

RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Meeting Date: 12/6/18

Time: 6:00-8:00PM

Location: Newport City Council Room

Present: Adam Thurston, Mac McKenny, Mike Nolan, Laura Dolgin, Nicole Gratton, Jaime Comtois, Jennifer Smith, David Jankowski, Magarita Brown, Marin Gardyne, Shari Ryan, Laura Smith, Jessica Booth

Absent: Debbie Smith, Louise Whipple

Minutes by: Laura Smith

Called to Order- Meeting called to order at 6:00PM by Jessica Booth.

Welcome & Introductions - Parks & Recreation Director Jessica Booth welcomed everyone to the meeting and began introductions with each member sharing their name, a little about their background and why they chose to join the committee.

Welcome from the City Manager- Laura Dolgin introduced herself to the committee and extended thanks for their willingness to contribute to the community by being part of the committee. Talked a little about their new role and how they represent the municipality and should expect community members to start approaching them in public to ask questions or voice concerns. Expressed the importance of their body of work and their ability to bring those types of things forward to the City Council. Also introduced the VHB study and the Recreation Committee's role for future community development.

Overview of Bylaws- Attendance at the monthly meeting is very important. Three misses in a row without a valid excuse can be reason to be removed from the committee. The Recreation Trust fund is available to support committee activities with approval. About \$40,000 currently in the fund, some designated, some undesignated.

Appointment of Officers- Marin Gardyne made a motion to appoint Jennifer Smith as Chair of the Recreation Committee, seconded by Shari-Lee Ryan. Motion was made by Mike Nolan to appoint Marin Gardyne as Vice Chair, seconded by Nicole Gratton. Jennifer Smith made a motion to appoint Debbie Smith as Secretary, seconded by Shari-Lee Ryan.

Mission Statement - The committee should begin working on a mission statement to help guide projects and goals. Members were encouraged to give this some thought before the next meeting where it will be an agenda topic.

Overview of current Parks and Recreation department programs, events and facilities - Parks & Recreation Director Jessica Booth presented a brief slideshow and summarized current operations. The municipal department oversees Gardner Park, Prouty Beach, Pomerleau Park, the City Dock, Municipal Gym and Senior Center. There are several annual events and community programs hosted by the department too. A hard copy list of these events and programs was distributed during the meeting.

Gardner Park Restoration Project - Jessica Booth updated the committee on plans for the renovation of the Gardner Park playground and restroom facility (skate shack) with a slideshow. The project falls in alignment with the VHB Downtown and Waterfront Master Plan for Newport and builds on previous permitting and community planning work. The municipality hopes this will be the first big focus for the Recreation Committee.

The goal is replace outdated, unsafe play structures with new age appropriate equipment. Areas of the playground will be reclaimed for picnic/green space, a colorful sail shade structure and splash pad installed. Current chain link perimeter fence will be removed in favor of a low morgan rail with landscaping to open things up. Pedestrian safety will be addressed with new sidewalks and crossing area between the restrooms and playground area. The restroom building will be updated with all new commercial grade fixtures and additional exits for fire safety compliance. The entire project is expected to cost about \$400,000. The City is applying for a Land Water Conservation Fund which could fund up to 180,000. There is some current funding available in the Rec Trust and Municipal budget, but about \$120,000 will need to be raised before the fall of 2020 for implementation to proceed on schedule. The committee and Parks & Recreation staff were confident that goal could be achieved between private business sponsorships and a community fundraising effort.

Bryan Marovich, editor of Newport Dispatch, premiered a media spot he put together with Parks & Recreation this summer. This five-minute clip, consisting mostly of community commentary on the playground, will be shared with the public through social media to fuel fundraising efforts.

It was suggested that sub-committees could be formed to tackle various aspects of the Restoration project to utilize strengths of committee members and other interested community members. Sub-committee tasks could include fundraising, community outreach & marketing, site layout and design.

Volunteering Opportunities - Pomerleau Holiday Meal - December 15th
Father Daughter Dances - February 15th, 16th, & 17th

Next Meeting - Scheduled for January 10, 2019 from 6-7PM.

Adjournment- Meeting adjourned at 7:56PM - Motion by Shari-Lee Ryan, seconded by Jaime Comtois.