

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

April 27, 2016

3:30 p.m.

Unity Park Field House

56 1st Street

Turners Falls, MA 01376

Present: Dennis Grader, Chairperson, Linda Ackerman, Vice Chairperson, Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation, Barbara Kuklewicz, Secretary, Jennifer Peterson, Clerk/Bookkeeper (3:35)

Guests: Gary Briere from River's Edge Cycling, Brian Dolan, Anne Jemas and Ami Podlenski from Skate Park Committee, and Suzanne Lamonto from River Culture

Meeting Being Taped

Agenda:

1. Meeting Called to Order: 3:32 p.m.

2. Approval of March 15, 2016 Meeting Minutes: Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion of accepting the minutes; seconded by Linda Ackerman.

3. River Valley Ice Cream Ride

Jon introduces Gary Briere, owner of River's Edge Cycling. Gary spoke about himself and his 30 years as Chief of Recreation for Massachusetts state parks; he was project manager of Discovery Center in Turners Falls for a period of time as well as a former resident of Montague. This ride is a non-competitive fundraiser for the Communities Involved in Sustaining Agriculture and MassBike Pioneer Valley. He hopes to raise awareness for local foods and farming while enjoying the beautiful landscape of Franklin County. Bart's Ice Cream will be the ice cream partner for this event. The ride will be broken down into three loops/rides; a 50, 25 and a 5 mile ride. The Kiddle Scoop loop (5 miles) course will start at Unity Park then run the bike path along the canal and then back for ice cream and entertainment. The Single Scoop loop (25 miles) will begin at Unity Park and leave town via the Montague City Bridge into Deerfield, and Sunderland where there will be a rest stop at Williams Farm to see the animals and enjoy some ice cream. The Double Scoop loop (50 miles) will start at the park and head toward East Mineral Road and up through Northfield, Gill and their rest stop will be at the Upingil farm for ice cream and then back to Turners Falls. They are planning a catered lunch with entertainment in the early afternoon, a farmers market and vendors through out the day. This is a first year event but he feels it has great potential for success; they have been aggressively promoting the event with posters at various local businesses. Gary informed the commission that he will be carrying the insurance. Jon suggested that Gary go before the Board of Selectman because it will involve transportation and possibly a large number of people. Jon will contact the secretary for the Board of Selectman to begin the next step in this process.

Motion: Linda Ackerman makes the motion to support the River Valley Ice Cream Ride, seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Vote: 3-0

4. Skate Park Project Update

The first issue to be discussed was the safety issue with scooter riders. There was discussion regarding the post on Facebook about the young scooter riders, and their lack of parental supervision. Brian Dolan recommended two things must happen to ensure safety: additional signage and more community outreach. Parents and children need to understand skate park etiquette as well as possess some level of skill before entering the park; otherwise someone will get hurt. Suzanne suggested having a PSA that possibly Montague Community TV could produce and post on several town websites. Another suggestion was for the Park and Recreation Department to have classes in scooter safety for the younger kids. Jon recognizes the huge safety concerns with the young

scooter riders but he does not believe it is possible to keep them out of the skate park. He does highly recommended that if there is a possibility of restricting any type of user, that a public hearing be set. This hearing would be held in the evening at Town Hall and well publicized so that as many people as possible has an opportunity to be a part of the discussion.

Discussion then moved to the Grand Opening of the Skatepark on June 18. Suzanne went over the plans that she, Jon and the Skatepark Committee developed. Second Street would have to be closed to through traffic as well as the access into our parking lot. People could access the lot via First Street. Their plan is to only eliminate around 12 parking spaces for a stage and vendor tents. Additional parking on First Street's dirt lot could be utilized. There was some modification to the plans to be sure there was enough handicap parking spaces. Suzanne will take these plans before the Board of Selectmen.

Motion: Barb makes a motion to accept the plans for the Skatepark Grand opening.

Vote: 2-0

5. Lake Pleasant Park Update

On May 17, at the Public Safety Building there will be a master plan preview. Three landscape firms will be given a 30 minute presentation followed by a 15 minute question and answer period. The three firms are Berkshire Design Group from Northampton, GZA Environmental from Springfield and Marshall & Gray from Wakefield. We hope to decide that evening on a firm so they can then be brought in front of the Board of Selectmen and Park & Recreation Commission.

6. Directors Report

There were no questions.

7. Other Business

Jon requested Friday off, and it was approved.

8. Adjournment: 4:45pm

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