a rotation of the spaces. J. Hutchinson felt that the primary focus should be on getting the soil in great shape. Members agreed that the first step would be to finalize the desired field layout and next to work diligently to improve the topsoil. Chairman Shute will prepare some field pieces to scale and Members will consider the field layout at the next meeting. J. Manzi will ask Rick Pelletier for references of companies experienced in field development.

#### **NH Soccer**

J. Manzi spoke that, while Deerfield's Rec Soccer programs are thriving, several of the other towns in the league are experiencing a move of players to travel teams. As he has received requests that Deerfield be involved with similar leagues, Joe has reached out to NH Soccer League to find out more about the process for becoming a member. U10 or U12 participation is being considered for both boys and girls, depending on the numbers. J. Manzi noted that coaching will be critical to the success of these programs in Town.

#### **Deerfield Hoop Classic**

J. Manzi spoke that the 12th Annual Hoops Classic will be held March 18 - April 1. This year there will be a girls 3-4 Division and Joe is very happy to be building up the girls programs. The event has sold out each of the past 3 years and with registrations arriving daily it is expected to be sold out again very soon. J. Manzi will distribute dates and volunteer needs as the event approaches.

#### **Old Home Day**

Old Home Day will once again be held the first Saturday in August. J. Manzi will proceed with requesting that the Fair permit use of their facilities for the fireworks and ice cream social as well as ask if the Fair Association will again help with sponsorship of the fireworks. If the proposed Town Budget passes there will be \$2,000 to put towards the cost of the fireworks.

#### **250th Anniversary**

E. Robert attended the last 250th Anniversary Committee meeting and has committed the Parks & Recreation team to organizing the Road Race. Ideas were to map out a circuit course through the Fairgrounds where spectator

involvement would be high, or to include the race in the Sunday morning events at Town Center. Other areas where the Commission could potentially take the lead included the Fireworks display, kid games and some sort of chicken dinner/communal meal, though each requires further discussion over the coming months. J. Hutchinson said that it would be great if Parks & Recreation could put on a skit for the talent show.

**Adjournment**

**Motion:** M. Robertson moves to adjourn the meeting of February 2015

**Second:** E. Robert

**All in Favor – Motion Carries – Meeting Adjourns at 7:45p**

**Next Meeting Tuesday, March 3rd @ 6:00pm**

*The Minutes were Transcribed and Respectfully Submitted by Katherine A. Libby, Recording Secretary.*

*Pending Approval by the Parks & Recreation Commission*