**MINUTES OF THE RAYNHAM PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION**

**Regular Monthly Meeting, July 11, 2023 6:00 p.m.**

**Gymkhana Building, King Phillip St, Raynham, MA**

**In attendance:** Chairman Jim Brow, Commissioner Chris Shaw, Commissioner Riley Menconi, Director Tim McRae, and Administrative Assistant/Recording Secretary Samantha Sturtevant.

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 6:05p.m. Chris made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 6th meeting. Riley seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

Jay Messler introduced himself to the commission. Jay explained that he is there to discuss a bleacher project, possible gates, and to answer any questions that the commission may have. Jay provided pictures of the steel gates and the most logical places he thinks they could place the gates based on the roadway for fire access. Jay got up to explain the placement on the photos to the commission.

Jim has asked if he had gone to the building inspector at all.

Jay said he had not because they are elevated bleachers and fenced in.

Chris asked if it seats forty people.

Jay confirmed about forty people. He said that there have been estimates all the way into $32,000. There are companies that take down bleachers and galvanize all of the framer, they repurpose it all, and they can get it for a fraction of the cost. Jay put out to get all of the numbers, the cost for the concrete pad, the bleachers, and the insulation.

Jim asked if the capacity effect if it is handicap accessible.

Jay said that it will be on the other side so it will be handicap accessible. The problem that they’re running into is that every time they have a game there, they have that one bench, and people are standing on the other side. He knows that this has been brought up before and he doesn’t know what has been brought up in the past. Jay wanted to go out there to measure it out to scale to see if this kind of project would fit. The idea is to get seats for people so they don’t have to stand there and so that they have more room. Jay always gets two additional porta-pottys as the program starts to grow.

Chris asked how many registered players they have.

Jay said that they have 140 players. They have gone through D-1 which is great. The program is growing and is becoming a great organization. They’re trying to raise money to do what they can. Everything is for the kids in the program. He stated that he is there to see if the commission are able to help in some way and also to discuss possible gates.

Chris made a motion to support the building of the bleachers on the Bettencourt as proposed. Riley seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

Jeremy thanked the commission and expressed his appreciation.

Jeremy continued to his second topic of discussion of gates. He had talked to the president about it. He finds that he is always kicking kids out of the field who are on their bikes and picking up trash. He thought that it would deter people from riding bicycles and leaving trash that he is constantly picking up after. A lot of work goes into the fields so that was just another thought.

He asked if there were ever gates there.

Jim said there were no gates. Before the fence there was post and string. Jim said that they had put that fence and bleachers in.

Riley said that he likes the idea of gates because the fields are made for sports and they’re not made for trash. It does cost money and they are on a slim budget so he’s not sure if they are able to do that right now.

Chris said he isn’t a hundred percent sure if he understands what his request is because they have a large enough gate for an ambulance access and pedestrian access in at least a half a dozen spots.

Jay clarified that he would like to add gates. There are three entrances that could use a gate.

Chris reiterated that they are gates to close off the entrances.

Jay confirmed.

Tim said that there are one at each end zone and one at each end on both sides.

Jay confirmed and said that two are currently closed off. They are just brainstorming whether or not they should have gates. They initially thought that it would deter the kids from driving on the fields and leaving trash.

Jim said that during non-game times they would have to lock them.

Jay said that they may not necessarily have to lock them it’s more so for the deterrence of driving on the field.

Tim said that if the gates do go on, they cannot lock them because the schools use them. In terms of deterrence, Tim doesn’t necessarily agree because the amount of battles that they have had with kids riding their bikes on the basketball court and they have gates there. There are signs but it’s still a daily process. He is out at the basketball courts every morning picking up trash anyways when there’s two barrels there on their way out.

Chris said that he would rather put the money towards the bleachers.

Jay was hoping to get some thoughts. He is always at the facilities picking up trash and looking out for the grounds.

Chris said that kids are going to do what they want to do regardless. However, if that’s what the organization wants and they are able to finance it then he doesn’t see an issue with it. He would rather see the focus on that set of bleachers.

Jay said that it is definitely the main focus. He had told the president that he would bring it for discussion. They didn’t come to a final conclusion so they figured they would get some feedback.

Jim said that ideally the gates would finish the fence, would manage the field better during game time, and stuff like that.

Chris mentioned that financially, they don’t think that they would be able to help with that.

Jay said that’s understandable. If they are able to get together next meeting to discuss more about it that would be great.

Jim recommends double checking on the capacity.

Jay said that his next step is approval and compliance. He first wanted the approval to have all of his ducks in a row.

Jim said that it’s great he’s working to keep it moving.

Jay reiterated that its all for the kids.

Riley asked if they had a fiftieth anniversary recently.

Jay confirmed. They also replaced a lot of the banners. He has only been there seven years in the sports program. There are a lot of young kids starting out that will be growing with the program so it’s all about just trying to make a difference.

Tim said that if he’d like, he can attend the next meeting where they can discuss this at the next meeting on August 1st.

Jay asked if the bleachers were officially approved.

Tim said yes.

Jay asked if the decision is still being made towards the financial assistance.

Tim confirmed that he will run some numbers and get back to him.

Jay can get this project completed before football season because he already has everything in place. Contractors, insurance, etc. in hopes that it would get approved.

Chris made one last suggestion in regards to the bleachers. He mentioned bollards on the corners of the bleachers to protect the investment.

Jay said that it makes sense because there is a road right there. He concluded by expressing his appreciation, he said that he would be in touch, and that he would be sure to keep everyone updated.

Jim called for old business.

**Old Business (2):**

1. *King Philip Street Tennis Courts*

Tim got in touch with the U.S.T.A. in regards to the grants for redoing the tennis courts. If it’s going to be tennis, no other sport such as pickleball can be applied to that same grant. When it comes to the possibility as to what’s going to happen on King Philip street, until they know what’s going to happen out there and the shared use walking path, they are better off holding off because they don’t want to waste money in case they have to move it or turn it around.

1. *Summer Playground Program Update*

Tim said that believe it or not they are already on week three. They are at full capacity and things are going great. Heather and Bethany are doing a wonderful job. Sammi has been helping them. its been a great start to the summer but they have only five more weeks to go and it’ll already be over. It’s flying by.

Riley sees the pictures online and it looks like the kids are having the time of their life.

Tim agreed.

The chairman called for new business.

**New Business (5):**

1. *Raynham Giants/Jay Messler*

Moved to beginning of the meeting.

1. *Shared Walking Path*

Tim had a meeting a few weeks ago to discuss a shared-use path. Tim provided a packet with a few displays of different ideas. The shared-use walking path is going to start up by Thrasher Street and work its way down to South Main Street. It’s going to be about five feet off of the road and will be about twelve feet wide. People will be able to do some biking and walking.

Chris said that they have bike paths on the street and now there are going to be bike paths in the woods.

Jim asked if it was basically the existing cross-country path.

Tim said yes, they are discussing maybe adding onto that as well. It is up for discussion to do more permanent going forward. They wanted to send the ideas to show the commission the different versions of what they’re thinking of doing and Tim can relay the message as to what the commission thinks. There’re a few different versions of what they are thinking of doing. They are thinking of adding parking by the softball field as well so there’s a lot going on with this project.

Chris asked where the money is coming from.

Tim said that there are some grants but they still have some money to fill in.

The commission continued to review the packets.

Tim mentioned that parking will be adjusted in different areas as well.

Chris said that he likes the idea of additional parking but a lot of fill would have to go in.

Tim agreed and said that there is a lot that is going into this project.

Chris asked who is heading up this project.

Tim said her name is Lindsey Detone. The company that they are working with is G.P.I. (Engineering Design Planning Construction and Inspection).

Chris said those are the engineers but who is behind beginning this project.

Tim said that they did not provide him with that information.

Jim said that he doesn’t like the idea of it because back in the day they discussed putting a dog park there but they were against it because they didn’t want to put fill back there or drop their dogs off and leave them there. That’s a nice area. The parking lot space is not an issue because people park there now at that shared space. Jim asked about the existing walking path that is there now.

Tim said that it’s not official though, it’s out there.

Chris agreed that it’s there, people use it, but it’s not official.

1. *Under the Sun Farm*

Tim said that they are scheduled to come back this year. They were approved by the Selectmen’s office to come back this year. Last year, they had the permit but they did not have the staff. Hopefully, they have the staff. They are excited to come back.

1. *Spring Field Use Permit Applications (4)*

*Anthony Morrison*

Tim said that Anthony Morrison runs the Next Level Football Camp. He’s looking at doing a two-night - two-hour per night camp next week using the Raynham Middle School Football Fields. He hasn’t put in a permit in the past, he seems like a nice young man, and he went through the information with him as well as let him know that there could be a possible fee. There will be no conflicts over there.

Jim said that he is a good kid, they all know him, he’s in college, he’s trying to do the right thinking, and he’s seen as a very good mentor. Jim said having coached him himself, he would entertain that they don’t charge him a fee.

Chris made a motion to approve Anthony Morrison’s permit for the Raynham Middle School Football field from July 18th – July 19th from 5:00p.m. – 7:00p.m. as stated for a fee of $100.

Jim asked why they are charging a fee.

Chris said that though, he is a resident of town trying to do the right thing, they cannot divert from normal procedure and practice.

Jim agreed and proceed with the motion on the floor.

Riley seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

*Bristol-Plymouth Technical School*

Looking for field this year. They did very well working with us in the spring. They are looking for soccer, cross-country, and football. they’re looking for. Soccer is too hard to fit in unfortunately, with all that they have going on, which Tim let Mark know. They would like to have football practices over at South School and they would like to use the cross-country trail which hasn’t been used since Coyle Cassidy was open. They charged them $2400 in the spring for the four fields that they used. The other request that they have is that if they were to use South School for practice, would they be able to bring in a 20ft storage container and leave it there during the day.

Jim asked if that’s their call or is that something they would need additional approval for.

Tim said if they put it more towards the corner it shouldn’t be an issue as long as when the season is over, they get it out of there. The only other people actively over there is the Raynham Channel.

Chris approved the Bristol-Plymouth Regional Technical School permit for the Borden Colony Cross Country path and the South School Field from August 18th – November 1st from 2:30p.m. – 5:00p.m. with a fee of $1200. Riley seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

*Ryan Aronoff*

The Over the Hill Soccer League is looking for a fall permit for the 11v11 multipurpose soccer field starting on August 27th to approximately November 12th on Sunday mornings. Last year there was a fee of $600.

Chris made a motion to approve Ryan Aronoff’s permit for the Over the Hill Soccer League to use the 11v11 multipurpose soccer field on Sundays from 8:00a.m. – 12:00p.m. from August 27 – November 12 for a fee of $1200. Riley seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

*R.A.V.E.*

R.A.V.E. is looking for a permit for their Community Day. They have it setup this year for September 7th with a rain date of September 24th. The event will be 12:00p.m. – 4:00p.m. but they will be out there 11:00a.m. – 5:00p.m. with setup and cleanup. There are no conflicts and there are no horse shows on those two dates as always. There has been no fee in the past.

Chris apologized to ask but said that he was curious as to what happened to the name back when it was Raynham Pride Day.

Tim said that essentially, they changed the name in order to make it more of a focus on Raynham.

Chris made a motion to approve the R.A.V.E. permit for their Community Day on September 7th with a rain date of September 24th from 11:00a.m. – 5:00p.m. for no fee. Riley seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

1. *Scholarship*

Tim said that a family had reached out with a scholarship request form for a scholarship for the school year childcare program. Tim does recommend a full scholarship.

Chris asked what she is requesting.

Tim clarified that she is requesting afternoon care for her children.

Chris made a motion to approve the scholarship request form. Riley seconded and a unanimous vote followed.

**Commissioners’ Reports:**

**Riley Menconi:** He is happy to be a part of the commission and see the smiling faces online of the camp. He’s glad to see that everyone is having fun.

**Chris Shaw:** Every time he goes past Pleasant Street past the basketball courts, he always looks to see how things are going, and sometimes he has to stop to speak to some kids about having bikes on the court and about the trash around. If they continue to stop in and give the same respect to any other users of the facilities, it goes a lot further than having to fallback on calling another authority in there to reduce the improper use of the facility. Its just a thought to step out and have a conversation face to face if things are being done at the court that shouldn’t be.

Tim said that he had a kid recently trying to swat shots from behind the backboard so they aren’t always pleasant.

Chris said that there are some great facilities that are provided in town and they’re welcome to use it anytime as long as they’re not occupied and they’re well-respected.

Riley asked what the age range is for users of the basketball court.

Chris said typically between ten and fourteen.

Tim said that the later it gets, older people use the courts.

**Jim Brow:** Jim asked if there is a permit pulled for cricket because he was driving by this past weekend and saw a group. He had recalled it being brought up before.

Chris stepped out and spoke to a group of about ten guys setup at shortstop. Chris said that without requesting identification, they all claimed to be residents of Raynham.

Jim asked if it was an organization.

Chris clarified that it was just a group of guys.

Tim said that they have caught them a couple of times. Some nights they are out there and other nights they aren’t.

Jim just wanted to be sure that it wasn’t some kind of cricket organization without a permit. Now that they’re aware they are all residents that’s what he was curious about.

**Staff Reports:**

**Sammi:** Nothing to report at this time.

Tim shared that Sammi did a complete cleaning of the office. Everything is organized.

Sammi thanked Tim.

Riley expressed thanks for the organization.

Chris said that he appreciates the commission binders.

**Tim reported the following:**

-Tim said that Norm and him met with the Water Department. They were really good to talk to, the understand where they are coming from. They are currently not seeing any issues with the rain that they’ve had. The only thing that they mentioned, is if the state every came down and said that they need to do a water ban, then it’s out of their hands. So far, they are okay there but he just wanted to give everyone a heads up.

-Tim ordered some new signs for Borden Colony. The rust from the water and everything has worn them away. He also wanted to get them just as a reminder of the rules of Borden Colony. To bring awareness, to see the office for field permits, and to avoid drinking on town property.

-the baseball camp starts on Monday. There are fifty-four kids signed up.

-The Summe4r Concert Series kicked off tonight.

-Lastly, if anyone is looking to get on the childcare before and after school care list, they should give the office a call or contact Bethany because they are full for this upcoming school year.

Chris added a final thought. He had received an email from Mr. Barnes in regards to the Gymkhana Committee reconvening. They will start to get a little movement and they are tentatively scheduled for next Thursday.

Riley made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Chris seconded the motion and a unanimous vote followed. The meeting was adjourned at 6:52p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sammi Sturtevant

Administrative Assistant/Recording Secretary