

JOHNSON SKATEPARK & BIKE TRACK COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 2021

Present:

Committee Members: Casey Romero, Howard Romero, Rick Aupperlee (via Zoom), Greg Fatigate

Others: Lisa Crews, Sheila White (via Zoom)

Committee Members Absent: George Swanson

Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.

1. *Call to Order*

Casey called the meeting to order at 5:13.

2. *Draft Minutes of October 7, 2021 Meeting*

Howard moved and Greg seconded to approve the minutes of October 7, 2021. The minutes were approved by consensus.

3. *Public Input*

No members of the public wished to give input.

4. *Directors' Orders*

Casey said October bills totaled about \$400-\$500. There was nothing unusual. There were some payments for security work and the camera. An expense summary was sent out to committee members.

5. *Grant Update and Preliminary 2022-23 Budget Discussion*

Casey said we just got notified that we are getting \$1300 from a RiseVT grant. It will take a month or two to get the money here. The grant will fund activities or an event in spring that will incorporate food. It is a nutrition-based grant. About \$1000 of it can be slotted toward personnel and the rest will be used to pay for programs or events.

We did not get invited to apply for the big recreation grant. That means no progress on looking at feasibility or planning for multi-use trails or a bridge over the Lamoille River. A couple of weeks ago Casey and Brian Story met with someone from LCPC to talk about where we might find planning money. Nothing has been uncovered yet. Brian Story looked at another planning grant through the Department of Agriculture but it was for the very first stages of planning and we are beyond that.

Greg said there is a huge bike trail being built in Vermont, the Velomont Trail. A lot of grant money is being thrown to that. Casey said groups that are ready to build a trail can apply for that money.

Greg asked what kind of planning we need. Lisa said first we need a group of people who will take ownership for starting planning. Then they need to put a plan together and go to the

selectboard and tell them what we want to start with. Greg asked if he could get guidance about how make those steps happen. Lisa suggested putting that on the agenda for the next Rec Committee meeting. Casey said another factor for Johnson is that there is a strong ATV population and they think the town land would be a great place for ATV trails too. They want that feasibility explored. Casey said she would also like to be part of the conversation at the Rec Committee meeting.

Casey said she looked at expenses for the past year in preparation for starting to put together a budget for FY 2022/23. We spent \$1,062, including this month's orders. The approved budget, including grant funds, was \$10,350. We have a balance of over \$9,000. We are in a comfortable position for the rest of this fiscal year. We have \$4,852 in unspent grant funds. As of July 1 we added \$4,739 to the reserve fund. That was unspent money from the prior fiscal year. So our reserve fund total is about \$11,800. That is very handy to have for future projects, match money, etc.

Casey feels it would be worth the money to have Donna continue to take minutes for the rest of the fiscal year. **Howard moved and Greg seconded to hire Donna Griffiths for minute taking at Skatepark and Bike Track Committee meetings until further notice.** In answer to Casey's question, Donna explained that her rate is \$20 per hour for time during the meeting and time spent after the meeting preparing minutes. Typically the time spent preparing minutes is roughly equal to the time spent in the meeting. **The motion was passed.**

Greg said he didn't see anything in the expense accounts for mowing. Casey said Greg was paid for mowing with grant funds because it was for the bike terrain. Greg asked if that will continue. Casey said there is an amount that can only be spent on the bike terrain so for a while the committee will be able to continue using that to pay him.

Casey said we only allocated \$1,300 this fiscal year for personnel. Ashton has cost us less than \$250 so far. We have talked about having personnel to set an example and shape behavior for next year. One reason we have so much unspent balance is that we didn't do programs because of COVID. We also needed to spend much less than anticipated on renovations and repairs to ramps.

6. *Recreation Coordinator's Report*

Lisa said people are registering for the ski and snowboard program and for basketball. She met with Ashton Schriber. He has a lot of good ideas for the park. Hearing how much we paid him compared to how much we budgeted indicates that he wasn't working as much as he should have. She believes that is a misunderstanding. He seemed to think that his hours were very limited. In the future she suggests communicating better about schedule and defining it more clearly. Ashton thinks the idea of a work day / neighborhood celebration in spring is good. There are a lot of small things that could be done by community members. Ashton and Lisa talked about parking and improving the signage about rules. Maybe at the corner where the road goes up the hill there should be a sign indicating that is a private neighborhood and asking people please not to skate there. There is a problem with people skating and biking on the road. One reason for that may be that it has a nicer surface than the park. Maybe we should freshen the asphalt in the park. Ashton said it is getting pretty rough for

skateboarding. Ashton also pointed out some needed repairs that are beyond him – requiring welding, etc. The question came up of what became of the basketball court. Casey said it won't happen at the skate park. We hope it happens at some point at Old Mill Park. Greg asked if there is a way to provide Ashton or someone else with training through GMTCC or elsewhere on welding. Casey said that is a good idea. Rick said there are a limited number of openings for welding courses at GMTCC. Casey suggested Rick could be a resource in getting more information on that.

7. *Laraway Report*

Rick said Laraway just wrapped up the marking period last week. They had a recognition day and a trick or treat celebration. Parents were invited. Parents were impressed that Laraway recognized their children's achievements. One parent was in tears because it was the first time a school had recognized their child for the positives they brought. Currently Laraway is using a grading scale based on proficiency rather than letter grades. Lamoille Union has been using that system for a while. Laraway will be putting Pennies for Presents cans in local stores to raise money to donate to the Family Center for a gift giving program that allows families to go to the Family Center and get gifts.

8. *Volunteers & Personnel*

Casey said volunteers are something we could focus on more next year. When she needed to move some trash barrels, etc., two young adults at the park were very helpful.

9. *Site Tasks*

Casey said the bikes are gone from the park. They were taken to Old Spokes Home in Burlington. Trash huts have been built at the park. Howard said the pole base for the camera is in the ground. The town dug a hole and put in a pressure treated base. We still need to program the camera. Howard is having a hard time figuring that out but Sgt. Christian Watson has done it before and is willing to help.

10. *Rules Revision*

Casey said she sent out Warren's rules to committee members as a reference to consider.

11. *Adjourn*

Howard moved to adjourn at 5:53, Greg seconded and the motion was passed.

Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths