

**Minutes For
SOMERS RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING**

December 1, 2008

7:00pm

Kibbe Fuller Community Center

**Present: Karen Murdoch, Troy Montagne, Alicia Albert, Colleen Maniscalco,
Karen McGuane, JJ Wassmuth**

Non-Members Present: David Pinney, First Selectman

- I. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order 7:13 pm**
- II. Minutes of last meeting: Minutes of November 3, 2008 meeting were read and accepted with the following change:**
 - 1. Under Section VI, should read, “not designated as wetlands”**
- III. Audience: none**
- IV. Old Business: Karen Murdoch reported that another Skateboard Park fundraiser netted \$180. The kick wall has been started at the Firehouse Field as part of the Eagle Scout project. Troy Montagne submitted a synopsis of the sports association player enrollment numbers, projected growth, and field usage to assist with the assessment and prioritization of field improvements needed. The synopsis was incomplete as lacrosse numbers were not presented. There was also a discrepancy in the actual numbers/teams in Little League which was raised by Karen McGuane. Troy stated that the synopsis was a work in progress and he will try to get the corrections made by the next meeting. The group requested that rather than reporting the number of players in each sport, the number of teams should be reported to grant a better understanding of field usage for practice and game play. John Taylor e-mailed the recreation coordinator and recreation commission chairperson with his measurements of all recreation fields, including his assumptions of percentage of field use per sports associations. The commission noted some**

inconsistencies in the reporting as recreation field usage by JV and Varsity high school teams was not taken into the equation.

V. New Business:

David Pinney formally informed the commission of the appointment of our current Recreation Coordinator, Jen Charette, to the position of Director of Human Services. This fulltime position has oversight of the Senior Center and Social Services. David explained that the recreation department services will be impacted by this appointment as Jen tries to continue with her oversight role of the recreation services. David stated that Senior and Recreation Services will be Jen's primary role, and that it is possible that the town may "outsource" the social service component of the Director of Human Services responsibilities. He also noted that the town will be adopting a "wait and see" attitude to see how the recreation department fares with the cut in designated hours after Jen's new appointment, but would not rule out expanding recreation staff to cover day to day operations/administrative tasks. There was discussion regarding the Summer Camp Director role as a separate position.

David also implied that the proposed excavation of the town property behind the Field Road soccer fields for gravel and lumber in exchange for the creation of new recreation field(s) was a viable one and is being considered as a likely project for the town. The commission raised concerns about Fund 16 monies and the need to keep those funds designated for recreation projects. David noted that \$5200 has been approved to be paid out of fund 16 to complete the baseball field warning tracks. He did express concern that with the state budget deficits, funds normally granted to the towns may be considerably less or even omitted for the next fiscal year so monies for projects may be tight.

Troy Montagne expressed the need for the town engineer to review the possibility for field additions to the Sokol Road complex. In the past, Mike Provencher stated that it was not possible to add more fields at that location due to manhole cover placements and leech field. Troy thought that there still may be room for new field development and feels that a fresh look at the site by the engineer is warranted. The commission

agreed that this idea should be re-visited. Karen McGuane also raised the question of clearing brush behind field #5 on Field Road to place another small baseball field.

The commission went on to further discuss our concerns of the loss of dedicated hours of a recreation coordinator to the department. In the past , there was concern that the coordinator's role should have expanded hours to handle the day to day activities and administrative duties. The commission decided to strongly recommend to the town selectmen that the recreation coordinator position be fully replaced in addition to a dedicated Summer Camp Director position.

VI. Parks Department and Recreation Department Reports: none submitted

VII. Correspondence : A letter of resignation from the Recreation Commission was received from Colleen Maniscalco effective 12/22/08.

VIII. January Meeting Agenda: Recreation Budget 2009

IX. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 9:17 pm

Respectfully Submitted By,

**Colleen Maniscalco
Secretary, Recreation Commission**