

South Hadley Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes: March 12, 2019
Recreation Department Office – Town Hall

Presented by Recreation Director Andrew Rogers

1. **Roll Call:** Meeting called to order at 5:35pm by BC. Attendance: PD, DM, BJ, BC, RC, MZ.
Staff: AR, DS.
2. **Minutes of January 14, 2019:** Approved as read. RC/BJ. 5-0.
3. **Bills Payable:** Approved as presented. DM/BJ. 5-0.
4. **Correspondence:** AR reviewed the correspondence from the previous month. Of note:
 - a. AR will be meeting with the school resource officer and principals in the next few weeks about the basketball season and concerns the YMCA has about people in the building during their time with the new precautions the schools are taking during the school day.
 - b. AR said that PeoplesBank is interested at looking at the scoreboard at the turf field in the future for an improvement there. There is some concern that might replace the fireworks funding.
 - c. The situation with a complaint about the 7/8 Girl's Suburban basketball program was mentioned and the steps we went through to address the situation.
 - d. Andrea Miles was in attendance and spoke to the letter she wrote with concerns specific to team formation at the recreation level after looking for what polices we had listed on the website. There was discussion about how this works with various leagues, the need for good volunteers. It was mentioned by various commissioners that we are currently looking at all our programs and policies to attempt to make things better. Additionally, we are always limited by who volunteers and we try to do what is best for our volunteers and kids.
 - e. AR brought up the Bill that is currently in the legislature looking to ban youth tackle football in grades 7 and lower.
5. **Schedule of Events:** The schedule of events was reviewed with all the options we have by DS.
6. **Old Business:**
 - a. Dog Park: AR said he met with members of Berkshire Design and the town about the new dog park. The town will be working directly with the firm for the design phase while the dog park committee considers rules and regulations and has to fundraise a portion to satisfy the grant requirements.
 - b. The discussion to name Beachgrounds #2 after Bart Giamatti was further discussed. RC said he has written a draft letter to send via social media to Mr. Giamatti's children about trying to do some fundraising to make this happen with a scoreboard, plaque or something similar. AR said how Mr. Giamatti went to high school in the current town hall and was the team manager and moved on to become the Commissioner of Major League Baseball. RC will send out the draft email and work with the Baseball Committee.

- c. BC noted at the new food truck might be a good addition to the fireworks this year and either him or AR will discuss with Chef Bleu to see what might work.
- d. Winter activities were discussed. It was noted that there were several kids in K-3 wrestling this year and BC said that Holyoke might be looking to start a program, potentially with us next season. Basketball and specifically parent behavior is a concern of not only the Recreation Department, but many of the leagues our kids play in. People are very critical of referees and other teams/coaches. We are looking to get a stricter rule on behavior, especially attacking referees verbally during and after games. RC suggested a “quiet game” next season where nobody can make noise during the game except for the players. It was also asked that for games at SHHS, could both sides of the bleachers be opened. AR said that is difficult as it adds to the custodian’s duties as they tried it before. We can certainly investigate it.

7. New Business:

- a. We welcomed new Recreation Commissioner Mark Zraunig to the Commission and he gave a brief overview of why he got involved. AR mentioned that a mistake happened with the latest commission appointments where two people were appointed for one spot. Ben Sabbs was not added but is very interested. Seeing we are trying to expand the commission’s responsibilities, AR suggested we move to nine members. This was passed. (RC/PD 5-0).
- b. The spring sports offerings were mentioned, and out numbers are very healthy across most divisions. Tryouts were scheduled in advance and we hope to get an early start to the season.
- c. The Easter Egg Hunt and Hat Parade will be April 20 at 10am. Danielle has asked for help putting out the eggs and judging the parade. If interested, please let her know. DM asked about the bunny as his children would volunteer.
- d. AR noted that he is currently working with the Pool Director Jim Mercer to bring some swimming activities to the Recreation Department that would cover a wide range of ages. Adding Pre-K lessons is an option this summer and bringing back the open swim nights. It was noted that some people felt the pool was too cold, especially during the winter high school season when they like the pool cooler for races. It was also noted that someone felt their kid got a rash, potentially from the amount of chemicals. There is open swim for seniors during the week, which is very early. The idea of doing a monthly fee for open swim on the weekends or during slow times was also brought up.
- e. We have added some new programs with Futsal Street Soccer for Pre-K through eighth grade this fall. We are running a spring vacation clinic (K-8) as well as Sunday morning soccer for Pre-K and Grades K-2 at Buttery Brook Park. We are hopeful this program will be successful, and it comes highly recommended from Wilbraham.
- f. AR said that after attending an ADA hearing, they will be putting in ADA sani-can units at all parks this season. This will cost roughly \$3,000 extra but we will meet all legal requirements. They are also doing self-evaluation of all facilities around town to make sure we are complying.
- g. A question was asked about the new Council on Aging and what impact that might have on Woodlawn Field. AR walked the property with the TA and COA director last fall and discussed what can be used. We are going to bring the right field fence in 5-10 feet and

round off the fence in center field. This will be an improvement for baseball. The basketball court and some of the playground equipment will also be removed to make way for senior friendly activities. Additionally, AR asked for there to be restrooms that are only accessible from the outside and the potential for an exercise room/dance studio for use by the Recreation Department.

8. **Adjournment** at 7:20pm. MZ/BJ. 5-0.