



Town of Shaftsbury

Municipal Offices at Cole Hall

Meeting Minutes

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Recreation Committee

Date of Meeting: Friday, February 28, 2025 at 10:00AM at Cole Hall and remotely via Zoom

Members Present: Deena Ruege (chair), Sarah Costin, Liz Duffy, Anthony D'Onofrio. Also present: operations manager Jen Holley, members of public, Kayla Becker, Mike Becker, Sarah Beebe, Julie Robertson

1. Call to Order and review of January 24 minutes

The meeting came to order at 10 a.m. The committee reviewed the minutes. The minutes cannot be accepted at this time.

2. Conflict of Interest Statement

None

3. Announcements

They were tabled to "updates."

4. Public Comments

- **Kayla Becker** is the Director of the Rec Center in Bennington (contact info: kbecker@bfymca.org and cell 802681-8469). She is working with Little League to **grow the usage of the field** at Howard Park. This project would involve a **"conversion" field** to allow travel team age children to be able to utilize the Little League field also. This entails **expanding the infield**. Mike prepared a packet on exactly how this would be accomplished. Hard copy is included in my binder along with the minutes. The Little League field can accommodate this easily. With this adjustment, not only would the younger children be able to continue to play Little League, but also older players that are too young to use the high school field will now be able to play on a regulation size field for their age group. The **use and activity** in the park would **definitely increase** due to now being able to accommodate the travel teams. The travel program, 802 Elite, is composed of 70 of our community kids. Since we do not have a regulation field, no travel games can be played at home. We can remedy this! They are looking for approval to start work immediately. Spring is around the corner! All of the conversion work and upkeep of the fields would be done by the folks spearheading this project. **Geoff Metcalf** (Little League) would be laying out the fields according

to game specifications. **Mike Becker** said that the fields should be mowed 2 X a week and he would take on that responsibility. **There is no monetary output by the town at all.** Our field at Howard Park will be the “cutting edge” of these projects. This is a win, win proposal! Deena will speak to Paula Iken and then get back to Kayla.

- **Sarah Beebe and Julie Robertson** would like to donate a bench with a plaque in memory of their friend, Laura Cavanaugh, who recently passed away. Great idea! Their friend often walked Howard Park with her dog. They will be checking out websites and forward information on to Deena. **Sarah Beebe contact info:** (802) 375-0058

5. Updates

- **Moonlight Walk at Howard Park, March 14 from 5:30 to 7:30.** Jen Holley ran off small notices for Town Meeting night. We also have **posters** to distribute in town. All is ready for this community event.
- **Adopt a Park:** Ask Liz if there is an **environmental club at SES**. This would be a good focus for kids to take pride in their community. They could set up a schedule for once or twice a month. **Spring** would be a good time to start this.
- **Safety material for playground:** Tony suggested using **double ground mulch** instead of rubber. The **chemicals** in rubber can **cause problems** in addition to rubber getting **super-hot in the sun**. **Double ground mulch** is a **better choice**. Wood is natural and safer. Todd Sclery who takes care of the elementary school gets the double ground mulch locally. It works well. **Tony can get the contact information from Todd.** Tony can **pass along** all of the **information to Mike Y.** at DPW.
- Tony needs to check the soccer ball and basketball frames before ordering nets for them.
- We can construct **Cement planters** for the parking lot by enlisting volunteers to work on the framing of these large planters. We would put three or four of these large planters in the parking lot. We want to **stop cars from making donuts** and ripping up the lot. However, we also need to keep in mind the **parking needs of the cars**. **Peckham** is considering donating cement for our project.
- **Sarah Costin** showed us the **finished “HOWARD PARK” sign** from Peckham. We all agreed that it looked good as is. The **DPW** would be able to **install** it in the **spring**. We will ask Peckham if they could **clear coat the sign**. If this is not possible, we will hire someone who does clear coating professionally.
- **Message Board:** Speak to Paula about **ordering the larger message board in green**. With the anticipated increase in activity at the park, we will need the larger size for posting information.

6. New Business

- **Deena** to contact **Emily Umphlett, the art teacher** at SES, to find out when the **spring pictures** can be expected for display on the Howard Park Art Gallery.
- **Deena** will contact the **Norshaft Lions** to find out if they would like to take on another project for Howard Park. We would like to add **corn hole** to activities offered at the park. It would be blank so that we could attach a **Shaftsbury town logo** to it and clear coat it. The corn hole structure would be stored in the shed when not in use.

- **Dog park fencing** was discussed for the dog park. Sarah located a fence design that would work out to be much less expensive than using chain link. She is researching web sites. Tony also has contact with a “fence guy” that we can contact. (Mr. Santanarchangelo ?)

7. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned: 11:08 a.m.

The next meeting: March 28 at 10 a.m. at Cole Hall

Respectfully submitted: Deena Ruege