

RECREATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

February 28, 2019 – 8:00 P.M.

Len Bicher	Chairperson	x
Scott Yappen	Vice Chairperson	x
Bob Androsky	Member	x
Jeri Quirk	Member	
Jennifer Kerr	Member	x
	Member	
Nicole Halajian	Secretary	x
	Alternate 1	
	Alternate 2	
Alex Rubenstein	Council Liaison	x

Also present: Joe Sabatini, Scott Olson, Ben Spinelli, Frank Pinto

Call meeting to order, Flag Salute, Moment of Silence

Meeting opened at 8:00pm

- Minutes from January 16, 2019 – Motion by Alex Rubenstein, second by Nicole Halajian to approve the minutes. Motion passed
- Greener by Design will be sending out a public survey to the townspeople and will set up meetings with stakeholders. The first public meeting will be March 12. Greener by Design is collecting all opinions and information about Byram’s resources and where to make improvements and will identify the funding sources and maintenance plans.
- Trail network: The “big picture” of Byram and “green assets”. One of the goals is to give a plan then seek grants. Woodlands, eco-tourism, what draws people in, what are the attractions of Byram
- Are the fields and parks an asset? Some are in good condition and some need help. Some fields are not available because of weather and are very wet. The goal would be to use the fields as early as possible. The kids lose 1-2 months of practice because of the weather. Turf fields are usually available in February.
- Other assets: tennis courts, basketball court, two parks (CO Johnson and Brookwood West)
- Wish list: turf field, picnic area, gazebo
- CO Johnson. The field is outdated and the trails are dusty. It does not look modern and there are no bathrooms. Landscaping is needed as well as walking areas. The bones of the fieldhouse are good. The building needs a complete makeover: kitchen, lockers, bathrooms,

outside lights. Field 8 should be converted to turf. The organizations could fundraise for turf then the township would fund the upkeep. It was suggested to change the name of CO Johnson Fieldhouse to Town Recreation Center. This would be the town hub.

- Storage. Wrestling and cheerleaders can't store their mats at the school. They can only use the school during the season. Baseball and Football keep equipment downstairs at CO Johnson Fieldhouse. The layout at CO needs to be redesigned.
- Scheduling field use is an issue. A team may have access for a field but then do not use it and the field is empty. That time needs to be given to a different sport but there is currently no way to reassign it. Approval of fields is done by the township. There is no communication between the towns and LVR.
- Maintenance of Facilities. Can fields rest for a season? There aren't many other options to replace that field. Football has a dedicated field but the field doesn't have a lot of time to re-establish. Soccer has greater flexibility with the addition of Tamarack. Soccer youth did not use it but the adults did. There is a lights issue – it's too dark in the fall. Joe stated there was never a request for lights at Tamarack. Parking is also an issue at Tamarack.
- Fields Closing. The Superintendent of Public Works texts the group if the field will be closed before the end of his workday. This has been working out better. He relies on his staff and observes the fields/weather conditions. Coaches should also use their judgement.
- Another issue is finding participation in age groups. There is a 30% decline in K-8 population. Is that a typical decline? Growth in general has stopped in this part of the state. Also, kids are sticking to one sport. There is a market for sports to be indoors and played all year-round. Football now has 3 teams but if there were 6, like in previous years, there would be a competition for fields.
- Outside groups. There is no process for outside groups to use fields. We have had requests from various groups to use the fields (marching bands, private soccer clubs), which were denied. This is a Resource Management issue (ie no weekend staff, no parks dept, polices would need to be established).
- Open Space Tax. The voters authorized 2 cents but the township is currently charging 1 cent. The funds would be invested in an open space trust fund. There is \$50,000 allocated to the recreation department. Anything that the rec department wants to do should flow with the plan. Scott asked what the town spent on recreation. Joe stated that the operational budgets are in many sub accounts. Scott would need to be more specific than a broad question of "what was spent." Typically the township does not spend money on equipment.

- Soccer: Scheduling is an issue. The soccer program uses Byram fields. There is no middle school soccer team and this creates an issue that kids join another team then don't play again together until high school.
- Girl Softball: Neil Gylling field, Byram residents only. Men's softball: play on Sundays, whomever wants to join.
- Lacrosse: uses Indian Field in Netcong
- The skate park is a target for graffiti. It attracts people from out of town.
- The next sports council is in June for fall sports. Football, soccer, field hockey, Lacrosse
- Ben and Frank will meet with each sports team. Frank asked for a list of all rec organizations and the number of all enrollees for the past 5 years. Len said he would provide this information.
- When using the fields at LVR, the team has to pay for lights and custodial staff. The leagues complain that they have to pay taxes then have to pay another fee. During the week a custodian is not needed. Typically lights are \$60 an hour.
- Bob Brady has resigned as Vice Chairperson and representative to the Open Space Committee.
- Motion by Jen Kerr, second by Bob Androsky to elect Scott Yappen Vice Chairperson and Open Space Representative. Motion passed
- Jen will reach out to the Byram Day Committee and ask them to attend the next Recreation Committee meeting.
- The Netcong Board of Ed is reviving Camp Lenape and using the name. Jen will ask a representative to come to the next Recreation Committee meeting.
- Can the Rec Committee have a Facebook page? No. Instead, committee members should email Joe and ask him to post on the Byram Township Facebook page.
- Scott Olson suggested a flea market instead of a garage sale.
- Scott asked if the meeting could be changed to 7pm. This would require re-notice. Len cannot attend that early. Time kept at 8pm.

- Rec Department email address (such as recreation@byramtwp.org). Len will email Joe (and cc Alex) and ask if this can be done
- Scott Olson suggested Committee members have access to a computer at town hall. Scott will discuss with Joe.
- Jeri will contact John Harin – operator of golf course. Ideas: father/son outing, glow ball, soccer ball, or some other kind of ball (not discussed)
- Jen and Nicole to work on Triathlon. Jen will ask Doris for the Triathlon registration information. Nicole will add the date to the Lake Lackawanna event page.
- Jen asked if a flyer could be sent to the schools with the event dates. Alex suggested an email blast. Jen will ask Doris. The events also need to be added to the Township webpage.
- More members are needed to join the Committee.

Motion by Bob Androsky, second by Len Bicher for adjournment at 10pm – approved by all

The next meeting will be Wednesday, March 20, 2019 at 8:00pm at the CO Johnson Fieldhouse