

Recreation Commission Regular Meeting
Wednesday, August 11, 2021
DRAFT

- 2 The regular Recreation Commission meeting was held Wednesday, August 11 , 2021 at the Stowe Arena Community Room starting at 5:02 P.M.
- 3 Members present: Lynn Altadonna, Dave Rogers, Ed Sthal, Art Shinnars, Adam Rice, Ryan Thibault, Brett Loomis, Matt Frazee. In audience: Hayley Fien, Michael Diender, Maureen Little, Bill Little, Joyce Griffith, Greg Griffith, Roger Lavidle, Berkeley Brooks, Ilya Sadigurski, Robert Page, Loretta Page, Nick Donza, Tiffany Donza, Perry Heller, Kelli Millick
- 4 **5:02pm called to order. Agenda Approved.**
- 5 **7.7 minutes approved. Matt will add list of audience members to 7.7.2021 minutes.**
- 6 **Ice Dance International**
- 7 Hayley Fine presented the Ice Dance International schedule of events and a sneak peak into their community outreach and workshops scheduled to take place September 13-17th. She explained that this program and it's outreach is a great opportunity to get the local community engaged with figure skating and that IDI will be hosting a hockey skills workshop as well. Ice Dance International provided exposure locally, regionally, as well as world-wide. Matt explained that the Town is using \$1,000 from the Arena advertising budget to support IDI's Stowe programming. Lynn asked if the Recreation Commission would need to make any decision on that support. Matt said no, this information was informational since the funds have already been approved for this use. Matt will send along promotional materials.
- 8 **Tennis/Pickleball Courts/Memorial Park**
- 9 Michael Diender, representative of the Stowe Pickleball Club (SPC) shared about the growth of the sport locally and nationwide. The Stowe Pickleball Club currently has 120 registered members. During the last meeting the Stowe Pickleball Club gave an overview of the sport and discussed the courts at Memorial Park. At this meeting, SPC presented a proposed plan that included a combination of tennis and pickleball courts. In their work to create a strategic plan they discovered that the existing footprint does not fit current regulation size courts. In order to get the maximum space utilized, which would entail 4 fixed pickleball courts, one fixed tennis court and 4 portable pickleball courts on the tennis courts, the footprint would need to be extended 12'. The SPC is currently playing on 4 courts. In order to extend the footprint of the existing courts would require a property line adjustment with Ampersand.
- 10 Questions and discussion included the effects of the stormwater act, timeframe of the project, cost of changing the program from the original tennis court project, income from the courts, usage, and expected daily and weekly maintenance. The Selectboard has asked the Recreation Commission to report back to them by this fall with what the Recreation Commission feels is the overall priorities over the next ten years for recreation. To show support of this program the Recreation Commission would need to include this as a top priority in that 10-year plan. Brett Loomis asked what the process would be to amend something the tax payers have already approved. Matt said it's common to amend plans as long as it's not a drastic modification of the original intent of the project. Adam Rice made a motion in light of the significant deterioration of the existing Memorial Park tennis courts to instruct staff to include pickleball/mixed use courts as a high priority in the Recreation Commission's priority recommendations to the Selectboard for the future community recreation needs and that it be the first phase of any

improvements to Memorial Park provided it doesn't necessitate discontinuing existing uses (e.g. Rec Center, ball fields, basketball courts). Motion carried all in favor.

11 Fall/Winter Proposed Programs

- 12 Matt gave a brief overview of marketing strategy changes that the Rec Department has taken in light of COVID. He explained that most recreation departments in the state have discontinued printed copies of brochures and advertise through an online format. If Stowe Parks and Recreation discontinues their printed brochures the department has an estimated savings of \$4,000 in printing costs per year and about \$800 in distribution costs. The Recreation Department has not seen a drop in program registration by not offering a printed brochure. Kelli also added that the Recreation Department's office printer does have the ability to make printed brochures for office use if needed. The Recreation Commission agreed that we should discontinue the printed brochures and move forward with online advertising efforts.
- 13 Kelli gave an overview of the upcoming fall and winter programs and a status report of each program. Programs range from skating program at the Stowe Arena for all ages, youth enrichment programs, youth sports including basketball and flag football, teen programs such as the Babysitter Course, adult programs and community and family events.
- 14 Tiffany Donza asked how the Recreation Department advertises these programs and suggested the Recreation Department use Instagram to promote upcoming programs. She also suggested that the Recreation Department explore the options to run a youth soccer program, she provided Shelburne's recreation programs as an example. Matt said we've been in discussion about a soccer program in the past and would look into it.

15 Other Business

- 16 Nick Donza attended the Recreation Commission to encourage the commission take a broad look at Memorial Park and the Recreation Center as a lineal plan and gather information about what community members want- citing the need and space for senior programs and the skatepark petition. Matt explained that the Recreation Commission is currently in the process of identifying priorities for the town's Recreation 10-Year Master Plan. Matt explained that consultants are typically hired to conduct a broad study of recreational needs. Matt started that consultant studies usually cost roughly \$10-12,000. Matt added that he can add this discussion to the next Recreation Commission meeting in September.

6:53 Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted
Kelli Millick