



**Parks & Recreation and Harbor Commission Meeting  
Minutes  
June 2, 2015**

**Commission Present:** Bossange, Hurley, Kaplan, Hanson and Khadka

**Staff Present:** Bridges, Roach, Cate, Moreau, Paradis, Allen, Cahill, Rogers and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:35 p.m. by Commission Vice Chair Bossange.

**Approval of Agenda**

Motion was made to approve the agenda by; adding IIIA. Discussion Item: Naming of the New Skatepark, moving up IX. Information Item: Burlington College to IIIB. and adding VA. Action Item: Conservation Acquisition Funding by Hanson, second by Khadka, motion carried.

**Approval of Consent Agenda**

Approval of Minutes of May 5, 2015 Meeting

\*waive the reading, approve the minutes and place them on file

Motion was made to approve the consent agenda as requested above by Hurley, second by Khadka, motion carried.

**Request for Permit Extension, Battery Park**

Allen requested an extension on the sound for the July 3<sup>rd</sup>, Independence Day celebration at Battery Park, she stated that with sound check and music the total amount of time with amplified sound would be approximately 4.5 hours. Very low impact to the neighborhood, requested an extension of 2.5 hours of amplified music and a 20 minute extension on the stop time from 9 p.m. to 9:20 p.m.

Motion to approve the request for extension of amplified sound and shut down time by Hanson, second by Khadka, motion carried.

**Discussion of Naming of the Skatepark**

Bridges stated that Andy "A DOG" Williams was very pivotal with the skating community and the skatepark in general and said all of the Leadership team was in favor of the proposal for naming and added that this was the first official request for naming since the new naming policy was adopted. Said he was in the process of responding to all the emails but over 60 emails regarding the request as well as others and added the department as a whole is 100% in support of this proposal as well as a lot of public support. Bridges stated that he wanted to pass that on to the Commission and was not requesting approval at this time. No gifts would be associated with this naming it would be in honor of civic responsibility and stewardship to the City.

Hanson felt need to be careful moving forward what public support means particularly since this is the first request, would be good to formalize what public support means in respect to the naming policy and how to gage moving forward. Bridges clarified this would be the first under the new policy but many things have been named prior to this policy. Further stated that the policy says it is incumbent upon the



Director and the Commission to approve. Bridges concluded by offering to forward all emails regarding this naming on to the Commission for the record.

**Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00PM, 3 min. per person time limit)**

Public forum opened at 5:58 p.m.

Dave Hartnett, Ward 4 City Councilor, spoke regarding the Starr Farm Dog Park, explained that he had been meeting with the neighbors and that the sentiment of the neighborhood is that the park is out of control, people/dogs are coming too early and leaving very late. Feels there can be some compromise. The neighborhood will be meeting in a couple of weeks to figure out how to move forward with the problems and come up with some resolutions.

Lee Brown, Starr Farm Resident, spoke regarding the Starr Farm Dog Park and how noisy it is and would like to have more specific hours of operation rather than until dusk, would like Sunday hours to be shorter, would like to have a gate, would like the park to be smaller, all dogs should have a license and vaccinations and need enforcement. Would like to see north and south ends moved in to make smaller, too close to family homes and gardens, felt no authority monitoring, insufficient parking and should be for residents of Burlington. He was also reading emails and letters from others including; Patricia Blohm, Pete Carroll and Denis O'Brien.

Ruby Perry, spoke regarding Burlington College property, she has been meeting weekly about the property with faculty and staff, students and how to save the land as well as doing a lot of public outreach. The public outreach has had a lot of support with not giving for housing use, done a lot of research and organizing and felt public is not well represented. Felt needs to be more public input. Also feels the property should not be private for only the people living in that space.

Joanne Hunt, resident, advocating for keeping as much of the Burlington College land open as possible. Uses land a lot and loves that it is open space, should keep open for wildlife and feels can be more creative and imperative to keep in that manner.

Andy Simon, Locust Street resident, and Save Open Space Burlington group, felt very important to keep talking about the Burlington College property and what the voice is of the City toward privately owned pieces of land. Wants to make sure the public voice is part of the process. Would like to see kept accessible.

Charles Simpson, Opens Space Burlington, Ward 6, feels parks needs to take the lead on making this thing happen in relationship of maximizing the open space at Burlington College and feels Parks & Recreation should take the lead on initiating funding to buy this portion of property, feel need to have the Commission forcing a good solution in the public face and need to make real.

Trina Zide, Burlington resident, stated that she initiated the naming of the Skatepark and felt she had done a lot of due diligence in making sure that this is supported by the community, the request has a lot of support and hopes to have considered.



Mike Sheridan, supports the Skatepark naming and was a neighbor of Andy, said he was a very positive and creative person and having his name associated with the Skatepark would help with fundraising into the future.

Mary Twitchell, Burlington resident, supporter of Burlington College open space, advocate the Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department push for open space and be a representative and lead in this campaign.

Diane Gayer, Open space representative and advocate, stated she understands many layers to the Burlington College property, felt the need to make sure the proper amount of open spaces remain and this is a unique piece of open space. Felt very important to the eco system, a lot of value in keeping open.

John Van Hazinga, spoke in favor of naming the Skatepark after Andy A-Dog Williams.

Joan Furchgott, in favor of naming the Skatepark after Andy and felt that Andy was more of an ambassador for the Skatepark and naming after him would represent the “welcoming vibe that you would want at the park”.

Travis Card, stated he was on the initial committee to create the Skatepark and felt it would be very appropriate to name after Andy. Also stated that he was the best skater and represented the values that Burlington embraces.

Public forum closed at 6:27 p.m.

### **Oktoberfest Event**

Lou Demasi, introduced himself and stated that he runs events in the area and athletic teams. He explained that he was presenting the event for the last weekend of September called Oktoberfest. He explained how Fork in the Road is a teaching program and will be having a dinner to raise money that will be held on Thursday. The event is a fundraiser. There will be a lot of sponsors and will give out vouchers. Lots of games all for free with tons of prizes throughout the festival. Forty brewers will participate, had multiple meetings with fire, VT Liquor control, and others to make sure everything is in order. This is a Bavarian festival and everyone will get a bottle of water and a pretzel when they leave. Sunday will be the Burton/Jay Peak family day and with a lot of events and other carnival type games and a dance group.

Kaplan asked what the difference was between the Brew Festival and the Oktoberfest and Demasi said the difference is that the Brew Festival is not a traditional beer festival but a festival and he is conscious of sending to the proper crowd not the young drinking crowd and college students. Bridges added that the ticketing type of model of event has worked well in the past and is better for serving, it has a very controlled atmosphere.

Bossange asked what time Friday night events begin and was told at 5 p.m. and is open for 4 hours with targeting the 25 plus age group as well as Saturday and then Sunday would be geared more toward families.



Hanson asked about what the food options are for family day and was told Fork in the Road, Blue Bird and several others as well as farm fresh food, Kountry Kart Deli and Myers Bagels.

Khadka asked if there would be any ethnic foods and if Demasi had been in contact with any of these vendors of ethnic stores downtown and Demasi said it is really a German food themed festival, would be more authentic for this year but could look at different items into the future.

Hanson suggested having more options for beverages for children.

Khadka also asked how many students are involved with the Fork in the Road program and was told 6-10 the limit that could work in the space provided.

### **Approval of Conservation Funds Expected Executive Session**

Motion to go into executive session at 6:53 p.m. for the discussion of real estate matters that could put the City at a substantial disadvantage, Bossange, second by Hurley, motion carried.

Motion to go out of executive session at 7:06 p.m., Bossange, second by Khadka, motion carried.

Motion to approve funding up to \$12,000 of Conservation Legacy Fund dollars for pre-acquisition work, Bossange, second by Hanson, motion carried.

### **Parks Master Plan – Strategic Initiatives Review**

Bridges stated that he had conversations with all Recreation division staff and Rogers will be the new Superintendent of Recreation, also the new Marketing and Outreach person has been filled by Diana Wood and her official start date was May 28<sup>th</sup>.

Bridges explained what he had given to the Commission was the meat of the document and the Leadership team has reviewed and discussed and approves of the plan. The goal for the Commission is to talk through any questions, comments or concerns to the plan they may have. The initial has been redesigned and would like to give some time to the Commission to digest before asking for approval.

Hanson asked about her previous request into why there is no Recreation piece to the plan and was told by Bridges that he did send out the information to all Commissioners and that piece is not meant to be in the actual initiatives document, more of a honing of what doing and offering and focusing on successful programs and things that are being done well.

Kaplan asked about the sustainability of recreation and Rogers stated that a lot of the changes within the Recreation division happened when the CityKids program went away, due to the change in actual positions and programming and being more intentional with programming and what is being offered and the demographics.

Hanson said additional indoor facilities and pool has not been mentioned and would like to see it put back in the plan, feel the community needs a pool. Bridges stated that it was noted as a deficiency in the plan but struggling with as a recreation facility and what the City square footage limitations are and



where it could be built, also looking at regionalization of community centers and who and where it should be.

Bossange said he was more concerned with timelines and the ability to get to all the areas and get the work done. Suggested slowing down and evaluating, not always doing as moving along and while things are so fast moving. Bridges responded stating an atmosphere has been created within the department to take the time to take care of family and self and it has been working well.

Kaplan reiterated that she puts in time in her schedule to reassess and reevaluate, suggested building time into the plan.

### **Licensure and Fees for Use of Dog Park**

Bridges stated that other communities are not stepping up and Burlington is bearing the brunt of it and don't have the capacity to manage. Some of the points made by neighbors such as the park is way too big and need a dog park fee and should charge just like any other venue with Burlington/non-Burlington resident rates. Bridges was in favor of making this change that could also make a positive impact on a public and pet issue and was also in favor of moving forward with shrinking the size of the park.

Hanson stated that making the park smaller would not be the place to start but was open to consider licensing.

Bridges said a certain amount of problems are happening with people not paying attention to the rules and a very large sense of entitlement. Design is a big factor and that if the park were smaller but better it would make a difference.

Bossange recommended Bridges come back with a recommendation for license and fee, shortening hours, where the park is closest to homes move away from the homes, feels very reasonable and that people going to park would understand and also felt the park should be open to everyone and Khadka agreed.

Bridges stated that he would put together a proposal for the next Commission meeting.

Kaplan asked if the department could address some of the immediate issues and Roach said could not make any real changes due to the fact that the rules are all governed by ordinance. Also do not have any enforcement. Need more outreach and support to educate the users of the park.

### **Harbor Update**

Moreau explained the Marina and the Campground switched over to a new software called Hercules, much better and appropriate for a marina and also allows mobile tablet use in gates, can accept credit cards at the gates, campground 100 % on line for reservations, new partnership with Plattsburgh Marina which is interactive with Burlington's for deposits, which makes a stronger cancellation policy.

New Parking Kiosks; two on the waterfront lot, existing kiosk was moved to launch ramp parking lot to better serve early morning boaters, working on the Oakledge lot next for kiosks also.



Boathouse Renovations; explained the new and more efficient front desk which also coincides with the new Wayfinding design.

North Beach new organization site was added for larger groups to stay in a specific area, also used for community events and programming.

New Service Partners; LL Bean and Skirack, offering bike rentals and on site bike repairs as well as instructional kayak and SUP tours from Leddy Beach.

Other Improvements; Re-design parking pass, new waterfront equipment, all utility vehicle at North beach allows for better beach access and in the works is new waterfront parking signage and employ about 70 seasonal employees.

### **Burlington College Update**

Bridges acknowledged meetings and more public hearings have been happening, had the first meeting for looking into having a dedicated web site with on line tool for input. Good feedback at Conservation Board meeting with a smaller agenda and focused on this specific agenda item. Cahill took notes and would be happy to share the information with the Commission as well as publicly, a lot of desire for more conversational outreach and dialogue on the issue and working on different ways to get and give input back.

Kaplan asked if other than the use of conservation funds why is Parks, Recreation and Waterfront helping to manage this particular private project and Bridges said the department has been engaged with the property for many years and this property was the poster child for why the Conservation Board came about and parts to this property that if available would have leveraging funds and that is why in the forefront and a priority. Other City departments are also involved, as well as other housing entities.

### **Annual Report to City Council**

Bridges stated the City Council has requested the report and he proposed to the Leadership team that the Department put together brief synopsis and get to Commission for approval and to sign off on.

### **Director's Items**

None

### **Commissioner's Items**

Kaplan congratulated Bridges on getting reappointed.

Hanson thanked Rogers for turning Smalley Park into a softball field, really wonderful and he did a great job supporting that effort. Bridges added that it has been a long term effort.

### **Adjournment**

Motion was made to adjourn at 8:23 p.m. by Khadka, second by Hanson, motion carried.