

**Durham Parks and Recreation Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, August 17, 2006**  
**7:00 PM**  
**Durham Town Hall – Council Chambers**

Attending P&R Members: Denny Byrne, Jane Crooks, George Lamb, Cathy Leach, John Parry, Frank Pilar. Also attending: Town Council Chair Neil Niman.

The meeting was called to order by Chair Parry at 1909. The minutes of the July meeting were approved.

The ORYA issue, an overview of which was presented at the June meeting, was presented. No details available on the DP budget request. Dues will increase by 40% to 100%, depending on the program involved. Organizational and programmatic issues are at stake. Council Chair Niman urged the committee to focus attention on what do we wish to do for the town in particular, i.e., what programs do we wish to provide. It was opined that first preference should be given to informal programs. The question was raised as to how activities should be apportioned between the town and ORYA. Coordination with neighboring towns as to facilities and programs was deemed very important. Should we split sports and/or age groups with Madbury and Lee? The components to consider are sports vs programs. Support of baseball was mentioned. Denny Byrne suggested that we should focus on programs first. It was suggested that the town should take over the ice rink in lieu of providing funds to ORYA for this purpose. The consensus seems to be YES. It was pointed out the the rink needs an operations manager as well as a program director and that it would be desirable if DPW was in charge.

A draft plan for the Mill Pond Center for the Arts was passed out by Chair Parry. The plan has two main parts: (1) the Mill Pond Center itself and (2) ORYA. It was pointed out that we need a long-term plan in lieu of ad hoc solutions for problems as they arise. It was pointed out that that we need to look very carefully at the Recreation Director position so that past errors are not repeated. All duties and responsibilities should be spelled out in specific terms. A Community Center should focus on specific uses and programs which represent the interests of the town's citizens. It was emphasized that the MPC should be used not only for support of the arts but recreation and other uses as well. It was pointed out that the town should purchase the MPC within the next two months, or it may be auctioned off to another party. A variety of options exist involving this and other town plans. It was emphasized that an organized approach is needed. The various recommendation noted above will be presented by P&R to the Town Council on 11 September, particularly those concerning the MPC and the ice rink. A full grant application is planned for December.

Cathy Leach volunteered to streamline the draft proposal to the Town Council concerning the MPC and ORYA.

There was a brief discussion of the 2007 Budget Proposal using the 2006 Budget as a guide.

Discussion ensued about the proposed Lee soccer field off Packer's Fall Road. This is officially within the town of Lee but is owned by Durham. Costs of constructing this need to be included in the budget.

Chair Parry mentioned that approximately \$5000 is needed for improvements to the Jackson's Landing area.

It was suggested that the questionnaire intended to be sent to the public concerning Durham P&R needs be modified so that we obtain a more accurate appraisal of what the public really desires.

Respectfully submitted,  
Frank L. Pilar, Secretary