

**Town of New Hartford
Recreation Commission
Monday, March 1, 2021
Minutes**

Present: Chairman Joe Petrarca, Ed McCann, Linda Aquavia, Greg O'Brien, Arnie Helt, Jeremy Schaller
Others Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Dale Martin (New Hartford Youth Baseball) Don Cassella, Rick Berneike (New Hartford Youth Sports – Soccer); Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward

This meeting was held via ZOOM.

Chairman Petrarca called the meeting to order at 6:45 PM.

Discussion/Action regarding rates for Brodie Beach 2021:

The Commission reviewed the existing rates for the beach and the fees for boats and kayaks. It was noted that one-third of the passes sold were sold at the Senior Rate. 13 Veterans passes were sold last year. First Selectman Jerram informed the Commission that the funds in the Recreation Program account have dwindled and are lower than they have been in the past for start-up. Jerram stated that this is due to impact COVID had on summer camp. The revenues are not in line with what they have been in the past. The fees for the beach are used to cover the costs of expenses for the summer programs, which includes the beach and the camp. It was noted that minimum wage has increased. Mr. Jerram stated that since school will be ending earlier this year than in years past (no snow days due to virtual learning), the beach can open two weeks earlier than usual. This will require additional time for lifeguards, which will increase the expense.

Mr. McCann stated that having the table set up at the top of the beach access road for sticker sales worked out well last year. He plans to do that again this year.

MOTION: by O'Brien, second Schaller to approve the following rates for the 2021 Summer Season:

Beach Stickers:

Resident First Car:	\$90.00	Non- resident First Car:	\$335.00
Resident/Senior Second Car:	\$55.00	Non-resident Second Car:	\$335.00
Senior:	\$50.00	Non-Resident Senior:	\$335.00
Veterans:	\$50.00		

Rack Storage:

Resident:	\$125.00
Non-resident	\$150.00

Boat Moorings:	Large Boat	\$525.00
	Small Boat	\$270.00

Unanimous

Discussion/Action regarding sports field allocation (Browns Corner):

The Recreation Commission discussed field maintenance costs at Browns Corner, which is used by Youth Sports. Rick Berneike and Dale Martin were present (virtually) to discuss this matter. First Selectman Jerram began the discussion by informing the Recreation Commission that gone are the days when the local sports organizations were sitting on large balances of cash in their accounts.” The expenses to run the sports programs increases each year and the savings are being used to cover the expenses. Dale Martin stated that there are 2 smaller fields (60 ft diamonds) used by baseball and softball near the snack bar that are cared for exclusively by baseball and are totally their responsibility to maintain. Their costs for fertilization (both for the area that is their responsibility and the shared fields) runs about \$3,400 per year. Maintenance of the clay mounds and sod is an additional \$3500. The maintenance of the Soccer field, football field and the 90 foot diamond are shared by Youth Sports and the cost is typically between \$6,000 - \$7,000 per year. Premier Turf is the company that is used to provide services to the turf at Browns. The average costs of maintenance are broken down on a per use basis and bills are sent to the individual leagues. Mr. Berneike noted that the soccer funds are also being depleted and their bank balance is much lower than it once was. He stated that they have tried to keep registration costs affordable and they also made some donations of soccer goals to the local elementary schools. Mr. Martin interjected that baseball registration costs are currently \$120.00 and that does not come close to cover their costs. They also do fundraisers and seek sponsorships to cover expenses. Mr. Martiin stated that they do not turn away any child who wants to play baseball. They want to be able to offer that experience to any child who wants to play, regardless of their ability to pay. Mr. Berneike stated that he is very thankful to the town for the work they do to keep the fields in shape. They are dedicated town employees who do a terrific job with field mowing. He is also extremely appreciative of the fact that the town pays for the upkeep and cleaning of the bathrooms. Mr. Berneike stated that both he and Mr. Martin had come before the Recreation Commission a couple of years ago to seek assistance with the expense of field maintenance and they had left the meeting thinking that it had been approved. Somehow, that never occurred and therefore they are here again to revisit that topic.

First Selectman Jerram noted that there is \$5,000 in the Recreation Budget that is listed as Sports Allocations. He stated that if the Commission wished to provide this funding, it should be as a direct payment to a vendor and not as a payment to be put into the bank accounts held by the organizations.

MOTION: by McCann, second O’Brien to allocate up to \$5,000 for fiscal year 20-21 for field maintenance for turf management expenses for football, baseball and soccer.

It was agreed that this allocation would be disbursed as a payment to an invoice.

Unanimous.

Discussion/Action regarding Lions Club request for windows and additional space:

First Selectman Jerram informed the Commission that the Lions Club is seeking some financial assistance with replacing windows on their cabin at Brodie Park. They are looking for \$2,500 for this purpose. Mr. Jerram stated that they are looking for this for this summer, therefore it is not front burner right now. He just wanted to let the Commission know of this request. He stated that there will be additional funds available in the next fiscal year.

An additional request from the Lions is a request for some additional temporary storage for cans and bottles that they have been collecting as a fundraiser during a time when they have not been able to run their Flea Markets due to COVID. Ed McCann commented that the cabin that was previously used to store football equipment may be an option. This cabin was cleaned out last year and a lot of junk was disposed of. It is available to the Lions if they want it. First Selectman Jerram said that he would have the highway department check the lock on the building and make sure that it locks properly.

Mr. McCann stated that there are still some repairs that need to be done at Brodie. The arts and crafts cabin needs to be painted. The nurses cabin needs a roof. The Playscape has a broken slide that has been quoted at close to \$6,000 to replace and there are additional pieces of equipment that need to be repaired for a total of close to \$11,000.

The Commission discussed projects that are pending, such as the completion of the painting of the Field House. Discussion also ensued regarding the status of the Nurses Cabin, with a suggestion being made that it be torn down if it is not worthy of fixing. It was decided that this cabin has merit and will be saved. Tennis Courts were also discussed and it was decided that it might be worthwhile to investigate switching to asphalt courts and moving away from clay. The Commission also discussed that there is really only one court that is being used and it might be a time to consider moving to one court and creating a pickle ball court on the other one. Joe Petrarca opined that if asphalt is being considered for the tennis courts, it would be prudent to check the drainage situation near the courts to be sure that the area is suitable for asphalt. Selectman Jerram stated that he would obtain quotes to convert the existing clay courts to asphalt.

Canoe and kayak racks are being replaced with new ones, thanks to the efforts of Brianna Boyajian, a member of Scout Troop 19 who is doing this as a community project to earn her ranks as an Eagle Scout. New racks will be installed by kayak rental day (early April).

Samir Patel will be doing some landscaping on the trail that leads from the park to the boat moorings. This trail was widened to access the boat mooring area and gates have been installed to ward off vehicular traffic. Samir will work on making the area more attractive for his Scout project.

Mr. Jerram informed the Commission that a STEAP grant has been awarded to the Town for installation of bathrooms at Brodie. Test pits have been done for septic for outdoor facilities. Once the Attorney General has reviewed the final contract and has signed off and returned to the Town, work can begin on the bathrooms.

Commission member Arnie Helt extended kudos to Town of New Hartford employee Zach Marcus. Zach is assigned to maintenance of the parks and Mr. Helt wanted to publicly acknowledge the work he has done.

MOTION: by O'Brien to adjourn at 8:20 PM, seconded by McCann.

Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted, Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant