

JOHNSON SKATEPARK & BIKE TRACK COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES  
MINEMA GALLERY, 2 LOWER MAIN ST. EAST, JOHNSON/REMOTE ATTENDANCE BY ZOOM  
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2023

**Present:**

Committee Members: Greg Fatigate (Zoom), Casey Romero, Howard Romero, James Whitehill (Zoom)  
Others: Sheila White, Alexis Daniels

**Absent:** Rick Aupperlee, George Swanson

**Note: All votes taken are unanimous unless otherwise noted.**

**1. Call to Order**

Casey called the meeting to order at 5:41.

**2. Draft Minutes of October 11, 2023**

**Howard moved to approve the minutes of October 11, 2023, James seconded and the motion was passed.**

**3. Director's Report & Early Budget Work**

Casey said the only directors' orders were for minute taking and minor supplies.

The town is in a fiscal pinch because they have to spend money on repairs and don't know when they will get reimbursement. They asked all committees to cut current year spending by 5% and develop a budget for FY24 that is level (i.e. a 5% cut from this year's budget.) She put together preliminary numbers but the budget will need discussion. We don't know what FEMA revenue we will get. We don't know if we will get the \$2100 we had requested as payment for direct COVID costs. The reserve fund is never included in the budget but has to get factored in. Howard asked if we have any idea when we will get FEMA reimbursement. Casey said we have no idea.

**4. Sticker Fundraiser**

Casey said Aryk Tomlinson developed 6 great sticker designs and he is really helping with the marketing. He is using his website to sell the stickers and he set up a way to pay for them that allows people to make a contribution in addition to the cost of the stickers.

If the committee is okay with it, Casey would like to buy about 10 or 12 sticker sheets to give as thank you – for example to the kids and families that did the lemonade fundraiser. The committee agreed to that.

Casey said she wondered if Laraway might want some stickers to use with students. Since they are a partner, should we offer them the chance to buy stickers at \$6 a sheet (probably slightly over cost), instead of \$12? The committee agreed to that.

**5. Laraway Report**

No one from Laraway was present.

**6. Town & FEMA Info Re: Flood Recovery & Other**

Casey said she is working on getting more bids for work on the skills park. She has reached out to a skatepark builder/contractor to get an estimate on ramps for the skatepark, as well as other items like repairing the trash bins. For the FEMA process we have to get a cost estimate to rebuild what was there with no changes. But we don't have to rebuild just what was there. We are going to follow a longer process, the mitigation pathway. As Casey understands it we get the amount of money it would take to rebuild exactly as it was and we can also get additional money to help pay for the higher cost of mitigation work. Greg asked if the person providing the cost estimate understands that we don't

want to do the work he is estimating. Casey said yes, definitely. She has communicated that to everyone she has spoken with about providing estimates.

Casey said the demolition was done at the skatepark. The town does not own a magnet (which Greg had suggested they use to make sure all screws were picked up) but they reported that they scooped up and removed a certain depth of earth around where they did the demolition. There is still some debris at the park – a propane tank, for instance. She believes the town crew is coming back.

The day after the demolition, someone broke many glass bottles in the concrete bowl and on the asphalt. Ashton and others have done some cleanup work but the glass is not completely cleaned up. Casey spoke with Sgt. Watson, who said that even if we knew exactly who did it this would not be a case the state's attorney would want to spend time developing because it is not a serious enough crime.

Sheila said she thinks it would be helpful for the sheriff to speak to the individuals who did this, who she thinks are probably young. Casey said the people involved may be the same ones involved in a previous vandalism incident. They are known to Sgt. Watson. He and Casey will stay in touch. She is not sure what the follow-up will be.

Casey asked if committee members think she should put something on Front Porch Forum asking anyone with information about the incident to get in touch with her. Greg said he thinks it would be good to acknowledge on Front Porch Forum what happened and that we are aware of it. James agreed. His brother, who found the broken glass at the park and notified him, said it didn't seem like someone just broke bottles for fun. Shards seemed to have been intentionally placed on features in a way that could be dangerous.

Casey said the cameras did not capture any helpful images. Howard said he pulled the cameras down and looked at the images from about the last 3 weeks. There is nothing useful. Part of the problem was that the wind had blown the cameras somewhat off where we had originally pointed them. He described where he would like to place cameras for better views.

Greg said he is becoming more of the opinion that the skatepark needs to move. Issues seem to be getting worse in the last 3 or 4 years. The park is isolated and not attached to any other public space. If it were possible to move to another location like Old Mill Park he would prefer that. He also feels the park should have no moveable features. Everything should be made of concrete. When there are things there that are not in good condition it leads to people treating them poorly. If the park floods again, he doesn't want to hear about things floating away from the park. He thinks we need to make a push to get more skatepark users to come to committee meetings.

Sheila White said she agrees with Greg. The park is in a very out of the way place with no one watching.

Casey said Sheila represents the neighborhood near the park. Neighborhood representation is important too. Greg said if we are going to vote on things, people who live in the neighborhood and people who commonly use the park should have votes. Alexis Daniels said she actively tries to get other skaters to come to committee meetings.

## **7. Half-Pipe Project**

Casey said she has no updates on the half-pipe project.

**8. Citizen Input**

Sheila said there are still a lot of things – boards, cans, bottles, etc. – in the field that was flooded. It hasn't been brush hogged yet. That is usually done in the fall. She is concerned that the debris would interfere with brush hogging. Casey said she will talk to Jason Whitehill about it.

Sheila asked who owns the fence between the skatepark and Harvey's trailer park. Casey said it belongs to the skatepark. She has gotten one quote for fixing it and she has been trying to get another but has not yet been able to.

Casey said we are open to having more people on the committee. Howard asked if Alexis would join. She said yes. Casey said the selectboard has to appoint all new members, and briefly described the process. She asked Sheila if she would consider joining the committee; Sheila said she would think about it.

**9. Other Business**

Greg said he wants to propose a fundraiser to Smugglers' Notch. In early April, after programming at Sir Henry's Hill has ceased, he wants to see if they will allow him to build a ski and snowboard downhill flow area there that would feel like a skatepark without being too difficult. This committee would need to be involved if we wanted to have food, music, etc. He is thinking of making it free with a suggested donation. He will start by just suggesting this be a fundraiser for the skatepark but he might suggest sharing the proceeds with the Cambridge Rotary (since they pay for kids to go to Smugglers' Notch) to make the proposal more palatable. Is there an account we can tie a QR code to, so people can scan it and go to a link to donate on their phones? Casey said James previously set up an account with a QR code that was okayed by the town treasurer. James said he would be happy to do that again.

**10. Adjourn**

**Howard moved to adjourn, James seconded, the motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned at 6:31.**

*Minutes submitted by Donna Griffiths*