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**Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes of
Monday, September 21, 2020
Virtual Meeting 4:00pm**

Recreation Chair: "Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the North Reading Parks & Recreation Committee Meeting is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to this meeting while in progress may do so by dialing: +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) or linking to: Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84245605052?pwd=MElvMTJJZDNPY0ZBM2ZPSWZrNGFkdz09>

In accordance with the Open Meeting Law, the North Reading Parks & Recreation Committee states for the record that this meeting is being recorded by the state and may be recorded by other individuals or media.

Attendance:

Recreation Chair (Take Attendance): Committee Members Present: Ron Kern Chair (RK), Sergio Coviello (SC), Rita Mullin (RM), Mike Fitzpatrick (MF), Pat Filmore (PF)

Staff present: Lynne Clemens (LC), Maria Brown (MB)

Tardy:

Absent: Billie Luker (BL) Sheila Sturdevant (SS),

Staff Absent:

Call to order: 4:00pm; Quorum, called by RK

Audience of Citizens: None

Discussion: Remote Learning Center (RLC)

MF explained his intent not to discuss the RLC at our previous meeting without LC being present.

RK thanked everyone present at the meeting. He explained that this meeting was to discuss RLC and to have LC give a brief description/update and have the committee ask any questions they may have.

LC - went over the email she previously sent to everyone on August 26, 2020. This email outlined the possibility of running a RLC. She pointed out that she hasn't gotten very far because she has to fill out an Exemption Application for the State. The TA needs to meeting with the Select Board, meeting scheduled for 7pm on 9/21. This is to designate a Municipal Authority from NR to sign the Exemption Application and look over the process for the Municipality.

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LC - not certain if this program will run or not. LC and Nancy Ursino (NU) toured different town and private facilities. They were met by Town inspectors (Police, BOH, Fire, TA). Town Hall Gym – not an option because boiler repairs are being done then early elections will move in. It was determined that if this program runs we will use a room at the Trinity Church.

LC has been on Mass Parks & Recreation Zoom calls weekly. Some other communities are attempting to do the same. Some have licenses to run as camp. Others in same position as NR and trying to get an Exception by the State to run this Remote Learning Center. Some of the items needed, need to have employees hired, CORI/SORI, background checks all prior to Application.

We originally began planning on having full-time staff members. After discussions with Finance it was determined that with the cost of benefits we cannot hire full-time. We would have hire a couple of part-time staff.

Trinity Church will be charging us a fee of \$50/day. They are being very flexible. They hire the cleaners and use covid foggers. RM expressed her concern with other people using the same room we would be renting.

LC - as 9/15, we sent out a survey to parents asking if they would send their children to RLC. We received over 300 responses. We then sent another email to the "Yes" responses asking if they'll still send them with three separate questions.

I was 100% on board with going forward with this program. After speaking to some parents on Friday (9/18) about their first few days, their information was negative. They said children have lots of down time, lots of questions for parents from children, time in class only 7:45am-10:30am, some microphone problems. My concern is what to do with children from 10:30am – 2:30pm. Children are in different grades, classes with different schedules. We would need to hire more staff. I have a Virtual call tomorrow I will need to ask the schools what their intention is. See if this is what the school schedule will be like going forward.

MF – with this information it seems as though the outlook of this program has changed. How do we help? We shouldn't put this much pressure on LC.

LC – reason we were interested in doing the RMC: help parents, keep department personnel employed, concerned with bringing in money. Fall programs running, not sure what the winter will bring. If school schedule changes it would make things easier with children's time. If not, not sure how we proceed. The good thing is TA supports that we shouldn't begin the program until we have everything figured out and can run program without concerns. We still need to get through the application process and deal with the challenges of what we have.

RM – you are bringing in money. You shouldn't be concerned that your job is in jeopardy. Unless TA says something to that effect.

LC – some Towns have laid off employees, which is why we are concerned. MF – what can we do to protect P&R Department employees? SC asked if it would work if we had everyone in same grades. LC – no because some will be in different schools with different teachers.

RM – Rec & Hillview fall under Enterprise, which they have to make money. With P&R we have been with programs/permits, whether small or not. LC – have not brought in as much as usually bring in. We are at a breakeven at this point, again I'm concerned about what we can offer in the Winter.

RM – this meeting was to update the Recreation Committee and let you know we are in support of you going forward. Concern is Covid, hiring staff. If this RMC program does not run, I would like to see if Town would protect department 1 ½ year.

LC – concerned about keeping kids busy. RM would rather see department work with smaller programs. PF – if LC feels she would like to try to work the issues out and run it, it should be her decision. RK – would like to see us work with school and keep talking to other Towns for ideas and advice. LC – she has an Virtual call with schools tomorrow and address her concerns.

LC – I will move forward, will not run if not safe or if it reflects bad on department. We have had no pressure from TA and I am comfortable know the Recreation Committee supports us either way.

SC – we will back you, if you only run smaller programs we'll back your decision.

PF – agrees.

RM – agrees.

LC – we have not committed to anything. Not sure if this will come into fruition. I am moving forward with what we have to do, waiting for Application approval. I will keep you updated.

Committee – let us know if we can help. We support what you do either way, what you feel comfortable doing.

Next Recreation Committee Meeting: Monday, October 5, 2020 at 6:45pm.

- **Adjournment: 4:56pm**

(PF) made a motion to adjourn meeting at 8:05pm.

(SC) seconds the motion.

Approved: 5 Opposed: 0

Abstained: 0

Motion: PASSED