

Camden Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes
November 28, 2012
5:15 pm, Washington Street Conference Room

Present: Ray Andresen (chair), Pete Brown, Pete Conover, Casey Leonard, Ed Libby, David Olivas, Beth Ward, Jim Heard (Select Board liaison). Absent: Brian Robinson. Guests: John Anders, Pat Finnigan, Geoff Scott.

Ray Andresen opened the meeting at 5:15 pm.

Welcome: Casey Leonard was introduced as a new Alternate Member of the Committee.

Director Update: This being the first meeting since Jeff Kuller's passing, Town Manager Pat Finnigan was invited to discuss the Town's plans for finding a successor. For the interim, Beth Ward will serve as Acting Director of the Parks & Recreation Department. Pat said the search process won't begin until the start of the new year, but she is looking for feedback from Committee members (and others in the community) about the qualities needed for a new Director as well as the current state and future goals for the Department.

Minutes: Pete Brown moved to accept the October 10, 2012 minutes as presented, Ed Libby seconded the motion, and it passed 5-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

RMRA Redevelopment: Beth Ward reported that Rick Knowlton wants to hold a co-meeting with the Parks and Recreation Committee, possibly in December, to discuss progress to date and future plans for a Town vote on a \$2 million bond issue. She also noted that more than 65 donations have been made to the RMRA campaign in Jeff Kuller's name and that total donations and pledges have surpassed \$3.1 million.

Pathways: Geoff Scott reported that the Town has received a grant for developing a vision for the Riverwalk from Shirttail Point to the Harbor. Pete Brown is on the study committee. Geoff mentioned that another public meeting was held with the engineers planning the sidewalk extension to Shirttail Point. He also will contact the Maine Conservation Corps to make sure the Tannery Riverwalk project is on its calendar for next summer.

US National Toboggan Championships®: Ray Andresen reported that the Select Board approved plans for the Camden Rotary to hold a wine-and-beer tasting event at the Toboggan Championships on Friday. He also reported that registrations are on par with last year, but sponsorships are lagging.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Snow Bowl: Beth reported that season passes have reached \$145,000 to date, about \$15,000 below last year. It was noted that season passes were high last year, but day tickets were low because of the poor snow season.

OLD BUSINESS

Septic System: Beth reported that the project is not completed; there's no engineering sign-off yet.

Parks Brochure: Ed Libby reported that more than 2,000 copies were handed out on Election Day and that copies are available at the Town Hall, Chamber of Commerce, Public Library, and various B&B's.

Shirttail Point: Presentation to the Select Board will be tabled until next year.

Winter Dog Policy: Same as last year.

NEW BUSINESS

Mountain Biking: John Anders, president of the Mid-Coast Chapter of the New England Bike Association, discussed his group's plans to form a non-profit to help build, maintain and connect biking trails at Ragged Mountain and other locations in the area. John noted that the volunteer resources of his group cannot keep pace with the growing popularity of mountain biking in the area, and that by establishing a local non-profit similar to the successful model used by Kingdom Trails in Vermont, his group hopes to raise enough funds to work with public and private partners in developing mountain bike trails that will attract outdoor recreation enthusiasts to the area. After much discussion, Pete Brown moved that we support the efforts of John Anders and the Camden Area Trails Working Group to form a non-profit for trail building and maintenance. Ed Libby seconded the motion, and it passed by a vote of 5-0 with one abstention.

Field Closure: Beth reported that the Sports Field at the Snow Bowl was closed after being torn up by the Five Town Football League during its Harvest Bowl weekend of games and cannot be reopened until next spring. Sportsfield Associates inspected the field and will give a proposal for repairs, but said nothing can be done until next year. The Committee discussed imposing user fees or security deposits, but decided a policy decision should be left up to the next

Director. In the meantime, John Novak from Camden Hills Regional High School will be doing a “usage” study to determine the impact of different sports and age-groups on the field.

Special Session: The Committee discussed holding an extra meeting to review its policy, goals for 2013, and strategic plan for Parks & Recreation. Everyone agreed that a special session was needed, but no date was set.

Upcoming Events: Projected Opening Day for the ski season is December 15.

Ed Libby moved to adjourn, Pete Brown seconded the motion, and it passed 6-0 at 6:50 p.m.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, December 12, 2012 at 5:15pm in the WSCR.

Minutes recorded by Ray Andresen