

RECREATION BOARD MINUTES 12/3/08

The December 3rd meeting of the Portsmouth Recreation Board was held at the Greenleaf Recreation Center. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

Members in Attendance: Harry Clark, Assistant Chairperson Paul Houlares, Elaine Syracuse, Pat McCartney, Chairperson Carl Diemer, City Council representative Laura Pantelakos, School Board representative Kent LaPage, Jackie Pitts, Recreation Director Rus Wilson

Members Excused: Kathy Siegel

Actions/Discussions:

- A letter from Carl Diemer was sent to the Board regarding the Middle School project and the effect on the current field situation. The letter discussed the loss of the “stump dump” land that was earmarked for additional recreation field(s) that may now be used to replaced Alumni Field. The letter also discussed the priority in field scheduling concerning Leary and Central fields, located across from the current Middle School. After much discussion, it was moved and seconded that a letter be sent to the School Board, with copies to the Mayor, City Council, City Manager and Recreation Director. The motion was unanimously approved. The letter should include the following:
 1. Thank you for the hard work of the School Board on the Middle school project
 2. Thank you for the great cooperation with the Recreation Department resulting in great success with the PHS athletic program
 3. Concern over the potential loss of the “stump dump” land that was earmarked for other recreation field purposes
 4. Concern that the cost for the proposed new softball field at the “stump dump” does not cover access roads, parking lot, field irrigation, sidewalks, utilities, utility structures, snack bar, press box, all currently at Alumni Field
 5. Concern over the priority scheduling of Central and Leary fields.

6. Concern for parking for all recreation activities around the Middle School /Mill Pond area.
 7. Request to meet with the School Board to discuss these issues.
- The Recreation Director gave an update on the possibility of artificial turf on the high school football. The department has spent a great amount of time researching the cost and use of artificial turf and gave a presentation on the benefits. The field is used approximately 230 hours per year now. With artificial turf that could grow to almost 3,000 hours per year. The Middle School project has earmarked \$1.1 million dollars for an artificial turf at the PHS football field. The written estimate was \$1.3 million. The Recreation Director said he has notified school officials of the discrepancy.
 - There has been a great deal of concern whether a full softball field would fit at the “stump dump” site. The Recreation Director passed out maps with a softball field placed in several locations on the land. The only way the field would fit without hitting balls onto Route 33 is to locate the field East to West, which is not an ideal location. It is a very tight fit with no room for expansion or additional fields. If there are any type of setback requirements there will not be sufficient land to place a field there.
 - The Recreation Department will be assisting with the organization and implementation of the City Holiday Parade. All of the full time staff and about 15 part time staff will coordinate and staff the parade on Saturday 12/6/08.
 - The RFP for the Recreation facility needs assessment will be going out in the very near future. The assessment will look at all recreation facilities and determine the need to build, repair, consolidate, etc. The Connie bean center and the indoor pool are of special concern as they are in need of major repairs at this time.
 - The Recreation Director reviewed the athletic responsibilities at PHS. The school had a phenomenal fall athletically, with two sports playing in championship games and several others making it to the semifinal round. School Representative LaPage discussed the idea of the Recreation Department taking on more responsibility within the school athletic system as a way of improving efficiency and possible cost savings. The Recreation Board thought it would be something to look into if there could be cost savings and better efficiency within the city.

- The maintenance report included a new hot tub to be installed at the Spinnaker Point Recreation Center in mid December and the roof repair at Spinnaker that has been long overdue.
- There were three letters of support and gratitude from three Spinnaker Point Recreation Center members for the fine programming, low cost and great staff at that facility.
- In other business, there was discussion as to why the Mayor has not reappointed Recreation Board members whose terms were up in April and/or why open positions on the Board have not been filled. A motion was made, seconded and unanimously passed to have the Board write a letter to the Mayor for an explanation.
- Meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.