



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes
December 14, 2021
Parks and Recreation Commission**

Commission Present: Traverse, Hurley, Duke, Lantieri, Johnson and Farrell

Staff Present: Wight, Roach, Sauve, Madalinski, Moreau, Kaeding, Kaplan and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:33 p.m. by Traverse

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Farrell, second by Lantieri, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Traverse asked to waive the reading of the consent agenda and motions into the record for approval.

Approval of consent agenda by Farrell, second by Johnson, motion carried.

Encampments in Parks

Traverse introduced Lacey-Ann Smith, BPD and Deryk Roach, BPRW. Roach began with stating that Smith was the expert and under the management with Police Department. Roach explained he had sent out a draft form of policy and procedures and how organized organizationally, group that shares where encampments are jurisdictionally within the city. Ultimately the Mayor has the say as to how and what the City reacts to and also members of Attorney's office, DPW, Parks, and others. Stated how information is collected and monitored, is generally received from staff within the department working in the field and documented by c click fix. Approximately 20-40 sites monitored annually as well as who is there, are they being sought with any outreach workers, what priority, is the encampment active or abandoned, if receiving assistance, be it medical or community services. Smith coordinates getting the outreach needed if not receiving and also makes aware to the appropriate services of needs.

Smith explained that Parks will notify of who is out and where, she will contact liaisons and get fact finding and how long can give persons, don't try to rush people unless a real need, if a clean site is being lived in versus dirty or unsafe depends on the speed in which addressed. Degree of triage as to how, when and the typical process is to provide notice and once notice, several days to a week or more before going out and pick up items if needed. Pickup would be herself and Paul Morris, store everything that is dry and non-perishable. If go out and someone is there and they move then done. Property is stored for 30 days then a letter is left on site so people know how to retrieve belongings. Pretty clear when a site is abandoned, if unsure would leave notice. Police are not involved unless it becomes a trespass situation. Smith also explained the outreach and how working with individuals is much easier than the enforcement piece particularly when it is a larger group and not making a relationship and getting an understanding and explaining the process.

Farrell asked if a spreadsheet is kept with information and monitoring and Roach said the documentation is difficult and would require to continue to maintain and virtually impossible and do not do but do have the c click fix to look back on and all other means that are done by email and other messaging gets resolved and followed. When the public calls in it is a bit more difficult, more about



verifying information, continuous and fluid, not as helpful. Roach also said he has a file on his desktop that he keeps track as it comes to attention. Had multiple meetings at sites because of the changing of individuals coming and going at different times of the day. Roach said probably average 7-8 times a week talking to others about the sites and individuals. Also has a very big effect on the City facilities with use and misuse, same people outside are going and doing same inside.

Traverse thanked for coming and opened to other Commissioners if they had questions. Roach viewed as a community issue and how the community wants to help the City process and very complex. Said Burlington as a whole had to help understand how to be a compassionate City and straddle the line of good City and creating a camp and more tightly managing, Roach said he did not have the answers.

Hurley said she appreciated all the work that had been done.

Lantieri said what he felt interesting was the flexibility to shift in severity can lead to unfairness, and asked if there was any will or appetite to codify or to keep as flexible policy. Smith said some Councilors would like to have it voted on to be a law to some degree, and that was seen because of the Judge's ruling, said policy has no legal standing, has to go through all groups to be no longer a draft. Some Councilors would like to see that be a reality. Smith also stated what made the Sears Lane encampment very difficult was not the size, it is 4th generation of campers, when working within parks, it is camper and City with no other parties involved. In the Sears Lane there was a 3rd entity of protesters and that shifted a lot, from personal and human to human contact, versus the City, media, protestors and all the other things that make significantly more difficult. Smith felt needed to be addressed for a long time and don't have the spectrum as to what it means to be homeless and how to meet needs with dignity and respect.

Traverse said during the pandemic a site was setup at North Beach Campground and at Sears Lane and inquired if it was possible to move back to North Beach and also asked when the site was at North Beach if and what challenges and issues were presented and if it could happen again. Roach said the way the infrastructure is set up is for seasonal use. All utilities are very shallow and not meant to be used year round, very shallow meant a lot of frozen pipes, a lot of issues with electric, water, sewage, not meant to support that use, risk having an even bigger problem, about 50 problems due to infrastructure issues, not many with personal violations. Big fees for rental of campers but looking more for a facility and don't have that available.

Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00 PM)

Public Forum was opened at 6:05pm

Thomas DeSisto, speaking about Pomeroy Park tot lot, wanted to thank everyone on staff at BPRW and initial interface was with D. Roach who was very clear and helpful. The whole planning team was very helpful and professional. Several months ago and for several years had a 2-5 year old play area, several months ago removed for safety reasons, has a 2 year old that was using and had major impact on families using and asked for something to replace the structure that is comparable and important to the neighborhood who have very small yards, lots of children live in apartments and multi-family structures. Noticed there are many day cares that use the space as well. Asked to prioritize the structure with something safe and playable.

Andy Simon, talk about the Pine Street Barge Canal and a petition circulating for two weeks, currently 404 signers, asking City of Burlington work immediately in conserving for human and non-human to



make a park accessible to all. Stated he had presented petition to Conservation Board, City Council and Planning after tonight and would like to request that Parks consider putting on agenda to discuss further either January or February and would like to talk about the history of the superfund site and the toxins and long history of the canal. Would like to hear thoughts about how to do development in Burlington, and hopes to talk about responsibility for this land, humans and residents created and how to work together to come up with strategies to remediate and how the site can become win win win for people private and the earth. Petition speaks specifically to private parcels but would like to also speak to the 11 acres owned by the City of Burlington.

Susan Ogden, PFP project to create public safety and educate campaign for the Bike Path, recently relocated to Burlington, promoting a safer bike path with speed limits and to remind all to use signals, she is on the path as cyclist and walker and 8 out of 10 don't use signals and etiquette. Request to approve a campaign and engage stakeholders to raise consciousness and awareness to avoid accidents and keep safe.

Ruby Perry, spoke to the barge canal petition and would like to admit that the petition is asking to think differently but also about citizens of democracy. The barge canal is something that can help bring together as a City, to see a working landscape, healing itself, regenerating soils and water, an opportunity to work in partnership, and would like to be the forefront in the area, explore ways to remediate and learn to take care of the mess that was left behind. Felt the barge canal was a good place to learn together. Stated don't expect the City to own but rather the citizens to own and to work with nature and want to further that work.

Jordan advocating for tot lot at Pomeroy, said he used for a few months and noticed immediately when gone, space felt very empty, not much for daughter to engage with and very hopeful for this lot being prioritized, loved the neighborhood and has been a resident for quite some time. Supports the lot for his family.

Karl Lukhaup and family in favor of the tot lot on Pomeroy, would love to see lighting and stated that some are using the park as a dog park and not in favor of that happening for use.

Chris Rousseau, would like to have lights at the Skate Park, frequents the park and travels a lot and has not found one as nice as Burlington, but many have lights for after hours and since more northern felt strange that don't have. Stated has 3 children and after dinner it is too dark and will have to choose with helping for dinner or go and skate. School kids in general get out of school and it is dark at 4pm and did not know of any other park that is used as much, even in the colder weather it is shoveled. Feels if no lights will go skate downtown or other places. Felt a lot of other kids at the park and it will get dangerous, longer window would help spread out the larger groups using at one time.

Seeing nobody further from the public, Public Forum was closed at 6:32 pm

Penny for Parks Community Requests

Madalinski thanked all the people that spoke and participated, had 6 separate project requests, have \$40,000 funded for this fiscal year, screened one out, roller rink with concrete pad. Recommendation is to fund 3 of the 6 requests and moving 2 into future capital plan and one request that did not feel had quite the adequate effects.

\$10,000- Resurfacing Roosevelt Tennis Court, aligns \$10,000, can hire court resurfacing company



\$25,000- allocated to the tot lot at Pomeroy Park, had 39 signatures to replace, hearing from manufacturers that it is taking some time to get the pieces but hope to have for the coming season, also a lot of removing the fence and hedges but working on plan

\$3,000 for Campaign on etiquette and rules for the Bike Path/Greenway, talked about doing a PSA and other different things, not a guarantee but hopeful

Long-term capital- plan to move about \$25,000 for skate park lighting, very expensive, under skate park have to hire environmental consultant, and many others and additional costs will add and would be well above what could fund.

North Shore Natural Area Southern Staircase Replacement; prioritize on long-term capital planning list due to H&S concerns

Schmanska Park Playground Accessibility & Park Safety; add notes to Schmanska Park playground replacement on capital list requesting accessible rubberized surfacing be installed at this playground

Lantieri asked if there are savings below the budget, if those funds would be rolled over or put in general fund if under anticipated, Madalinski stated have a contingency but ideally come in on budget or under and recommend any remaining be put in emergent needs, which goes towards things that come up that were not planned for such as burst pipe and sometimes put toward benches or picnic tables, fencing, more flexible line to support maintenance teams as well as communities.

Sauve said in terms of funds going back to general funds, it would always stay in PFP funds and would go back into that account, never general fund.

Roosevelt Park Resurfacing;

Traverse said in the past few years a group had been looking into the Roosevelt courts and asked if the group had been approached regarding the project. Sauve stated this was part of the comprehensive plan when constructed not an observation of boundary and how effects connections to community and the edge of the park, will be looking at that, have official survey and will look at the park as a whole. Madalinski said with resurfacing it is best practice and it will make best surface for use.

Lantieri asked how tight to the letter do the funds need to be, can the funds be a bit flexible or specifically for resurfacing, could you use for nets if needed. Madalinski said probably not that specific but it very much toward the actual court would likely fall under the purview.

Pomeroy Tot Lot;

Traverse felt awesome, his daycare used the park on occasion and thanked for bringing forward.

Bike Path/Greenway Etiquette Campaign;

Lantieri asked if any extra money could round out the campaign and Madalinski stated he did not have the numbers currently and if to do internally it is more a matter of staff time not so much funds, not sure if hired out, probably more than \$3000, did not have hard numbers. Spoke of social media, Facebook and broader video campaign.

Farrell said he felt great timing given what many had previously said about speed limits and etiquette on the Greenway, felt a great direction to go.



Lantieri asked if it could be pulled in with wayfinding and Madalinski said he had a conversation earlier and said it is possible and some money aside for updating some signage on wayfinding, more map signage for amenities.

Duke felt a good idea and asked if would do a community type engagement with other entities to involve others to get the word out and Madalinski said a good idea and would like to get others involved, would be helpful and potentially work on some concepts to have an idea of what would look like and could find ways to improve.

Skate Park Lights

Lantieri asked by shifting over to long-term timeline wanted to know about how long and what the process would be and Madalinski said very hard to have a firm commitment as you never know what will happen with funding and what other emergencies will come up, just insures on radar and projects that are planned to be tackled and trying to find funds is often tough. Sauve also stated very high price tag if on list would not be much else that could be done. Not impossible but hard with lots of playgrounds that need to be replaced and attention to add another item to an existing site.

Traverse said seen request similar and in reviewing a request for lighting asked if a temporary situation had ever been looked into, either for this project or others, Madalinski said yes periodically, personally spent time taking care of Calahan rink and looked into and not a lot of good cost effective good lighting. Stated if you don't light adequately you can create a worse situation and need to create good illumination. Temporary and generators tend to have a pretty high ticket cost per unit, still pretty costly, to get the level needed would be large investment and then diesel fuel through the night, along with noise and emissions. Do look to add when possible, such as at Leddy, got a good price and staff put in the actual fixtures.

Motion to approve the recommendation by the department by Farrell, second by Johnson, motion carried.

Standing Item: Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours

Farrell had an extra hour with Foundation, at pocket park 2 hours, total 3, Lantieri extra 2, Duke had additional 1 hour, Traverse had additional 2 hours.

Director's Items

Wight mentioned opening at Oakledge December 16th, 3:15pm at Austin Drive entrance and then Flynn, said the Red Hot Chili Dippers might attend, Saturday at 1pm the Gift at Leddy, Park Foundation will support Redstone Cottage with funding, looking for family match, coming back in January with signage and if changing speed will need to vote to repeal and go with safe speeds language, showed the signage of what staff had been working on for greenway signage rules and etiquette.

Lantieri asked if standing item could be added to agenda for Volunteer Opportunities

Commissioner's Items

Farrell stated the Champlain Street Pocket Park information gathering went well, most would like some lighting and for passersby a lot of interest in keeping as a playground and things for kids would be really important, most common was sprucing up and cleaning. Lantieri said spoke with many people in a short amount of time general consensus was for lighting on programming and cleaning up for children's space.



Wight said going through files and in 1995 Director brought forward to sell that piece of property and the community fought to keep.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:21pm

HARBOR COMMISSION MINUTES

The meeting was convened at 7:21pm by Traverse

Approval of Agenda

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Farrell, second by Hurley, motion carried.

Park Field Fees

Moreau stated been at least 7 years since increased hoped to have more investment done before increased but still below others and want to continue to give access to all.

Farrell felt very modest and no reason not to support.

Moreau also added that she was open to answering any questions regarding the new Park Rangers positions and gave some information on the progress to date about the new jobs that were added as well as the supervisor and what the positions will provide to the division, particularly some decrease in bad behavior and increased education.

Farrell asked if there was an ideal profile and Kaeding said anyone with park experience, would like to see someone that has been in the department and a lot is talking with people and talking skills will be high on the list, past park, state or federal. Moreau said for education made broad, history background could be very good, traditional park background, non-profit. The position would reflect the mission of the department.

Moreau also stated would like to have a future conversation regarding the bond failure and the waterfront is lacking representation, feels Boathouse is functioning year to year and will fail soon, at current rate rusting out should have failed 5 years ago. Without bond or capital support and at crossroad as to what to do. Stated needs investment as will not be able to operate waterfront and campground without investment. Encouraged all to be engaged and raise level of awareness of the Boathouse failing and not operating, said need to get creative and other opportunities, working on grant currently. Asked if an opportunity to get more money from PFP or another bond what the Commission support would be.

Hurley asked if Moreau had talked to the State or Federal regarding new bill, Wight said bridges are what is the focus and it is very specific, nothing that she has seen yet that would relate to waterfront or beaches, the overpass might qualify for funding and a lot also requires a match and currently don't have a match either for some of the funding. North Beach, since new money, might not require a match.



Farrell said that Leahy is currently asking for requests and suggested reaching out and explore options with that department.

Hurley suggested Northern Boarder Regional Commission is another source to look into for funding.

Motion to approve marina fees as recommended online by Hurley, second by Lantieri, motion carried.

Wight showed a comparison of usage at the marina and campground from 2018 and 2021. The marina did not make up the difference from Canadian usage, however the campground made it up with a little increase in all other users and none from Canada.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:51pm by Traverse

