

MINUTES

Park, Arts & Culture Committee Meeting
Tuesday, June 19, 2016 at 5:30pm
Wakefield Room of Splash, Burlington Boathouse

Participants

Committee Members:

- Councilor Dave Hartnett, North District (Chair)
- Councilor Karen Paul, Ward 6 (recused from Agenda item #1)
- Councilor Selene Colburn, East District

Staff:

- Jesse Bridges, Director, Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront
- Erin Moreau, Waterfront Manager, Burlington Parks, Recreation and Waterfront
- Kath Laing, Development Manager, Fletcher Free Library

Others:

- John Bossange
- Nancy Kaplan

1. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved with one change – no update from New Moran would be made. The draft minutes from 06/23 will be approved during at the next meeting to be held August 11.

2. Public Forum

No time was needed for public forum at the start of the meeting. Councilor Hartnett encourages the public to participate throughout the meeting.

3. Update from Waterfront

- During the development of the BPR&W Master Plan the community wanted a focus on events, beaches and trails:
 - A new beach comber allows for more efficient and regular beach combing from Blanchard to Leddy. A beach patrol from Oakledge to Leddy has been implemented this summer, stopping at all beaches to clean up refuse, relay pertinent information for community use of beaches, decrease of negative activity in the evenings, enforce leash laws.
 - This summer is the second season with a full time manager at campground. Additionally, online reservations have been implemented.
 - Increased number of French speaking seasonal staff providing improved services to Quebecois visitors.

- Councilor Hartnett asked about boat slip waiting lists at the Boathouse. Erin Moreau reports slip availability is dependent on boat size: 3-5 yrs smaller boats, longer for bigger boats. At Perkins Pier there are 10-12 openings a season for smaller craft. There are not enough slips for demand, transient slips have a constant waiting list.
- Councilor Hartnett asked about the perception of having the new Marina as competition. Erin Moreau believes it will be competition, same as LCT is competition. The Harbor needs more slips in so BPR&W and new Marina need to work in partnership to satisfy the demand. Although economic impact is possible, BPR&W believes the market can handle more than 116 slips.

4. Smoking ban survey

- Director Bridges believes the survey questionnaire construction, data collection techniques used and population sampling need to be scientifically valid. He has shared an option for conducting such a survey which will have a cost of 8-10k. Director Bridges is willing to look at local and regional surveys conducted on this topic to see if the results are relevant to determining if a smoking ban in Burlington parks should go forward. He knows some local organizations have already offered to share their results. He is unsure if these results will satisfy the Council resolution. He commented that the resolution was very open – no definition of who would conduct the survey or how it should be conducted.
- Councilor Hartnett says the council needs to decide if they will spend the money to get a scientific survey. He believes the lack of effort to enforce smoke free beaches is discouraging. It is going to be an extraordinary effort to enforce parks that are 100% smoke free. He believes this situation has been overthought, referencing Winooski banning smoking in parks based on existing ordinances. Most parks with the exception of Oakledge, Waterfront, North Beach, Leddy, City Hall and Battery, could be smoke free according to current ordinances. Councilor Hartnett believes a 100% total smoking ban is hard and discriminatory, and the Council could save funds and take a common sense approach. He believes that the people who are going to be affected the most are those who will not be surveyed, the transient / homelessness people. – walk one or two blocks to have a cig but at least stay in park. Councilor Hartnett says he did present a survey in April to the PACC, and if accepted it would have been done by now. If 100% smoking ban is the only option then we need a scientific survey. He is unwilling to tell people they can't smoke in park, but someone in a boat in a slip can smoke without a problem.
- In response to Councilor Hartnett's proposal of using existing ordinances, Director Bridges says everything we do needs to be consistent and clear. What classifies as a play structure? Where does an athletic field extend to? He will check in with the City Attorney to for her interpretation on these definitions.
- Councilor Paul believes it is a good idea to look at surveys that have been done on this topic. She is concerned that if we move ahead with a survey methodology that is not scientifically valid the Council runs the risk of setting a precedent for similar situations in the future. She says we were charged with coming up with a survey, that is what we must do.
- Councilor Colburn checked in with Councilor Knodell on the methodology used for the neighborhood safety survey – online, paper and door-to-door surveys were conducted. She wants the PACC to better understanding of use patterns in parks, where is smoking occurring. She asks is it possible to carve out a smoking area within parks or is this going to create a situation where people smoke right outside the building. Research states that if second hand smoke is more disperse then the risk is lower. And if condensed into a smaller area, there is a higher risk. She would like the PACC to think about what our job as a committee is on this topic. Possible to come forward with a

proposal of a smoking policy in parks. Councilor Colburn believes it is important to separate a survey from any proposed solutions or compromise. The survey is not necessarily a tool to get us to a point, but a way to measure the community's appetite for all possible outcomes – allowing smoking, implementing a partial ban, implementing a total ban. It is important to pose questions in neutral way.

5. Next meeting

August 11th, 5:30 in the Local History Room of the Fletcher Free Library.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:45pm.