

Parks and Recreation
Town Hall
September 16, 2019

Present: Doug Thornton, Michelle Lauria, Joe Reynolds, Steve Victorson

Steve was 20 minutes late

Program Updates

Beach Operations

Beach Directors Report
HES contractor parking
Citizen complaint -

Andrea Juchartz, Chris Durham - Citizen complaint regarding dogs at the pond. Would we consider installing clear and easy to read signage stating our rules for no dogs. Sign should state no dogs at anytime, per our rules. Also, talk to the Harvard police. Reasoning - the past five years has seen an influx of dogs. Dog waste by the kayak racks and boat ramp along with waste bags with dog poop. Has seen dogs running freely on the beach among kids. She is here because we have the rule and would not be complaining if we did not have the rule.

Town of Harvard Bylaws - States no dogs except for service dog as defined by the ADA. There is also a fine system in place for dog owners that are caught.

The board will improve the signage.

Field and commons

Public communications - Doug read a communication from Tim Bragen stating that the softball field would be ready for the Spring season. Doug is concerned that their work may not be done in time. Audience question - Who on the board will make sure that this will happen on time? Audience question - What happened last Spring to cause the problems? No one on the board knew specifically what happened. Audience request - Please make a backup plan for getting this done.

Bob commented - Discussed a previous board member's efforts to making the softball fields work at the school. Discussed the end around of the board by the town, but also stated that this board should consider taking over the project. Town citizen - Make a formal request to the town for all information relating to the softball field project.

Bob - Convinced that a regulation sized softball field can still fit on the field in front of the school.

Softball Coach - Commented on the state of Anne Lees field and that it is not possible to have a decent game or practice.

Bob - Reminded the audience that we do not actually have a jurisdiction over the land, but will put forth a warrant in the special town hall. Suggests that we send an official letter to the town/school board requesting that a field be built at the new school.

Citizen - What is happening with respect to the title 9 issue?

Steve suggested that this go back to the school board. Who is in charge of the compliance of title 9?

Doug will talk to Tim regarding the process. Audience stated that the board should take over the project from the town. Another audience member wants to have transparency and to make sure that there is a softball field ready during the Spring time.

Bob - As long as he has been involved with this board, he has never known that this board should be responsible for title 9 compliance.

Doug has his marching orders - Plan A - Talk to Tim about current project.

Michelle wants to hear directly from Tim. Does Linda know of the title 9 issues? Should Tim and Linda be present to discuss this topic?

Doug states that the work process is happening? Vendors have been given to Tim.

Will invite Tim and Linda to the next meeting. Sharlene Cronin suggests that we go to Tim tomorrow and meet with Tim and Doug to find out the status of this project.

Bob will work with Joe on plan C - Elementary school planning is now taking place for the open field space.

Plan A - Anne Lees.

Plan B - Joe will work hard to find another field.

Plan C - Elementary school field.

Audience member asked about how our money is being spent and is it being spent equally.

Sub-Committee report - (for the entire report, go to the subcommittee minutes)

- All fields over used and no possibility to take a field out of rotation
- Ownership and control of fields is unclear.
- Parks and Rec not suited to alone to take the workload that is required to maintain the fields.
- Recommends a contracted/paid parks and recreation director.
- There is not enough available money.

Bob reminded the board that there was an agreement with the DPW and the school board and the town to combine parks and rec money with school and town money to maintain the fields. The agreement was that DPW would provide 3 full-time workers to take care of the fields

Bob - Public comment: Reminded the audience that the board is just volunteers. There is an opening on the board and there is a need for fields related experts. To the general public, please consider joining the board.

Field closure policy and enforcement

Joe discussed the importance of keeping a field closed during maintenance periods.

Joe will submit a field closure policy. Do we have any comments? Can we put fences around all fields with locks?

Fall Maintenance

Doug discussed current needs.

Baseball/Softball - Darren Magan: Discussed process behind fields maintenance and 7 years of action plans, money for maintenance. His group has come with 50% of the funding. The school takes no responsibility for any of the fields. The school should consider the fields as a classroom and take full responsibility of all fields. Darren - vested interest in baseball and softball. Discussed the lack of care for the pond road fields and how he himself took care of those fields.

Sharlene - requested that we look at all of the fields needs.

Dan - This is about the parks and rec process

Joe talked about fields that get the most use and spending equally.

Paul Cohen - Unhappy with the town spending on the playing fields and that this committee should ask for more money for the fields. Cannot ignore the here and now with the field needs. What needs to be done right now?

Doug - Let's look at our available funds and come up with a spending plan now with available funds.

Fall Maintenance Plan -

Michelle - put together a plan for each field.

Prioritization review (Dan Daly)

Motion to paint the third court with the approval of Chris and Dave on the color. Pickle ball group will un-paint the court if there is an issue. Passed 3-0.

CPC Warrant - Asking for additional 28-30 k or just double the existing budget.

Vote Joe motions: That the Parks & Recreation Commission vote on and adopt a policy that requires consideration of:

- allocation of maintenance funds according to field conditions and need
- an assessment be conducted each year beginning in July prior to the funding of any maintenance funds to inform the Commission's spending
- a prioritized list of athletic fields and their respective needs be developed and voted on by the Commission prior to the expenditure of maintenance funds

Passed 4-0.

Doug motioned to approve up to 4' of land on the small common....

2-2. Did not pass. Michelle and Joe requested to first read a copy of the state contract.

Adjourn 23:41