

Town of Durham, Parks & Recreation Committee
Minutes / April 16, 2009

Present: Sara Wilson (chair), Amy Cunningham (co-secretary), Pat Houle (co-secretary), Mike Sievert, Dave Leach, John Parry, Jenna Roberts, Gregg Moore, Jean Olson
(Absent: Emily Slama)

Visitors: Todd Selig, Town Administrator; Mike Gamache, Dir., ORYA; UNH RMP students

Todd Selig joined the meeting of the P&R Committee to discuss the following items:

Community Garden: The group discussed the pilot community gardening program that is starting this spring at Wagon Hill. Some concern was expressed about the location of the garden and looking to the future use of the land. This year, the program will be small (approximately 5 plots) so that if it's necessary to move the garden next year it would not be difficult.

Parks & Recreation Director position: Administrative code has provision for this position for the town. Mr. Selig asked the committee to determine whether the position title should be director or coordinator. After discussion, the members of the committee agreed to the title of director. Mr. Selig asked the committee whether the position should be a salaried or hourly compensated position. The committee agreed after discussion that the position should be hourly. The group also discussed some of the duties that the P&R Director would be expected to handle including coordinating the town Memorial Day Parade, Durham Day, Easter Egg Hunt, and other events, working with volunteers and P&R Committee. Next steps are to advertise the position. Mr. Selig asked for two volunteers from the committee to assist with evaluation of applications and the interview process. Sara Wilson and Amy Cunningham volunteered. Applications will be received through the end of May. John Parry suggested some additions to the director job description – in addition to forming a “long-range plan for recreational enhancements,” there should be an annual plan. Also, in addition to developing “a strong, productive working relationship,” with local groups we may want to include neighboring towns of Lee and Madbury, ORPP, ORCSD, the Durham Library, and others. The group agreed. The plan is to have someone in the P&R Director position by July 1, 2009.

Memorial Day Parade: Mr. Selig reported that the town is handling the coordinating of the parade this year and asked if P&R could step forward to help. The group agreed. Pat Houle, Jean Olson, John Parry, Amy Cunningham, and Sara Wilson offered to help. Amy Cunningham will assist town Administrative Assistant, Jennie Berry, with scheduling and details. The parade will be Memorial Day, Monday, May 25th, beginning at 10AM.

Durham Day: Durham resident Nicole Moore has been the volunteer coordinator of the Durham Day celebration for the last four (five?) years. This year, the town is asking for support from P&R. The group agreed. This will be an event that the new P&R Director will be able to take on, along with the committee.

Reports/Updates:

Easter Egg Hunt – the event was a great success with many people turning out despite the cool, damp weather. Sara thanked all who volunteered. Thank you notes will be sent to the businesses who donated goods for the event.

Park Use Guidelines - the group reviewed the latest draft of the guidelines. There were several items discussed:

- 1) There was discussion of whether to permit horses at Wagon Hill. The waste issue is a real problem. Motion by Jenna that horses no longer be permitted at Wagon Hill at any time. Second by Dave. Motion passed: 6 yes, 1 abstain.
- 2) Need to check the ordinance on dogs being leashed before listing in the guidelines.
- 3) Need to check with Mike Lynch on how much time is required for applying for permits for:
 - campfires
 - large group events (25 or more?)

Guidelines will be edited and shared with other town groups for input with a deadline for return to P&R to finalize.

Jackson's Landing Trail Project – Interpretive signs are needed for both sides of the trail. This is in process.

Adopt-A-Trail – John, Gregg & Pat are working on this. Pat & Gregg will be holding a volunteer training on May 17 at Wagon Hill. Lots of interest from town residents!

Action Items:

Bobcat Bolt – event on May 9 with Oyster River Festival. P&R will have a table there. Several members of the committee will be present.

Oyster River/Mill Pond Dam statement – After discussion, the group agreed that P&R should make a statement regarding the issue of the dam. Jenna motioned to accept the proposed statement by the P&R Committee regarding the dam. (*see below*) Second by Gregg. Motion passed – all in favor.

“The Durham Parks and Recreation Committee supports whatever decision the Town Council makes regarding the Oyster River Dam. We expect the Town Council will make the best informed decision by including recreational opportunities for the Town of Durham.”

Tabled for discussion at May meeting:

Ideas for events – Gregg proposed a summer potluck/picnic to be held regularly at various recreation spots in town.

Grant Writer – a volunteer has offered to help with grant writing for Wagon Hill improvements.

Wagon Hill worksheets - everyone

Wildcat Fitness – Pat

Website/brochure update – Sara

Meeting adjourned at 9:45PM.