

Oak Bluffs Park Commissioners Minutes

Page 1

February 7, 2011

Members present: Nancy Phillips & Richard Combra Jr

Others present: Gail Barmakian (BOS/WW/OB Resident), James Tripp (Park Foreman)

Minutes approved: August 16 2010, October 4, 7 & 18 2010, November 15 2010 & January 28 2011

Special Event Requests

- **Ocean Park Bandstand – Adams/Gilbert wedding June 25, 2011.**
Motion: To approve event with hours from 4:00-6:30 PM by Commissioner Combra
Second: Commissioner Phillips
Motion passed unanimously

East Chop Lighthouse

Commissioner Phillips explained that MV Museum charges \$300 per hour and should applicants also pay the Town for use of the land.

Commissioner Combra said the Commissioners have discussed the issue over the years and perhaps a meeting with the MV Museum would be beneficial.

Commissioner Phillips will request that a MV Museum representative attend the March 7th meeting.

Adopt-A-Park, Adopt-a-spot Concept

Commissioner Phillips was looking for assistance with upkeep of parks.

Commissioner Combra had no issue with idea but was unsure how to implement it.

Commissioner Phillips said she would look into it further.

Budget & Possible Restructuring of Department

Commissioner Phillips said that the mission of the Oak Bluffs Parks & Recreation Department is to advance parks recreation and environment conservation efforts that enhance the quality of life for all people in Oak Bluffs that was previously voted on. She has been looking at just the recreation department as wages are paid from general fund and revolving fund. She had spoken with Mike Joyce about increasing the fees but he felt that as the court is in such bad condition that they could not charge more than \$10 a game for adults and people couldn't afford more than \$45 for the camp session. She has been discussing options with the YMCA regarding the basketball camp program. She is not sure if the court would pass a safety check. She has also been discussing lifeguard options with the YMCA for Oak Bluffs Town beaches and would need to have them added to the Town's liability insurance. Town Administrator told her that it would be dependent on Board of Selectmen approval and a letter was sent asking that lifeguards be funded by ferry fees.

Commissioner Combra suggested having a YMCA representative attend a Commission meeting to discuss program possibilities and lifeguards.

Commissioner Phillips stated that as it is a Park & Recreation department, she felt that there were areas in the "recreation" department that are lax and part of it may be what the job descriptions are (i.e. safety on the playground) but unsure of what the issue is. She said parks get mowed about twice a month and unsure how time is spent on that. She is guessing how time the Foreman spends on recreation aspects and how much it costs. She suggested that the help be re-arranged to fulfill whatever the current needs in Town. She wasn't sure if the Parks Foreman is what they need for a parks & recreation department considering everything else that is going on. She said that James Tripp's skills are more geared to Highway Department and that as heavy equipment operating which includes the mowing. She continued that as far as the recreation side, she would like to see help with a different type of employee based on what their services are, what people expect and how to deliver them. She realizes that it is difficult with unions.

Commissioners' update

Commissioner Combra presented Commissioner Phillips with a breakdown of what Crossland did over the summer of 2010 in Ocean Park. He also had a copy of advertisement of invitations for bids for 2011 season. He felt that they would probably not be able to maintain the level for Ocean Park and may have to eliminate some flowers and irrigation. He didn't think that the \$35,000 would cover what needs to get done.

Commissioner Phillips said it needs to get out there and let the voters decide.

Oak Bluffs Park Commissioners Minutes
February 7, 2011

Page 2

Commissioner Combra replied that they should go out to bid with what has currently been done in Ocean Park and should it come back over the \$35,000 then they will have to eliminate things from the contract.

Commissioner Phillips said that is where Adopt-a-Park or Adopt-a-Spot comes in but they need to be transparent with what they are doing. She is trying to get the basketball, tennis & swimming programs to pay for themselves.

She presented an email from Eliot Coutts regarding the MV Skate Camp that will run from July 11th, 2011 to August 26th, 2011. She wanted to know if the Town did anything besides picking up the garbage as it is actually MVRHS property.

Commissioner Combra replied that there is a document that the Town Administrator would have but the Town is a sponsor of it and they were advised to not regulate it due to liability.

Public Input

Gail Barmakian asked about the YMCA getting involved with the Town's basketball program.

Commissioner Phillips stated that she was afraid that there will be cuts to the program and they won't be able to have it at all and she knows that they can run a high quality program even if the fees might have to go up but at least there would be a program.

Ms Barmakian felt that it might not be financially beneficial as they are going to need raise the rates to operate the program so why doesn't the Town just raise the fees. She was concerned about the loss of control over the program.

Commissioner Phillips replied that there needs to be experts in young children basketball program and she wants to see if there is other input on how the YMCA could run the program.

Ms Barmakian asked if there had been any complaints as she knows many participants, the physical activity, the instruction, girls are involved, social aspect etc. She wanted to know what Commissioner Phillips saw lacking in the current program as she thought the instructors hired by Mike Joyce were fabulous.

Commissioner Phillips answered that she holds a Masters in Physical Education, so she would like more structure as she has observed what goes on. She said she asked Basketball Director Mike Joyce to provide more information but he would not structure or say what he is doing so she could not defend the program if she doesn't know what is going on in it. She felt she couldn't negotiate with him to raise the rates last summer but there may not be any choice this year.

Ms Barmakian suggested that perhaps it could back to one person being the overall director of all three programs.

Commission Phillips felt that there was a lack of oversight under that system and were not up to the standards of what lifeguards are required to know now (EMS standards, etc). She said that it might be the cheapest way to provide lifeguards is through the YMCA.

Ms Barmakian asked what was wrong with the park maintenance the way it currently is, excluding Ocean Park.

Commissioner Phillips replied that the current playground equipment would not pass a safety check; overhanging limbs, equipment incorrectly installed and old metal slide needs to be removed, etc. She said that Foreman Tripp does mow various parks with the tractor but she had asked him to write down what he was doing but he didn't so she doesn't know what exactly he does except what she has observed and she knows what his job description is.

Ms Barmakian asked about OBPR, the nonprofit organization created to raise money for Oak Bluffs recreation.

Commissioner Phillips said that it was part of Let's Move MV which broke even but they haven't been meeting on a regular basis.

Meeting adjourned.

DISCLAIMER: These minutes are based on a tape recording and as such have a margin of error.

Next meeting March 7, 2011