**Town of Westborough Recreation Department**

**Recreation Commission**

**Meeting Minutes – April 13th, 2021**

Members Present: Recreation Commission Chair Earl Storey, Recreation Director Jenn Kirkland, Bill Clausen, Beth Travis, and non-voting member Sean O’Dea

The Recreation Commission Meeting opened with Recreation Director Jenn Kirkland reading the Governor Baker statement suspending certain provisions of the open meeting law.

**Golf Course Updates**Edward Keenan is in attendance as a guest with a request of putting in a memorial bench at the golf course. The request would be to honor his father who passed away in Feburary. The proposed bench is 48 inches long, would be made out of Trex, not wood, and would not be concreted to the ground. His father was a member for 40+ years, and the course was like a second home to him.

Bill Clausen offered his condolences, and thanked Edward for bringing this before the commission. There was discussion about the memorial benches currently at the course, with what those are made of. Earl Storey noted that it would be up to Mike Hightower’s [Superintendent of the course] discretion in terms of installation.

Everybody on the commission was very supportive of the gesture, there was just noting wanting to check in with Mike in terms of his input for the style and installation of the bench so it doesn’t interfere with his upkeep. Belief that it should be concreted down and permanent. An ceremony would be planned for around Thanksgiving at a later time.

Bill Clausen made a motion to approve the memorial bench, Earl added on a contingency of Mike Hightower’s satisfaction of the location and materials of the bench. Beth Travis 2nded the motion, and it passed 3-0.

**Golf Manager Update**Golf Manager Jack Negoshian was not in attendance, but Jenn Kirkland spoke about how busy the course has been. There have been hires made at for help at the course, but the course has been running well.

**Superintendent Update**Mike Hightower was not in attendance, but Jenn and Earl noted that the course looks to be in great condition. Bill mentioned playing 9 holes there, and felt that the course looks great and the carts were great as well.

**Gas Pump Discussion and Vote**As an update from the previous week, Mike Hightower fuels his machines for course maintenance with gas. His current practice is to drive to the DPW, fill up gas cans, drive them back to the course and store them in the barn at the golf course. The safety of this is an issue that is looking to be addressed.

The cost of the gas pump would be around $5000, which is present in the budget. It would be above ground, next to the current diesel tank there. This will be double-hulled, and meeting all the fire regulations as the Westborough Fire Department approved this project.

There will be a security camera there, paid for by an article that currently has money in it from a previous project. There will also be monitoring of the spending to make sure the usage is in term with what it was previously.

A private vendor would be the one filling the tank, as they currently fill the diesel tank next to it.

Beth made a motion to move forward with the gas tank at the course, and Bill 2nded the motion. It passed 3-0.

**Pro Shop Staff Update**There have been five more hires made, 3 college students and 2 high school students.

**Approve Recreation Commission Minutes from April**Jenn did not receive the minutes for the previous meeting yet, so this agenda item was skipped.

**Beach Discussion and Potential Vote**

* Most recent announcements regarding COVID, propose to open the beach as normal
  + Masks, distancing
  + Can close the beach if it’s too crowded (refusing entry similar to what occurs with out of town residents)
  + Enough lifeguards, still hopeful for a few more
  + No swim lessons – not big enough swim area for both lessons and free swim
  + Can re-visit the option of holding some later on into the season
* Swim lessons are popular (changing the time of the day)
  + Competing with ourselves in terms of time of the day (playground programs)
  + Hudson isn’t offering lessons
  + Need so much space for the lessons, could get too congested
  + Not sure about staffing the lessons and the beach at the same time
  + Beach closes at 5pm
  + Concern about masks and teaching lessons (hesitation around that)
* Good news about being able to open
* Making people pay online – cannot pay at the gate (unless they do so on their phone at the gate)
* Beth – anything we can do to get back to normal
* Potential waterfront director that worked last year, would send people to places with wifi if they hadn’t purchased ahead of time
* Authorize or TD Bank for processing fees
  + Any sort of new thing to adjust accounting system would need to go through Accounting and Treasurer departments
  + 50 cents increase would cover the processing fees
* No need for temperature checks, no extra bathroom cleanings – guidelines starting to relax
* Teacher worked at a beach before, lifeguard and managing experience at beaches
* Sean O’Day – entrance and exits with clickers to track current capacity of the beach
  + Good thought to keep a count rather than just visually tracking the capacity vs the limits

**Fields Update**All the fields are open, and Rogers has been fine. With the spring being drier compared with previous ones, it’s been in good shape relatively. The Pavilion over in the Chauncy are has been finished and looks great. There are going to be some perennials planted around it.

**Town Meeting**Town meeting will be held on May 15th, with some Recreation articles on the warrant. The first is at the golf course, where a damaged net needs to be repaired as it is a safety hazard. This money would come from retained earnings.

There are two articles related to Lake Chauncy are on the warrant as well. A copper sulfate treatment which was done last year, as well as a study of the lake. The study is to help find what is causing the algae problem at the lake, and attempt to find a solution.

There was discussion of the fish stocking fund as well, with this warrant covering two different fish stockings.

The July 4th block party was mentioned as well, with money being requested for that. While not happening at the end of June, it is possible to occur towards the end of September.

**Next Meeting**Bill, who was not at the previous meeting, asked about the alcohol discussion at the golf course. The plan is to have discussions with the Civic about extending their liquor license, which is the easiest option legally and logistically.

Virtual programs are also still running, with the E-Sports leagues opening registration within the next couple of weeks. Bill Clausen wanted to mention somebody re-creating the Westborough Golf Course perfectly in PGA 2k21. While he didn’t want to mention his name, he did want to give him credit given how good the course looks.

The next meeting date was tentatively set for June 8th, and the meeting was adjourned.