

Dover Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting of October 28, 2011
Minutes

P&R Commissioners In Attendance: Chris Boland, Rich Oasis, Peter Davies, Scott Seidman, Nancy Simms

P&R Employees In Attendance: Jessica Cooney

Others In Attendance: Jim Dawley (BOS), James Stuart (WC), Andy Waugh (WC), Jim Powers (Citizen)

The meeting was called to order at 7:25am.

PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

Minutes were not available for review.

ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- **Staff Daily Tasks** – In order to increase the efficiency of existing P&R staff, certain office changes were discussed and implemented. (1) Three hours a day will be set aside as an uninterrupted work block for all P&R staff as of January 1, 2012. Jess reported that most of the visitors to the office come during the morning and after school hours and that the middle of the day has fewer visitors. Therefore, it was determined that P&R public office hours would be from 9:00am to 11:00am and from 2:00pm to 5:00pm. Motion: Rich. Second: Chris. Unanimous. (2) All program registration will be done exclusively online as of January 1, 2012. Registration software was approved for FY2011 as a capital budget item at the May 2010 town meeting. Jess worked through the first half of FY2011 to install the software and familiarize herself with its operation. Online registration was first offered for Spring and Summer courses at the end of FY2011. Online registration for the first season of FY2012 Fall programs is complete; FY2012 Winter programs are currently undergoing their first round of online registration. Jess reports that approximately 50% of registrations to date have been completed online. It was noted that registration for all non-P&R sports programs (soccer, basketball, lacrosse, baseball/softball) in town are exclusively online. Motion: Nancy. Second: Rich. Unanimous. (3) Two additional phone lines will be installed so that phone calls can be directed to individual staff members. See the discussion below under “Operating Budget”. (4) An Office Renovation Plan that affords more efficient work space will be presented to the Capital Budget Committee. Private office space, public greeting space, group work space, room dividers, updated heating and electric systems, and new ceiling and floor treatments are elements being considered for inclusion. With the Community Center here to stay in its current form and with P&R’s offices remaining in the Community Center, it has become unnecessary to view the space currently occupied as temporary. In an effort to improve the work environment, increase the staff efficiency and enhance the public image of the P&R department, the Commissioners have embraced the idea of creating an intentional permanent space for the department. Further reviews of and renovations to the plan will be made in order to have a final product to present to CBC.
- **Master Plan examples** – Jess will bring to the next meeting a cost estimate for completing a professional Master Plan for the P&R Department. Preparing such a document is complicated by the fact that the P&R “clients” are not just Dover citizens but include Sherborn citizens too. Additionally, since P&R runs all of the Regional School’s Middle School athletic programs, any formulation of a Master Plan would need to include discussions with the school district. Jess reported that other P&R departments across the country are also experiencing tight budgets, but those that have commissioned a Master Plan have found it incredibly useful.
- **Survey Options** – Jess stated that other P&R departments have used surveys of their constituents as one of their data items in creating a Master Plan for their department and have also used this input determining their long range goals. It was determined that Dover P&R and the Commissioners needed to accomplish certain other tasks prior to taking this step.
- **Program Summary** – Jess presented a listing of tasks involved in running one P&R program. She used Field Hockey as an example. This is a program requiring a high degree of staff involvement. She was

asked to review all P&R programs and rank them based on the amount of work each one requires. The idea of retaining a higher percentage of program revenue for the programs requiring a higher degree of staff involvement was discussed.

- **Notify Groups of CPARC Update Meetings** – There are no CPARC meetings currently scheduled.

OPERATING BUDGET

It was agreed that phone expenses should be removed from the BOS operating budget and added to the P&R operating budget. The current cost for the single phone line is \$45 per month. Jess reported that adding two additional lines would increase the cost to \$75 per month. It was agreed that internet services should be removed from the P&R revolving fund and added to the P&R operating budget. These changes will take place effective FY2013. The two additional phone lines will be added immediately; there is money set aside in the office staff account within the revolving fund that will be used to fund the additional monthly cost (\$30 per month for 8 months = \$240) for the remainder of FY2012. Motion: Nancy. Second: Rich. Unanimous.

Other elements of the P&R Operating Budget will be discussed in detail at a subsequent meeting.

LONG RANGE PLAN FOR PARKS & RECREATION DEPARTMENT

- **Mission Statement and Department Goals** – Discussion was held regarding what needs to go into each. A review of the Town Bylaws determined that they contained no directives regarding the mission or goals of the P&R department. It was stated that maintaining and preserving safe, high quality recreation facilities should be included. P&R's responsibilities for maintaining the land around the town's public buildings (Town House, Library, Community Center, Chickering School, Public Safety Building) should be noted. It was determined that we serve the entire town and citizens of all ages. We offer competitive and non-competitive programs. We have a no-cut policy so our programs are open to everyone (unless there are space limitations). It was noted that Dover P&R has had requests for four new programs from citizens and one new program from neighboring P&R departments that cannot be addressed because of staff limitations. Jess stated that most new programs come about not because she has sought them out but because she has been approached by someone who wants to run their program here. In determining our goals, we should consider which of our facilities are under-utilized and bring in programs to take advantage of this excess capacity. It was agreed that we serve the entire town and citizens of all ages. Going forward, we need to address the demands that are specific to our times; the demands are different now than "back in the day". They include an increase in girls sports, parents looking for drop-off time-filler programs for their children, parents looking for lots of diverse activities for their children, parents looking for programs that will give their children better preparation for high school sports teams, and an increase in liability exposure and awareness. Additionally, the senior population is more active now; they are living longer and are healthy longer and they want to be active.
- **Evaluation of Current Programs** – As discussed above, Jess is going to rank each P&R program based on the amount of P&R staff time required. It was suggested that the P&R Commissioners divide up all the P&R programs and come to a subsequent meeting with detailed analyses of each. Jess will make the assignments for the next meeting. Jess reported that the NRPA (National Recreation and Park Association) has just unveiled a system that allows a P&R department to compare itself with other similar P&R departments. It is called PRORAGIS (Parks and Recreation Operating Ration Geographic Information System). Dover P&R would have to input detailed data about the town and P&R programs offered, but the results would allow the department to compare its operating details with other "apple to apple" communities. It was suggested that Kathy start working on this or that it might be appropriate for a high school community service project or senior project. In order to address the current heavy work load of the staff, we should consider weighing the pros and cons of specific programs from a staff time required perspective in order to prioritize which programs to continue offering. This would be a temporary measure to addressing the excessive work load.
- **Daily Tasks by Staff** – Discussion details are noted above.
- **Surveying Options with Costs** – Discussion details are noted above.

- **Online registration only date** – Discussion details are noted above.
- **CEU Requirements and Proposed Five-Year Education Calendar for Staff** – Not discussed.

November 9, 2011

7:15am - P&R Commission meeting

7:00pm - Warrant Committee meeting to discuss revolving fund

7:30pm - Conservation Commission meeting to hear results of wetlands consultant's study

ACTION ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

1. Cost of doing a Master Plan for Dover P&R – Jess.
2. Rate existing programs based on level of work involved in running it – Jess and Dave.
3. Patch interview announcing new hours and online registration deadline – Dave.
4. Use town website and P&R website to announce office changes. – Jess with Bill.
5. Assign programs to Commissioners – Jess.
6. Letter to Caryl Park neighbors updating them on where the project stands – Chris.
7. Notify sports clubs about new parking policy for Chickering Fields – Scott.
8. Daily task analysis – Dave.
9. Office Reconfiguration Cost Estimate – Dave.

AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING – November 9, 2011 at 7:15am

1. Prior Meeting Minutes
2. Action Items from Prior Meeting
3. Middle School Football program
4. Evaluation of Current P&R Programs
- 5.
6. Action Items for Next Meeting
7. Agenda Items for Next Meeting

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45am.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Simms, P&R Commissioner