



DURHAM PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, May 23, 2023
7:00 pm
Town Council Chambers



Call to Order: Cathy Leach called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. In attendance in the Town Council Chambers: Joe Friedman, Rachel Gasowski, Cathy Leach, Matt Swiesz, Al Howland, Myrta Janosz and Brian Keegan. Genevieve Brown, Michael Drooker and Erin Guyotte attended via zoom.

Alternate member Erin was a voting member this evening.

Approval of Agenda: Al made a motion to approve the agenda, Joe seconded. No discussion, Approval by roll call vote, 7-0.

Approval of Minutes Al made a motion to approve the minutes from April 25, 2023. Joe seconded. Mike made 3 minor adjustments to the minutes. Minutes, as amended, approved by roll call vote, 6-0. Brian abstained as he was not present at the April meeting.

Public Comments: There were no public comments.

Roundtable (10 minutes)

Cathy reminded committee members of the Right to Know seminar on May 25@7PM.

Joe reported the following:

- The Historic District Committee and the Heritage Commission are looking at designs for the seating area of the new park near the Lafayette sign.
- The Land Stewardship Committee is looking at designs for the seating area on the Stevens side of the Rotner bridge.
- Joe acknowledged the landscaping work done by Liberty Mutual employees.
- The Wagon Hill Park grant application needed to be revised so the renovations are on hold.

Mike reported on the following:

- Jackson's Landing survey done by the Land Stewardship subcommittee. Recommendations are to improve signage, develop a trail map, and remove the poison ivy. Mike mentioned there are many trail steward volunteers.
- The church youth group did a great job on the trail at Jackson's Landing. There was discussion relating to the trail being underused and ways to encourage use. Rachel has met with Sara Callaghan, the town's land stewardship coordinator, and there are plans to improve signage.

Update from the Parks & Recreation Director & Upcoming Events (10 minutes)

Rachel provided the following updates:

- Monday 5/29 Memorial Day ceremony 10AM Memorial Park
- Friday 6/2 Durham Day Dash @6PM ending with awards at Tideline. 100+ are currently registered.
- Saturday 6/3 downtown Durham Day Celebration.
- 6/24 family Campout @ Wagon Hill. 10 families currently signed up.
- Spring programs are successfully wrapping up.
- Summer camp staff is hired. Orientation is 6/19.
- In addition to its own current after school programming, Parks & Rec will be taking over the after-school programming historically run by Growing Places starting in Sept. This is not budgeted for but Rachel feels it will work financially. It provides DPR with indoor space. Name of after school program is C.O.R.E. (Creating Opportunities for Recreational Experiences).

Business:

Joe led a discussion regarding the Town Council Goals for 2023-24 and the committee discussed how our committee goals support the TC goals. Rachel will take that information to Administrator Selig.

The draft rink impact infographic done by Gen for the Rink was reviewed – the committee thought it was great. Bill Page provided updates that will be worked into a final version.

Committee members are asked to keep an eye out for grants for the playground projects. Myrta reported that she had found a number of such grants, but they were geared toward non-profits, not municipalities or towns.

Al started a discussion regarding the fact that Durham has no Chamber of Commerce so there's a lack of advocacy for businesses in town. The Durham Business Association is being reformed and can hopefully fill some of those gaps. Brian indicated that there is a mistrust of town leadership from some Durham businesses. Brian felt it would be helpful to discuss further the idea of creating a model to give structure to the partnership so that businesses feel more value received when the town asks for donations or participation in local events. There was further discussion on whether this issue was something that fell to DPR or the committee. It was suggested that Kellie, Asst. DPR director, could bring it up at the next DBA meeting. We may want to extend an invitation for the DBA president to attend one of our meetings.

Update on progress of UNH ARC proposal: Rachel reported that Administrator Selig has reviewed the proposed scenario two and suggested edits. Rachel will revise the proposal and meet with Administrator Selig again to follow up.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, June 27, 7 pm

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned by roll call vote, 7-0.