

Board of Selectmen-Recreation Commission
SPECIAL JOINT MEETING
September 10, 2019 — 5:00 PM
TOWN HALL
MINUTES

Members Present: First Selectman Betsy Petrie, Selectmen Glen Coutu and John Bendoraitis; Recreation Commission Chair Nicholas Poppiti, Robert Gentes, and Tammy Raymond

Others Present: Meagan Bruce (Board of Finance); Facilities Director Jason Nowosad; Town Planner Phil Chester; Kevin Whitcher, President of Lebanon Little League; Chris Frank, President of the Lebanon Soccer Club; Jason Merrit, Vice President of the Lebanon Soccer Club; town residents affiliated with Lebanon Little League and Lebanon Soccer Club

1.0 Call to Order

B. Petrie called the joint meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

2.0 Discuss past and future recreation needs

B. Petrie said she called this meeting because she found there was confusion at the last Board of Finance meeting regarding the proposed appropriation of funds for a utility field. She said the Town has the opportunity to pursue this field but permitting and funding make it unlikely that the Town can pursue two fields at once. She said the development of a new utility field is part of the latest Recreation Needs Analysis Plan.

C. Frank, President of the Lebanon Soccer Club, stated he had not seen the Recreation Needs Analysis Plan. B. Petrie offered to distribute copies but noted it is publicly available. J. Bendoraitis said it is available on the Town website.

J. Merrit, VP of the Soccer Club, said even if a field is put by the tennis courts, there will still be pressure to maintain fields three and four. He said they will have to work cooperatively with Little League. One field will not alleviate the pressure.

C. Frank told the Selectmen and Recreation Commission that there is congestion partly because the soccer club is unable to use the fields at the school in the fall and noted that they need double-lined fields, which the schools are not willing to do.

B. Petrie said she understood why the clubs wanted the Town to pursue two fields but said the Town can only do one at this time. She said a new field has been sought for a long time and we have a chance to get it done if the parties involved are supportive.

K. Whitcher said the Soccer Club and Little League already get along very well and cooperate on scheduling for access to fields.

J. Nowosad, who also serves as Chair of the Board of Education, said there are concerns on the BOE that the fields are being overused which is damaging them. He said having an additional field is a step in the right direction which would alleviate some, but not all, congestion.

N. Poppiti said the Recreation Commission has developed field use forms that the clubs will need to start using to schedule time on the fields. K. Witcher asked who would have precedence during the fall for the fields under this system. N. Poppiti said precedence would go to the group with the most active teams that season.

A comment was made that Tyler Field's use is restricted by the terms of the Pepsi Grant. B. Petrie said she has investigated that rumor and confirmed that there are no remaining exclusions on the use of the property from the grant.

K. Witcher asked why the collapsed dugouts have not been replaced yet after two years. B. Gentes said the Recreation Commission lacks the annual funds to make the replacements. He said most funds in their budget pay for the wages of the part-time Recreation Director, the Water Safety Instructor, and Lifeguards. G. Coutu said the first request to repair those dugouts came to the Board of Selectmen about six months ago. J. Bendoraitis added when the request was made, the cost of repairing them seemed to be a moving target.

Danielle Pierson said when she looks around town, she sees five baseball fields and one soccer field. She asked whether anyone has looked at whether there could be additional locations where an additional field could be built without triggering a wetlands issue. B. Petrie said she was not aware of it. K. Witcher suggested the location behind the gas station. B. Petrie stated that the location there was purchased for parking and that putting a field there would create other parking issues.

B. Petrie reiterated that there is a chance to build a new field if the parties involved are cooperative and supportive of the project. She said the Board of Selectmen's regular meeting was scheduled to begin shortly at the conversation would need to continue elsewhere. She recommended the Lebanon Soccer Club and Little League work with the Recreation Commission.

3.0 Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 5:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bernard W. Dennler III
Administrative Assistant

Please see the Minutes of future meetings for any corrections hereto.