

Town of Harpswell
Recreation Committee
Meeting Minutes
May 16, 2022, 7:00pm

Members in Attendance: David Brooks, Tom Carr, Don Miskill, Jeanie Rubio, Rick Rumba

Also in Attendance: Gina Perow, Recreation Director; Kayla Mathews, Program Assistant; Kevin Hunt, Harpswell resident

A quorum of Committee Members was present when the meeting was called to order at 7:10pm.

1. Meeting Minutes:

The DRAFT minutes for the November 08, 2021 and the April 11, 2022 Committee meetings were accepted and approved as written. The approved FINAL November 2021 and April 2022 Committee meeting minutes will be forwarded to the Committee. Gina will forward the revised *DRAFT* February 14, 2022 minutes to the Committee members, and we will vote to approve these minutes at our next meeting.

2. Public Comment:

Kevin Hunt is a Harpswell resident and business owner who has children in the local school system that participate in many sports and recreation programs in town. He read the recent on-line article in the *Harpswell Anchor* that the Harpswell Booster Club has been dissolved and that Recreation Program was planning to demolish the Snack Shack. He came to express his concern over this news, and to offer his assistance with issues such as potentially re-organizing the booster club, mowing the fields, rehabbing (rather than demolishing) the Snack Shack, etc. Gina explained that the *Anchor* article had a lot of misleading information in it, and in fact that the Snack Shack was not to be demolished, but instead possibly removed and/or repurposed. Kayla and Gina also explained that since Harpswell's school population has dropped significantly in recent years the town can no longer operate the youth baseball/softball/T-ball program on its own, and that the Ararat Youth Baseball now runs the youth baseball program in the four towns of SAD 75. As a result, only 6 games are scheduled to take place in Harpswell this year. The Committee expressed appreciation to Kevin for his concern and his offer of assistance. The Committee also encouraged Kevin to apply for one of the vacancies on the Recreation Committee, especially given that we could use a member involved with the youth recreation programs.

3. Election of Officers:

Gina noted that the term of or previous Committee Chair (Sue Rich) had expired and that the Committee needs to elect a Chair and Secretary. Tom Carr was nominated and unanimously elected to serve as Chair and Rick Rumba was nominated and unanimously elected to continue to serve as Secretary.

4. Parking Workshop:

The town is holding a Parking Workshop on May 19, 2022 to discuss town-wide parking issues and is asking committees for input on specific areas of concern. Gina will be attending and asked the Committee for input. After some discussion, the Committee suggested that major areas of concern are the trailheads for Devils Back and Cliff Trail, as well as general parking issues at Mitchell Field.

5. Trail Items:

- a. ***Property Rules Signs:*** Many of the Rules signs for town trails have disappeared over the past few years, and new Rules signs need to be made and posted. Tom noted that there have been several instances of overnight camping on the Cliff Trail. Gina is having new signs made that will be installed at each trailhead.
- b. ***Cliff Trail Signage and Blazing:*** Tom noted that he recently installed all of the updated "You are Here" signs along the Cliff Trail. Gina noted that in anticipation of National Trails Day and the dedication of the accessible section of the Cliff Trail on June 4, we need to re-blaze the Cliff Trail and put up the new Trailhead sign in advance. David agreed to install a new post for the Trailhead sign, and Don agreed to

send out an email to the Committee members as well as the Town Lands Committee with a date and time to conduct reblazing. We will also move the Dog Pot station to the main trailhead.

- c. **Devils Back Signs:** Gina noted that we need to install some new “U-Turn” signs and “Private Property” signs on Devils Back Trail. Don noted that he will install the Private Property signs and that the U-Turn signs have already been installed.
- d. **Mitchell Field:** Don noted that the woods road trails at Mitchell Field need mowing, preferably before National Trails Day. Rick agreed to do the mowing within the next 10 days.
- e. **Giant Stairs:** Gina reported that Town Lands has rebuilt the steps at the beginning of the path that had deteriorated due to erosion, and they are working on poison ivy control along the trail.

6. Upcoming Programs/Events:

- a. **Harpswell Hiking Challenge:** The Harpswell Hiking Challenge is scheduled for June 4 and 5, 2022. The 8 trails that must be completed for the full challenge include: Long Reach, Otter Brook, Little Ponds and Curtis Farm Preserve trails (HHLT); and the Cliff Trail, Devil’s Back Trail, and Mitchell Field (Town of Harpswell). New this year is a modified challenge, excellent for families with small children or individuals with limited mobility. The modified challenge includes the new inclusive section of Cliff Trail, Mitchell Field, the field area of the Curtis Farm trail, and Johnson Field Preserve. Gina and Kayla have ordered tee shirts, cups and other giveaways. Kayla will be making stickers to verify completion of each trail, and Gina will be set up a schedule for volunteers to staff the table.
- b. **Kayaking for Kids:** Gina reported that the Recreation Department will once again be sponsoring the Kayaking for Kids program this summer. This summer, the program will have 2 half-day sessions and one all-day session in July and another half-day session in August. Slots are filling up fast.
- c. **Harpswell Guide:** The updated Harpswell Guide is completed and will be printed and available soon.

7. Update on Community Outreach:

Gina reported that the Recreation Department will officially be incorporating the town’s General Assistance and Heating Assistance programs as well as the Harpswell Aging at Home program this week. Staff will be meeting to put together goals and objectives for the coming year, and will be tracking their time spent on Community Outreach activities. The new name of the Committee will be “Recreation and Community Services”.

8. Committee Member Openings:

Gina reiterated that we have two committee member openings and we are actively searching for residents to fill these two spots.

9. Other:

- a. **Mitchell Field:** Don reported that the Harpswell Lobster Boat races will be held at Mitchell Field this year. The race day is scheduled for July 24. Don recently met with the Race Committee, and reported that they plan to have food trucks, a concession table, and possibly music available during the event. Parking will be made available at the end of the lower meadow across from the gazebo, and he is working with them to assure that there are adequate trash receptacles and porta-potties available.
- b. **Community Garden:** Gina reported that the Community Garden will be celebrating their 10th anniversary on July 30 (rain date July 31). The Recreation and Community Services Department will be present for the celebration and have handout materials and information available.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30pm

Next Meeting: September 12, 2022 @ 7:00pm at the Town Office

Respectfully submitted,
Rick Rumba, Secretary