

JOHNSON SKATEPARK & BIKE TRACK COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2021

**Present:**

Committee Members: Casey Romero, Howard Romero, Rick Aupperlee (via Zoom), George Swanson (via Zoom)

Others: Lisa Crews

**Committee Members Absent:** Greg Fatigate, James Whitehill

**1. Call to Order**

Casey called the meeting to order at 5:10.

**2. Define, Discuss & Prioritize Goals: Site, Program/Activities & Community / Define & Choose Action Steps**

Howard said he wants to know our goal for another concrete feature and if we are headed that way. Casey said we still have the plans for extending a feature but we don't have money for it or even the start of matching funds. Howard asked how much is in the reserve fund. Lisa said \$11,799. Howard asked, we are adding to that out of our annual surplus? Casey said yes. Howard said he would eventually like to get rid of all the wood features. Rick and George both agreed that concrete is the way to go.

Casey said she has been thinking more about the community aspect of the park. We have to give attention to keeping the park clean and orderly, encouraging better behavior, getting more volunteers, etc. To her it feels very important to get it feeling secure and operating securely. The biker Maxwell van Wie who had made a proposal about pump track maintenance told Casey that in his view the bike tracks are not in good enough shape to attract long distance traffic. While she can't evaluate whether or not his opinion is valid, she agrees that attracting traffic is a way to build a good culture. But she feels that right now doing new infrastructure work is subordinate to community and behavior concerns. She thinks the next step for right now is to work on programs, coaching, clinics, and camps. Some of those can generate revenue and are also good constructive uses of the park. Rick said he likes the idea of clinics and events. That will increase visibility of the park, and is a way to "flip the script" to change behavior. He added that COVID has and will continue to interfere with any plans for public events or clinics.

Casey said we won't see the result until next year but having the trash hutches in use should reduce the problems with tipped over trash cans and help with appearance. If we could limit graffiti to the ramps rather than having it on all structures (like the dumpster), that will make some difference.

Lisa said she thinks putting in infrastructure will drive more people to come. We previously talked about redoing the blacktop, improving parking and putting in a basketball court. We had put aside some money for a basketball half court but subsequently had discussed locating it in Old Mill Park. A bridge between Old Mill Park and the skatepark won't be put in anytime soon so she thinks putting the basketball court at the skatepark makes sense. People who live in the area would like other things there, like a basketball half court, a swing set, or a pavilion and space to rent for parties. Howard said his limited experience with basketball nets in residential areas is that people hate them because they are noisy.

Lisa said the blacktop is an issue. Community members complained about skateboarders riding on the strip of new road near the skatepark. She has used that strip of road herself with her kids who were learning to ride bikes because it is smooth and she did not realize that neighbors were distressed about the possibility of running into a kid. If there were better blacktop in the park that would be a place for kids who are learning to ride bikes. Also, skaters say it's gotten too rough.

Casey said she is thinking about ways to increase volunteers and better organize volunteers. She asked about Laraway's likely use of the skatepark for regular use and summer programs once we get past COVID. Is it likely to remain strong? In her view that is an important use. George said it has been very difficult during COVID. Looking past COVID, hopefully Laraway's use of the skatepark will increase.

Casey asked about the staffing situation at Laraway. Rick said there are committees looking at hiring and retaining people. They are considering different incentives. They are working on a strategic planning model. At this point everyone is trying to come up with what they think are the next best steps. He thinks Laraway's presence in the community can be a strong one. He is sure there will be a component of their summer program that includes recreational use of the skate park and some volunteer work there.

Casey asked other people's thoughts on organizing volunteers or other steps that could be taken to make a positive social change. Lisa said she thinks it would help to formalize the role of ambassador more – give them more structure and maybe an identifying shirt or vest.

Casey said she has been thinking about the young adults who use the park regularly. Perhaps in exchange for something like a gas card we could get them to agree to spend a certain amount of time doing specific tasks.

Lisa asked, didn't Greg reach out to Great Big Graphics about updating the sign at the park? Casey said James is working on a new map sign. Lisa said she is thinking of the sign as you pull into the park. It is showing its age. If we update that, it will show the skatepark is a place of activity that is alive and well and being taken care of. Casey said when we make progress on revising the rules there will be another graphic update.

Howard said the new security camera is up and running. He and Sgt. Chris Watson set up the post and got it aimed down the driveway. For the camera system to work we have to be fairly vigilant about going down there and watching for problems.

### **3. *Set Special Meeting Date***

The board discussed a date for a quick meeting to vote on the proposed budget. A Zoom meeting on Monday, December 13 was suggested. The village trustees will be meeting that night at 6:00 so Rick suggested meeting at 5:00.

### **4. *Link Goals to Budgets***

Casey said we underspent and underbudgeted on personnel time this year. We need to budget more money on personnel. Rick mentioned the upcoming increase in minimum wage; Casey said we are paying \$15/hr. and probably will maintain that wage.

### **5. *Adjourn***

Howard moved to adjourn and the motion was seconded and passed unanimously at 5:46.