

PARKS AND RECREATION  
COMMISSION

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# TOWN OF NORTH BRANFORD

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## **PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

**STW Community Center**

**November 17, 2014**

### Minutes

#### Present:

Brian Lynch, Victor Palma, Steve Torino and Michelle Provencher.

Absent: Karen Ablondi.

#### Also Attending:

Director Pam Gery, Rose Angeloni, Town Council Liaison, Joe Mascari, (NB Little League Baseball) Neil LeBeau (NB Youth Lacrosse), Michael Rice, (NB Youth Football) and Helen Lope de Hero, (Dog Park representative).

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Brian Lynch at 7:30 pm .

#### Minutes:

The October 20, 2014 Minutes were unanimously approved on the motion by Brian Lynch, seconded by Victor Palma.

#### Town Sports Organizations:

Neil LeBeau requested permission to rent a storage unit to be installed at Mill Road to store equipment during the off season which is currently kept in a lock box and in the garages of many of the coaches. It would be removed in the spring and he will contact Zoning officials to see if permits are needed and also neighbors who might object, though the unit would be hidden from neighbors view by fencing and/or natural foliage near the rear side of the field adjacent to the home of one of his coaches. It was mentioned that plowing might be problematic, but the unit would be at the rear of the field, out of the way and a key left with Fran Merola so it could be moved if it was found necessary. Brian made the motion to allow the unit as long as there is no objection from neighbors and the Zoning Board. It was seconded by Victor with Steve and Michelle consenting. Brian suggested that the goals for lacrosse and soccer be alternated in order to level the use of the field. Neil estimated there were 180 players evenly mixed both boys and girls enrolled in the sport and enjoyed family support. Pam agreed with him that access to the field needed to be improved and that drainage problems were also being addressed.

It had been recommended that Joe Mascari develop a priority wish list which he submitted and Pam said that she has already brought some of these requests to the Council's attention and hopefully they will be addressed.

A 5 Year Capital Plan spanning 2015 to 2020 was submitted to the Town Council early this year addressing the needs for each field and it was wondered whether this plan would be given consideration if changes were made. copies were handed out and Rose explained that the budge process starts in a few months where changes can be made to capital requests. She also mentioned that changes were made to the State but some of the grant criteria had been changed and the Town Manager had to reapply for same grant for Memorial Tennis Courts and Basketball Courts

### **Parks and Fields:**

Commission members had walked the fields and representatives of the various organizations were eager to hear their findings. Michael Rice addressed the need for a multi-use field to accommodate the number of kids that are practicing on Memorial Field and he has worked out a mutual agreement with Lacrosse to alleviate some scheduling conflicts with the use of Mill Road Field which helped.

He also addressed the need for handicap accessibility at Totoket Field.

Steve mentioned that the Northford Field already had lights that neighbors have not complained about and could be expanded into two larger fields by eliminating some trees and the softball field to accommodate them.

Pam said the master plan is needed for all fields and parks . Rose Angeloni suggested that since the Town is currently studying the need for improvement for the town buildings, it might be a good to include this in the study.

Pam also mentioned that a main endeavor will be to come up with a plan to beautify the outside of the new Community Center. She met with a Landscape Design Architect and is waiting for preliminary plans for the Commission to look at as well as to determine what type of funding these improvements will need. She will also review the original plans for Swajack property with the same company.

### **a. Dog Park:**

Helen represented the Committee and said that they had finished phase one, the commitment to raise the \$10,000 initial funds for the park, and many people are anxious to know the location. She presented a plan based on a one acre fence enclosed park, double gated, with a walkway around the perimeter. She had investigated Astro-Turf however the cost was prohibitive. There followed a discussion about the type of material considered for the ground cover and after a rather intricate evaluation, it was recommended that the location needs to be addressed first. Several areas have been given consideration, but no decision has been made, however it was brought out that the closer you cluster fields the cheaper and easier it is to service and maintain them since in entails less moving of equipment and manpower. She said that fundraising will be an ongoing project and though fees were spoken of, she maintained that in this area with so many free dog parks they didn't think that was best. Phase 2 is finding additional sponsorship.

### **Program Review:**

There will be a Tree Lighting on December 5th; Holiday Fair on the 6th and a bus trip to Radio City Music Hall on the 8th. Pam also reported that her department would like to plan an employee wellness program utilizing the facilities at STW as a benefit for good health amongst Town employees at Town Hall, Public Works, Library and the Schools.