

Camden Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes
April 1, 2015
Washington Street Conference Room

Present: Ray Andresen (chair), Landon Fake, Maureen Gordon, Emily McDevitt, David Olivas, Brian Robinson, Geoff Scott, Jessie Tobias. **Excused:** Casey Heard, Jim Heard, David Olivas, Beth Ward.

Ray opened the meeting at 5:25 pm.

Minutes: Brian moved to accept the March 4 minutes as corrected, Jessie seconded, and motion passed 3-0.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ragged Mountain Redevelopment: Landon reported that work has resumed on installing the double-chair lift, but it may need a new gearbox. Regarding cash flow for current and upcoming redevelopment expenses, not including the new lodge, he said that the Ragged Mountain Foundation has about \$380,000 on hand and that the Town may have \$80,000 left to spend against the \$2 million bond. In response to the recent editorial letter from Steve Smith criticizing the refurbished triple-chair lift, Landon will draft a letter for the Select Board rebutting the charges that we could have purchased a brand new lift for the same amount of money.

Brian suggested that the Parks and Recreation Department prepare an outline of allowed activities on the hill for this spring and summer. For example, the new lift will run on weekends during the foliage season (September and October). Also, there will not be a lot of mountain biking terrain available this summer.

National Toboggan Championships: Landon reported that the Toboggan Nationals were a big success, with about \$90,000 in gross revenues and \$60,000 in net income.

Pathways: Geoff reported that he and Landon met with Julie Isbell from the national Park Service about applying for an RTP grant for designing the Riverwalk. He added that we did receive a \$26,000 grant for the Seabright Dam section of the Riverwalk and that the work on that section will involve Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and the Maine Conservation Corps. It will be built in the fall, and the goal is to make it as even a grade as possible. Geoff noted that the MDOT will be at the April Pathways meeting to review bike and pedestrian plans.

Geoff asked the Committee for clarification of what we're looking for in a master plan for the Riverwalk, and it was determined that we need a set of guiding principles for trail use—what's allowed/not allowed; what activities are encouraged; who are the intended users; what is the hoped-for experience by trail-users.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Snow Bowl Operations: Landon reported that the Snow Bowl had net expenses of \$985,000, or \$90,000 over budget, and revenues of \$734,000, about \$160,000 down from the prior year, for an operating deficit of \$260,000. However, the Snow Bowl is expected to receive \$150,000 in energy efficiency grants for the snowguns and pumphouse, lowering the deficit to \$110,000. There also is \$70,000 in a reserve account and \$20,000 due from the Ski Club, so the final deficit may only be \$20,000. About \$150,000 of the expenses over budget have been payroll for the redevelopment project.

Landon added that once the Snow Bowl began operating on a regular basis in February, it surpassed 2014's sales of day passes for February by 70% — a good sign for next year. He noted that 30 season passes were bought after February 1. The last day of skiing is scheduled for Saturday, April 4, but it may be postponed to Easter Sunday due to a forecast for rain. A decision will be made on Thursday, April 2.

Budget Plans: Landon reported that the Town's Budget Committee approved the 2015/16 Parks and Recreation budget as proposed. It will include purchase of a new pickup truck. The total Town budget will go before the voters at the June Town Meeting. The separate Snow Bowl budget needs to be completed in May.

OLD BUSINESS

User Fees: Landon said that Town Manager Pat Finnegan needs to schedule a workshop with the Select Board to review the implementation of user fees for the sports fields.

Property Inspection Tour: The Committee decided that June would be the best time to conduct an inspection tour of the various Park-Rec properties.

Policy Review: Scheduled for the May 6 meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Marketing: Andrew Dailey and Landon will prepare new marketing materials on Camden's recreational opportunities for innkeepers, cruise lines, and other potential customers.

Upcoming Events: Run For Your Life will be held on Memorial Day weekend. There will be a Trail Building Festival in June to fix a downhill biking trail and a hiking trail to the summit.

Next Meeting: June 3, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the Washington Street Conference Room.

Jessie moved that the meeting be adjourned, Emily seconded the motion, and it was approved 5-0 at 6:50 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Ray Andresen