

Town of Stratham



Stratham Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

August 21, 2019

In Attendance: Tracy Abbott, Sean Burke, Brian DeKoning, Sean Kotkowski, Frank LaSorsa, April Mason

Absent: Joe Lovejoy, Jeff Simeone

Special Guest: Seth Hickey, Parks & Recreation Director; Jim Marsden and Peter Griem, Stratham Softball

The Stratham Recreation Commission entered into a non-public session at 6:45pm, and at 7:02pm, the non-public session ended and the regularly scheduled meeting of the Commission was called to order.

Softball

Jim Marsden and Peter Griem joined our meeting on behalf of the Stratham Softball Board to request a \$1,200 donation be made from the Stratham Softball Board's line in the Recreation Revolving Account to the Exeter Junior Softball League. Five Stratham girls were members of an Exeter Junior Softball team that was selected to participate in the Worlds Tournament which was recently held in Florida. The travel team's fundraising totals recently exceeded their goal of \$30,000, they raised approximately \$32,000. (The sum of \$30,000 was calculated to include all the expenses for travel, room, food, and spending money, etc. for the (13) players, (1) parent each, and coaches travelling to Florida for the game). Jim stated that the Softball Board's Revolving Account maintains a \$6,000-\$8,000 balance so there is money available to donate. Jim stressed that he feels this donation is a way for Stratham Softball to support players and special trips such as this one. When asked what would be done with the donation, now that the \$30,000 goal has already been met, Peter suggested that it might go into a "kitty" to be used for future Exeter Junior Softball League travel teams but that this plan hasn't been discussed or approved by the Softball Board. Jim suggested passing the money on to the travel team players and their families. Much discussion revolved around how the registration fees that are paid by Stratham residents are for the Stratham Recreation program. Several Commission members felt it would not make a good precedent to donate money from our non-profit organization to another non-profit whose teams are made up of players from multiple towns. Several suggestions were made such as asking Exeter Junior Softball League to set up a fundraising account specifically for these travel teams so that monies raised are allocated appropriately. Another suggestion made to Jim & Peter would be to have the Softball Board re-assess registration fees to see if they are in-line or could perhaps be decreased to help out our Stratham families.

Sean B. made a motion to deny the Softball Board's \$1,200 donation request, Brian seconded.

(4) voted in favor, (1) voted against, (1) abstained. **Motion approved.**

General

The General Fund report was reviewed.

The Recreation Revolving Fund report was reviewed.

Skate Park Committee – Seth updated the Commission and stated that the Skate Park Committee is continuing to raise funds for a new Skate Park; the Committee will work more with the Planning Board to discuss other viable locations such as the empty field behind the Municipal Center (which already has ¼ mile walking track surrounding it). Sean K mentioned that this location does have a bus stop so it would be easy for kids to get here.

Seth brought a request to the Commission to purchase a peddle-assist (E-Bike) bicycle which would be used primarily for setting up/cleaning up trail races and for trail maintenance projects. The bike has access to trails that the Kubota RTV does not. Seth has an opportunity to purchase a 1-year old E-Bike for \$3500.

Sean K. made a motion to approve the \$3500 request, funds to be used from the Recreation Revolving fund Donations line, Frank seconded, all in favor. **Motion approved.**

Community Trips-Seth reported that the (3) trips we've offered so far were sold out, and the (3) trips we have coming up are sold out as well; Seth is in the process of having an open discussion with the SelectBoard about the Department's transportation needs, such as a small bus. It would assist us also in our goals to increase our offerings for the Seniors group.

Stratham Hill Park

Facility Requests –Seth explained that groups who would like structured trail time will now need to fill out a request form, last year (20) trail races were hosted by the Recreation Department. Seth reported that the Barker Easement has officially closed so public access will now be allowed indefinitely on approved right-of-ways. Requests for trail access will be due for review once a year in January.

Baseball Field-the irrigation will be going in tomorrow and the perimeter fence will be in the very near future; Seth reported that the Friends of Baseball will be sponsoring the installation of a scoreboard; our goal is to restore it to its previous condition.

Sports Boards

Soccer –Seth announced that Sean K. will now be leading the Soccer Board; 231 registrations have been received for the Fall program; Sean mentioned a few changes to the program –the K group will be Co-Ed and then the 1st & 2nd graders and 3rd & 4th graders will be grouped together, boys and girls.

Programs

Summer Camp –This program was larger this year than in previous years and it went very well; Seth indicated he would like to expand the program a little bit to be able to include more Middle School kids next year, perhaps more as CIT's (Counselors-in-Training).

Administrative

Brian motioned to re-appoint Jeff as Secretary for 1-year, Sean B. seconded, all in favor. **Motion approved.**

Frank made a motion to move Brian DeKoning from Alternate status to Member, Sean K. seconded, all in favor.

Motion approved.

Brian made a motion to formally accept Sean Kotkowski to the Recreation Commission, April seconded, all in favor. **Motion approved.**

Seth has set up a Department Goals/Mission Statement for us to review, add to, or change; Seth will also start sharing his Dashboards with us so that our meetings can be more productive.

The Commission discussed the current By-Laws and decided that our review of them would be completed by the end of December.

Frank made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15pm, Brian seconded, all in favor. **Meeting adjourned.**

NEXT MEETING: September 18, 2019 @ 7pm at the Municipal Center