

Town of Harpswell  
Recreation Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 13, 2023

**Committee Members in Attendance:** David Brooks, Tom Carr, Jeanie Rubio, Donald Miskill,  
Tom Mahoney, Kevin Hunt

**Also in Attendance:** Gina Perow (Recreation Director), Kayla Matthews (Programs Assistant),  
Jane Covey (Selectwoman)

**A quorum was present; the meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.**

Meeting Minutes: The minutes for the November 14, 2022 were approved as corrected (5-0-0).

Old Business:

- **Community Swim Program** – Program restarted in January for 8 sessions. Due to pent up demand, it is only open to MSAD 75 towns. The sessions have been near full.
- **Comprehensive Plan Update** – Kayla is a member of the CP Task Force. The Recreation & Open Space Section draft has been distributed for review prior to the TF’s next meeting on Thursday, Feb 16 at 2:30 PM. The MF Cmte also received the draft. Gina asked folks to review the issues and implementation areas. See if it feels like the heart and soul of Harpswell. Forward any edits, questions, comments to Kayla so she can collate them for the review session.
- **HAH Updates (Jeannie Rubio):**
  - Jeannie is our liaison to the HAH Health & Wellness Cmte.
  - Working on the Mindfulness Program and Friends together drop-in Program. Looking at 4 weeks in the Fall and 4 weeks in late Winter.
  - Gardening boxes going to those who need them.
- **Mitchell Field Updates (Don Miskill)** – See MF Cmte minutes for detailed discussions:
  - **Waterfront Consolidated Landing** – Boat Launch Facility & part of the replacement pier.
  - **MF Survey Results** – 758 responses including the written comments which are available for review on the town web site.
  - **Admin Building Disposition Process** – MF Cmte recommended to remove or keep it.
  - **MF Marine Business District Redraw** – Will be voted on at Town Meeting.
- **Harpswell Coastal Academy Building** – The Town has first rights to repurchase the building since they are closing at the end of the school year. The asking price is yet to be determined. This building is an alternative to the Admin Building repurpose proposals. A review of the written comments in the MF Survey Admin Building Disposition question shows a wide range of desired uses. Many of which don’t work in the Admin Building (Gym, foul weather site for band concerts, pickle ball courts) but could work at the HCA Building. The HCA building has water and septic but still needs a significant amount of work. The MF Admin Building does not have water and septic and would need more parking all of which the town would have to pay for to make the building suitable for occupancy. Thus, the dilemma for both decisions.
- **Youth Program Updates:**

- 3 – 6 grade Basketball is completed. Pre-K – 2 grade Basketball is starting.
- Lost Valley Ski Program has one week left. Very well attended, ~45 skiers.
- T-Ball – We are all set. Scott Gill is running it. Always have good numbers.
- X-Country Harriers – Will be running at MF in May. Working with Topsham since the meets are so large in numbers. Frank Wright is stepping down and Tom Vogt will coach.
- Summer Swim – Hope to restart the Program in June if we can assemble the staff.
- **Community Program Updates:**
  - **Light up the Bandstand** – Very windy and cold but still well attended for first time event. 200+ people. Lessons learned – More hot chocolate, fire pits were excellent idea.
  - **MF Night Dog Walk** – Too windy & cold, no takers. Will try again in April.
  - Hoping for a **Snow Day Event** on Thurs or Fri but weather forecast is not good.
- **Adult Program Updates:**
  - Mindful Movement & Meditation – Mar (3 wks) & Apr (2 wks).
  - Working with Heather Shaughnessy (Merrymeeting Adult Ed) to add more.
  - Using the Town Office but need to find more venues.
  - Working on an Art Therapy Program with M/M Adult Ed.
  - Gina is looking for ideas on new adult programs using existing ones as a transition point.

New Business:

- **Community Garden Carryover – Motion was made to spend no more than \$2500 for a seasonal hire to assist at the community garden.** We did not have one last year during the pandemic. **The motion was approved (5-0-0).**
- **Hiking and Bicycling Group** – Dave Chipman and others are forming a group to promote and develop hiking and biking paths here in Harpswell. Gina looking for a volunteer liaison to the group. Tom Mahoney volunteered.
- **Community Assistance Update:**
  - Heating assistance is Jan - April and Oct – December.
  - 2021 – 65 requests for \$19,314
  - 2022 – 138 requests for \$60,974
  - 2023 to date – 35 requests for \$15,800
  - Cooks’ Heating Assistance Night raised \$20,000+
  - We do not get much money from Cumberland County for heating assistance. The guidelines and stricter on income limits.
  - General assistance – no significant requests
- **Trail Work** – Tom Carr says the Cliff trail suffered some erosion along the ADA section from the big storm so he will schedule some work parties to rebuild the damaged areas. Additionally, there are some other sections that need to be rerouted to lessen erosion of the treadway.
- **Dog Rules Violations** – Gina discussed the recent BoS meeting where citizens reported their empirical data collected on violations while using Town Trails. In addition, the trail camera on the Cliff Trail also shows violations. This puts pressure on the SB to change the rules. Gina will talk with Gerry Ferrari (Animal Control) about patrols and friendly reminders to increase compliance. This will be a continuing problem.
- **Shelves at the T-S Field Garage** – Kevin and Dave will begin work shortly.
- **Town Web Site Update** – The web site is undergone a complete redesign and goes live on Wednesday. Still more work to be done. Feedback is welcomed.

Next Meeting: April 3, 2023@ 7:00pm at the Town Office

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,  
Donald Miskill, Acting Secretary