



TOWN OF HOPEDALE

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Park Commission

Chris Larson
Michael Ledone
Chairman Michael
Reynolds

Hopedale Park Commission

January 18, 2024

Meeting Minutes

7:00 pm Remote Meeting via Zoom

Attendance

Park Commission: Mike Reynolds, Chris Larson, Mike Ledone

Clerk: Kristen Ledone

Guests:

Mike Reynolds called the meeting to order at 6:59pm.

Mike L made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from Dec 21, 2023, Chris L seconded, and all were in favor.

Announcements, correspondences and requests -

- Request came into the Park Commission from Tracey Phillips for the Fairy Walk, June 8, 2024. Tracey called out specifically having storage at the Bathhouse. Mike R did not foresee that being an issue. Mike L made a motion to accept and approve the request, Chris L seconded, all were in favor.
- Correspondence from Water & Wetlands regarding the weed treatment at the pond. The current quote is \$10,000. They wanted to make the board aware that the pond is about 10 years from a more invasive treatment that would cost about \$45,000. Without the invasive treatment, the annual treatments the board is currently approving would be less effective. Mike R will be sending communications to the town and to ConCom to keep all boards in town in the loop. Mike L asked whether the town was still pursuing the dredging of the pond, Mike R said he was not aware of dredging soon. Mike L made a motion to approve the pond treatment for 2024, Chris L seconded, all were in favor.
- The board received quotes from the Lawn Doctor through the Boosters for Phillips Field which would cover the entire complex (softball area and the playing field area for soccer and lacrosse). The quotes were in and around \$5,000 which would be for annual maintenance just for Phillips Field. Boosters and the high school are looking to form a partnership to split the cost on an annual basis. Mike R thought it would be a good idea to get into an annual maintenance routine. Discussions regarding financial commitment will be forthcoming.
- Annual Town Report topics. Mike R presented some items that he would like to discuss from Park's perspective. Among all positive things such as Bright Beginnings partnership, Summer Program, Day in the Park – there are resource restraints preventing the Park's from making major improvements. Mike R asked Mike L and Chris L if they had any other topics that they

would like to include. Mike L mentioned tennis courts but those fall under the umbrella of the Town Park Revitalization. Mike R confirmed he would create a draft including all specific topics that will then be submitted to the Town Hall before the due date of February 1, 2024.

- Budget discussion is beginning. Mike R has spoken with Mitch Ruscitti, and he has talked about taking certain items to Selectboard and FinCom. Mike R asked Mike L and Chris L if there was anything that they wanted to bring to FinCom. Mike L suggested a “Park’s Department”, adding an employee dedicated to the Park Department. Mike R said Steve Bosma is the part-time employee currently but is also a one-man crew and is spread too thin. Mike R said that the Community Preservation Committee is making great headway. The fund has been in force since Nov 2020 and there is about \$330,000 in the account which is great for the town. The money is specifically designated to parks, conservation, recreation, open space, historical and housing. Mike L asked if there was any information regarding the donation from the Warehouse on Plain St, the allocation was supposed to be \$200,000 to the Park Commission. Chris L would like to add an additional part-time employee during the summer to help Steve – weed whacking, clean ups, etc. Potentially a good opportunity for a high school student or college student.

Public Comment - Short Items (non-discussion)

- None

Review previous action items -

- Mike R sent the information from Tighe and Bond for the rock wall to Mitch at the Town Hall. Mike R would like the board to agree on the option that they think is the best based on what they have seen. The board revisited all the available options that were presented at the previous meeting by a representative of Tighe and Bond. Mike R was wondering what the initial thoughts of the board were. The board was aware that the removal of the dead trees to fix the rock wall will make residents unhappy, they will make every effort to replant trees. Mike L favored option 5.3 which included building a new wall but keeping the original look. Mike R and Chris L were not in favor of replacing sections, the board agreed that the entire wall needed to be repaired/replaced at the same time. Mike R had sent the information to Mitch and asked what the next steps were. Mitch explained the Park Commission needed to get in front of FinCom to explain the different options and the Park Commission’s preference. The board agreed that they should eliminate the inconsistent option. Mike R favored the concrete, modular option with the stone facing. Chris L agreed and said that the modular blocks are extremely strong, typically 3 feet thick and can be the most cost-effective way.
- Draper Field loam updated. Mike R had a brief conversation with the Baseball board, they are looking to have access to Draper from March through part of July. Chris L suggested working around the baseball fields and mainly focusing on the field hockey field. Mike R is going to plan on doing a site walk with the Baseball board to see exactly what areas they use for all their levels. Mike R asked Mike L to touch base with D&S Landscaping to see if they could spread the loam and what the cost would be. Mike L had spoken with Scott Savage of Hopedale Youth Baseball, and he said that the Majors Field would be in use until August 1st.
- Bathhouse updates from Mike R. There was approval to install a fire suppression system, a ramp on the back of the building and there was no lead paint present in the building. There was also talk of installing a different type of flooring, but that was not a prerequisite to resume use of the building.
- Mike R had talked to the Board of Health regarding the Bandstand use, they had no objections and said it was not up to them to decide and referred Mike R to the Building Inspector. Mike R wanted to contingently approve the Day in the Park and the Summer Band Concerts upon approval of the Building Inspector. Mike L made a motion to approve the Day in the Park and Summer Band Concerts contingent upon the Building Inspector approval, Chris L seconded, all were in favor.
- Mike R would like to talk about the Summer Program at the next meeting. Hudson Terrando reached out looking to run the program again this summer. Mike would like to see the program happen, but the board will discuss the financial viability of the program at the next meeting.

New Business

- None

Bills and Invoices

- All bills and invoices are current.

Public Comment - lengthy items

- None

Report of board members**Other topics not anticipated in the last 48 hours**

Mike L made a motion to adjourn the January 18, 2024 meeting. Chris L seconded. All were in favor.