

JOHNSON SKATEPARK & BIKE TRACK COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JOHNSON MUNICIPAL BUILDING
WEDNESDAY, JULY 13, 2022

Present:

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

Others: Pierre Hall (via Zoom), Ian Hutchings, Joey Handy, Alison Link

Absent: George Swanson

1. Call to Order

Casey called the meeting to order at 5:38.

2. Draft Minutes of June 8, 2022 Meeting

Howard moved and James seconded to approve the minutes of June 8, 2022. The minutes were approved by consensus.

3. Proposed Concrete Improvement: Designer & Contractor Pierre Hall

Casey said the committee wanted to find out more about Pierre's nonprofit. We talked briefly at the last meeting about longer term planning. How does that work? Is there a cost?

Pierre said his non-profit is in its infancy. It has 3 members. They want to advocate for skateboarding in the state on a pro bono level. He has been meaning to reach out to James and Greg about meeting on site to talk about what could be built with berms that would work for biking and skating. He would not be looking for any fees up front.

Casey had sent Pierre a sketch indicating where the parking lot will be extended to – about 10 feet from the berm that will be put in for the new feature. She said she wanted to make sure there are no concerns about that. Pierre said it will not cause any issues.

Casey said she has had brief conversations with some people about mini ramp options. Everyone wants to keep having a mini ramp. Some say they like wood. She talked to someone who said they love the way concrete rides and they would love for the mini ramp to be concrete. If we raise \$35K and the concrete feature doesn't take all of it, that is money we could use to address the mini ramp. How do we decide what we want to do?

Ian asked, isn't a concrete mini ramp included in what we are doing? Casey said yes, but not a mini ramp unto itself in a separate area.

James said if we have money to rebuild a wooden mini ramp as well as a concrete one, a lot of people would like that. Concrete is more intimidating for people who are learning and we have a lot of people who are learning at the Johnson park. But the new feature includes what is basically a mini ramp connected to the rest of the bowl.

Ian said overwhelmingly the feedback he is getting from everyone is having that having a wooden mini ramp unto itself like the one we have is very welcome.

Casey said from a non-rider point of view she can see the extension of the concrete feature also being a good spot for beginners, but there will be times of day when experienced riders will want the whole thing. That is where a separate mini ramp is good. Ian agreed.

Pierre said in his experience all riders share and take turns no matter what their skill level. A smaller ramp would be great for beginners. We could also talk about incorporating something into the existing concrete bowl. He would suggest having a separate mini ramp and making it really small for beginners.

Greg said the existing mini ramp will not last more than 2 or 3 more years. If we have money left over it's not going to be enough to fund a properly built wooden mini ramp. He thinks that would cost at least \$20K. He agrees with what Pierre just suggested. Ian agreed also.

Greg said he thinks a problem we have with the park now is that there is a standalone area which allows people to separate themselves and participate in activities we don't want to happen at the park. He is guessing they would be less likely to do those activities in front of families.

James said he thinks not having something in the space currently occupied by the mini ramp will leave a big hole in the park. We have lots of quarter pipes on the sides. He doesn't think we need another one but he thinks it would leave a giant hole if there were nothing where the mini ramp is.

Greg said he thinks it would be good to go to the park and consider what we can do long-term. He thinks there is a way to have a mini ramp but still incorporate it with the rest of the features. Currently someone who wants to ride the mini ramp will get off their skateboard and walk to it. We could have a mini ramp that is an island but that people could roll into, something incorporated with the concrete feature.

Casey said it sounds like we need a work meeting in the park. We should set something up by email.

Howard asked, we are contemplating putting another mini ramp where the current one is? In concrete or wood? Greg said no, we are thinking of working towards a concrete setup and having something that may be in the shape of a mini in an area connected to the greater concrete footprint. At least that is what he would like. Casey said we are saying we need to talk further at the park. Howard said he has had it with wood. Economically he thinks it is foolish.

It was agreed that Casey will get everyone's email addresses to each other and Pierre will reach out and start a conversation about meeting people at the park to discuss options.

4. Rules Sign

Casey had sent out suggested rules sign language. Greg said he suggested making "Respect our park and neighbors" the headline, not one of the listed rules, because that is the main theme of what we want. Casey said the newest version of the rules sign refers to a substance-free park rather than substance-free sports and it adds clarifying language saying it is illegal to smoke, eat, drink or bake cannabis in public parks. A lot of people don't know that is the law. She agrees with Greg's idea about moving the line about respecting the park and neighbors out of the list of rules and up with the general park information. James agreed.

Alison suggested there could be a separate smaller sign with some things like cannabis law information that aren't on the big sign. Icons can be used if we want fewer words. She mentioned that in other locations it was helpful to include "vape-free" in addition to "smoke-free." Specifically mentioning Juul was also helpful. Some kids didn't realize using a Juul was vaping.

Casey said the main impetus for redoing the sign was knowing people were not reading it and that some items were in conflict with reality. It was too wordy. She thinks we have hit our goals with the latest draft version. Everyone is happy with the wording. The only other element left to discuss is adding logos and partnership language about Laraway and Healthy Lamoille Valley. We can put small visual elements somewhere towards the bottom of the sign.

Howard asked if a QR code is going on the sign. Casey said she doesn't know yet what we can or can't have as a QR code.

5. *Site Issues and Site Work*

Greg said the park looked nice and clean when he was there recently. He said we need to be cautious about leaving any plywood or lumber out. We have had theft in the past. It is better to store it inside. Ian said he doesn't know how to fit it all in the "jail." Greg said we need to keep proactively moving toward removal of waste behind the building. Ian said there is a pile back there that needs to be gone through and we need to haul some stuff away. Greg said he has a dump trailer if that is needed. Casey said the town may be able to handle the disposal.

Greg suggested using loppers to make the path to the porta-potty clearer. There was discussion about moving it to a less out-of-the-way spot.

James said he has started building the sign structure. It is at the park behind the "jail." Maybe when we meet there we can decide where to put it.

Casey said she will check where to bring scrap waste.

Casey asked if someone is available this week to do things like putting up the signs. Ian said his schedule is pretty open. Casey asked him to let her know when it would be convenient for him to do some work. She asked Joey for time sheets, and to ask Kayla about the tub of T-shirts for sale.

6. *Recreation Coordinator Interviews*

Howard moved to go into executive session for a personnel matter, James seconded and the motion was passed at 6:14. Rick disconnected from Zoom and did not participate in the executive session. The committee consented out of executive session at 6:30. No follow up actions were needed.

7. *Financials: Current Expenses, Fundraising*

There were no questions about the information that was emailed prior to the meeting.

8. *Laraway Report*

There were no follow-up questions about the information emailed prior to the meeting.

9. *Other Business*

Casey suggested a small work group for fundraising and other tasks for the concrete extension. James will work with her. Casey said Ian will help with online tasks. We will ask Joey and Kayla to help.

10. *Adjourn*

Greg moved to adjourn at 6:36, James seconded and the motion was passed.