

South Hadley Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes: January 12, 2021
Zoom Online Meeting
<https://vimeo.com/500972620>

Presented by Recreation Director Andrew Rogers

1. **Roll Call:** Meeting called to order at 5:25 by RC. Attendance: Patrick Dawson (PD), Mark Zraunig (MZ), Laura Friesner (LF), Ben Sabbs (BS), Ryan Kennedy (RK), Ray Carillon (RC), and Byron Joy (BJ)
Staff: Andy Rogers (AR) and Danielle Stelma (DS). Excused: Dave Mendoza (DM).
2. **Minutes of January 12, 2021:** Approved, BS/MZ. 6-0.
3. **Bills Payable:** AR noted that we are currently around \$5,000 in the hole due to COVID refunds and many of the expenditures we had in advance like reconditioning football equipment and purchasing soccer goals and related equipment. Many of our revenue boosting programs have been cancelled as well. They are hoping to get back to even following a very active spring season.
4. **Correspondence:** AR reviewed the correspondence from the previous month. Many of the notes concerned COVID measures, policies, communication with coaches and parents, and a few complaints about specific situations with teams. There is currently a search committee being formed for a new Town Administrator and they are looking for a community representative. The FY22 budget process has started, and our budget is very minimal with a few capital requests for pickleball and netting at the Plains School. There was an issue at the Town Farm, where shooting was heard during a soccer practice. AR checked with Conservation and Mass Fish and Game, and that area is stocked with pheasant in the fall and hunting is allowed. They cannot be within a set number of feet of the houses and road; however, we posted some signage in the woods around that area notifying them of playing fields. There is active hiking in that area, and we helped publicize that. There was also a complaint about smoking in the parks, and we will work on posting more signage. Finally, the GMAX testing at the turf field happened and it is in great shape.
5. **Schedule of Events:** AR reviewed the schedule of events from the past month. DS lead some really exciting items over the past few months. We did a Virtual Santa in conjunction with the Friends of Buttery Brook Park that was a success. Kids signed up for a time slot and pre-answered questions so Santa could have a good discussion. At the end, they got a certificate, photo and coloring book if they wanted it. She has been doing some storybook reading on TV-15. We have been highlighting our trail network for "Trail Tuesdays" on our Facebook page and also did some scavenger hunts in our various parks and trails.
6. **Old Business:**
 - a. There was an open discussion about our fall sport offerings, flag football, virtual cheerleading, field hockey and soccer. BJ said the new uniforms, that were grey with the new logo were a big hit! There was some concern about the lack of Sani-Cans, but most understood why the decision was made by the BoH. RC felt the COVID-coach was very important and worked for the teams. The supplies were good, and the coaches

felt the extra masks were important as kids did sometimes for get them. BJ asked about trash cans, and how we can get more out. AR said that the Parks Department is trying to take the National Parks method of you “take out what you take in” and he has had many discussions with him about it. AR will invite him to our next meeting to discuss further. BS said that will be a concern at SHHS this season with all the games that are played on the turf field and the baseball/softball fields. MZ wanted to ask if this was happening at other towns as well?

- b. The dog park has been going quite well, except for a tree that fell across a fence and some dog owners not cleaning up after themselves. The Bike-Walk committee has been focused on promoting the various parks, and a few potential projects at Ledges and Buttery Brook Park. MZ asked about the area next to the Ledges that is farmland. AR said they are applying for a grant, to permanently protect that as farmland where the owners get a payout from the state to support that. AR said they are looking at a section in the back to connect to the existing trail network the town owns.

New Business:

- a. AR said they are not offering any basketball and wrestling due to the fact the schools are not permitted for use at this point due to COVID. We are going to concentrate on a robust spring sports season. RC asked if the outdoor hoops would be going up as the weather has been good, and teams that are playing in private leagues would like a place to practice. AR said he will ask the question; however, they came down due to the amount of trash being left at the courts and the amount of play despite the posted warnings and most courts regionally are closed.
- b. The potential spring sports season was presented. We are looking at adding a K-2 Sunday soccer league this year, following the success of the fall season. We are also looking to expand the Girls on the Run program in the 6-8th grade divisions. Another option to add is a virtual sign language course, a Corn Hole league (at Ledges) and a softball league for 40 or 50+. BS asked about grade 1 softball and baseball players, and the fact they didn’t play tee-ball before. Should we combine them with kindergarten and all play tee-ball? AR said that is tough, as there are not enough girls in grade 2 to have their own league. The numbers will ultimately tell us what we will do. The boy’s lacrosse league has separated from Connecticut as the rules are different by the state. RC asked about timing for all the programs and when they might start. AR said the high school teams are starting later, on April 26 this year which will help us. He thinks most leagues will start on time; however, we haven’t heard from many of the leagues yet as to their plans. BS asked about if there will be JV high school teams, and AR said he thinks so as they did in the fall. PD thanks AR for his efforts with the CVYL and getting them to separate from CT and set their own rules.
- c. AR said there is bad news with the MESMS pool. It was emptied in March and when they went to fill it for the high school swim team, it is damaged and cannot be opened. AR said back in 2014, the School Committee was looking at doing repairs, and they tabled it. He added this will be a repair over \$500,000 and this will be a school issue to decide. His opinion was that they should look at building a new pool that is larger. MZ asked if there was room for a larger pool, and AR felt that would be good if there was a

new Mosier school, that could be a better fit. MZ added that a good pool makes it more attractive for people moving to the community.

- d. AR gave an update on the new fitness walk at the new COA/Woodlawn. It will include a fitness loop around the ball field, added sidewalk up Dayton Street, and senior friendly exercise equipment. There will also be an improvement to the playground with a new structure added.
- e. People liked the soccer online team store and felt the quality of the products were good. We are going to look at adding more of these for the spring sports, and hopefully the high school programs will jump in as well. This is a fundraiser for the department.
- f. The Master Plan Committee sent along their tasks, and there are only two items for better advertising of our programs and to encourage more young families to use our facilities.
- g. AR presented the annual Town Report for FY2020.
- h. Please complete the Sexual Harassment policy and return to AR as soon as possible so he can turn in to Jennifer Wolowicz.
- i. BJ mentioned Brian Couture's replacement. AR said the Selectboard is doing interviews in the next few weeks, and they will fill that vacancy.
- j. MZ asked if we would be back on schedule for the meeting and AR said we should be on for the second Tuesday in February. There was consensus to stick with 5:15pm so AR can combine with the Bike-Walk Committee.
- k. PD asked about the issue with the complaint at football. AR said that has been dormant and feels that it is resolved and the coach in question will have to complete some tasks to be able to coach.

7. **Adjournment** at 6:27pm. BJ/MZ. 7-0.

