

San Anselmo Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes – 10/18/2011

1. **Meeting called to order 7:00pm**
2. **Roll Call:** Commissioners present: Kelly, Bergman, Holtzer, Logwood, Lopin, Community Services Director David Donery.
3. **Approval of Agenda:** Agenda approved.
4. **Approval of Minutes of October 18, 2011:** Minutes approved.
5. **Open Time for Public Expression:** None
6. **Recreation Fund Revenues & Expenditure Report – Fiscal year 2010-11:** Donery reported that the presented report represents the previous fiscal year, and are the unaudited, actual figures. Donery stated that the department ended the fiscal year with \$995,868 in revenues and \$1,030,848 in expenditures showing a loss of \$34,980. Donery stated that Parkside Preschool represented \$26,287 of that loss, and that the department deferred \$125,000 into the new fiscal year representing revenue that was collected in FY 2010-11 for program starting in FY 2011-12. Kelly asked if Donery thought the Robson House rentals were impacted by the new rules that were put in place restricting the type of use that is allowable. Donery stated that he believed that the rules did impact the amount of revenue that Robson received. He stated that staff is looking at other ways of marketing Robson that may position the space better for uses that comply with the new rules. He stated that this will be a challenge but that it is necessary to keep Robson viable as a rental facility.
7. **Presentation from the Dog Park Steering Committee:** Dog Park Steering Committee Vice Chairperson Mike Belling reported on the activities of the Dog Park Steering Committee. He stated that the Steering Committee is very appreciative that the Town has given local dog owners a voice, and a park. Belling reported on several items including the committee's monthly work parties, improvements including the construction of a new storage shed, a new drinking fountain, a new shade structure, improvements to the entrance of the park including laying of new bark. Belling passed out photographs showing some of the work that has been completed. Belling stated that part of the role of the committee is to listen to dog owners. He stated that the two items that they hear most about are more shade and better ground cover. He stated that the committee is working on solutions to both of these issues. Belling introduced committee member Carol Galloway who stated that she is at the park everyday and is constantly collecting names and contact information. Committee member Lora Parnell stated that she works on communications with the public through the committee's email list. Committee member Judy Kaufman stated that the committee participates in Town events such as the Country Fair Days. She welcomed recommendations from the commission on other opportunities for the committee to get more involved in other activities. Committee chairperson Teri Vyenielo stated that committee has raised and spent \$27,000 dollars to date. She stated that the committee is interested in developing a capital campaign to address finishing the development of the dog park through installing a groundcover and an interior walking path. She stated that these are the only two elements left from the original design of the park. Donery stated that the main entry gate has failed and that the Town is currently working with a local company to repair the gate. Vyenielo stated that the committee has an opening and that recruitment is underway to fill this position.

Vyenielo stated that there has been an issue with aggressive dogs at the do park. She handed out an information sheet that was developed by the committee detailing how to best address incidents involving aggressive dogs. Lopin asked where this document would be placed. Vyenielo stated that it would be laminated and placed in several key locations within the dog park. Kelly asked whether having a phone number of a committee member is the best contact point. He suggested that a generic dog park steering committee email be developed. He stated that this could also be placed on the dog park page on the Town's website. Logwood asked if the document had been reviewed by the Town Attorney. Donery stated that it had not but that he would ask for a review. Bergman reiterated that she feels it is important

8. Discussion Items –

A. Memorial Park Tennis Courts – Hours of Operation: Donery presented a staff report providing a brief history of the tennis facilities at Memorial Park. He stated that courts one and two were constructed in the early 1960's and that the lights were installed on those courts in the late-1960's. He stated that courts three and four were constructed in the 1970's. He stated that in the 1980s, housing was built on land owned by the Town at the Isabel Cook school property directly adjacent to the courts. He stated that this development is known as the Isabel Cook Homes. Donery reported that in September, a resident of the Isabel Cook Homes, Edward Watkins, contacted the Town stating that the tennis courts lights were staying on until 2 to 3am. Staff from the Department of Public Works investigated and found that the timer was broken. Staff replaced the timer and the lights began to work properly. Mr. Watkins also stated that the sound of tennis play woke him in the early morning hours and kept him awake until the courts closed at 10:00PM during the daylight savings and until 10:30PM during the rest of the year. He asked that the Town review the hours of operation of the tennis facilities at Memorial Park.

Donery presented a survey of other public tennis facilities in Marin County. He stated that the purpose of this survey was to compare San Anselmo's hours of operation against other public facilities. The survey also asked whether courts were adjacent or near residences. The results of the survey confirmed that San Anselmo's hours of operation were in-line with other facilities and that lighted courts in other communities had similar hours of use.

During open time, Mr. Watkins stated that he would like to see the courts be closed at sundown. He stated that the issue had begun to affect his health his privacy. He also stated that his bedroom is in the back of his residence directly across from the courts. Kelly asked how long Mr. Watkins has lived at the locations. Mr. Watkins stated that he has lived there for three years. Kelly asked how many nights per week do people play tennis in the evening. Mr. Watkins stated that people play at night at least four nights per week. Bergman asked Mr. Watkins what he felt would be a reasonable hour for the courts to close. Mr. Watkins stated that he felt that the courts should close when it gets dark. Kelly asked Donery how long the hours had been in place. Donery stated that he believed that the hours of use had not changed since the lights were installed. Holtzer asked Mr. Watkins which issue was more troublesome, the noise or the lights. Mr. Watkins stated that the noise was a bigger issue for him.

Dan Thomas stated that as far as he knew, this is the first complaint about the use of the courts in the past 50 years. He stated that he thought that San Anselmo observed "quiet hours" between 10:00PM and 8:00AM. He believes this relates to constructions, barking dogs and other loud noise. He stated that this provides 10 hours of peace and quiet. He stated that he did not feel the hours of use for a public amenity should be changed for a single person who complains. He feels that anyone who moves into a residence next to a facility such as this should be aware of its impact.

Nancy Oswald stated that she has lived in San Anselmo and has used the tennis courts since 1971 and this is the first time she has ever heard of a complaint about the tennis courts. She stated that the courts and lights were in place long before the housing was built.

Mark Susnell stated that the courts at Memorial Park are the only public courts in San Anselmo. He stated that the courts were there long before the housing and that anyone renting a home there should be aware of the situation. He stated that he pays taxes and he would like to see the courts improved to make the courts a first class facility.

Dolly Frauens commented that she has been in San Anselmo since 1958 and she has been playing on the courts since the late-1960's. She stated that people pay for keys to the courts and want to play tennis. She commented that she feels that people are respectful. She suggested that the timer should be checked regularly. She also suggested that signs asking players to refrain from making unnecessary noise after 8:00PM. She also stated that windscreen do not reduce noise and get damaged fairly quickly.

Lou Vaccaro, a Fairfax resident, stated that he plays at the Canon Village tennis courts. He stated that court three is closer to the residences and that the court doesn't open until 9:00AM and the rest of the courts open at 8:00AM. Kelly stated that he felt that the evening hours are the main issue.

Tammy McVicker stated that she plays during the days. She commented that she feels that the best solutions are to make sure that the timers are working correctly and the installation of the noise signage.

Holtzer stated that she feels that keeping the court hours as they are. Lopin feels that she needs to visit the courts in the evenings to get a better idea of the issue.

Bergman stated that she plays tennis and appreciates having local option for evening tennis. She asked why the hours are different than the rest of the parks In Town. Donery stated that recreational facilities with lights typically have longer hours to be able to take advantage of evening play. Bergman stated that she did not get a answer from Mr. Watkins about what time he feels would be reasonable to close the courts at night. Donery stated that he heard Mr. Watkins state that he wants to see the courts close at sundown. Bergman asked how the Town budgets for repairs to recreational facilities. Donery stated that the Town allocates funding for repair and maintenance to the Parks Division within the Department of Public Works. He stated that these funds are limited and are used to maintain all of the parks. Donery reported that courts three and four were resurfaced approximately four years ago using State Park Bond funds and that the Town monitors state and federal sources for potential capital project funding.

Kelly stated that he would speak to Public Works Director Sean Condry regarding searching for grant funding for the tennis facilities.

Logwood stated that the Town only has four tennis courts. He stated that many residents work and that tennis players rely on before and after work hours to enjoy the sport. He stated that he feels any reduction in hours of use would impact these residents. He agreed that commissioners should visit the courts during the evenings to get a better feel for the situation.

Kelly made the analogy that a house that is next to an airport is less expensive, but buyers/renters are aware that the house is next to an airport.

Kelly asked that commissioners spend time prior to the next meeting to visit the facility during the evening hours and come prepared to discuss the issue at the November meeting.

B. Country Fair Day – Review: Holtzer complimented Donery on a successful event. She stated that having water available is crucial. She suggested that the Town provide water refilling stations where people can refill their non-disposable water bottles. Donery stated that he will pursue providing Green Planet water, which uses a plant-based, compostable bottle. Logwood suggested that the Youth Commissioner host a Juice Box stand in the Fun Zone. Bergman thanked Casey logwood for donating the wine for the PRC booth. Bergman stated that she enjoyed the band.

C. Work Party Projects: Donery reported that at the previous meeting, the commission stated an interest in hosting work parties during the year to benefits different areas in town. Kelly stated that he is interested in organizing a creek clean-up but was told that the Town could not sponsor this due t liability. He asked that Donery check into this. Lopin suggested that the commission explore

9. Action Items –

A. Goblins' Parade – Assignments: Donery stated that if commissioners want to volunteer, simply show-up at the Town Hall Plaza at 4:30PM on the day of the event.

10. Staff Updates:

A. Parkside Preschool: Donery reported that the Parkside's summer program, Camp KidMarin Minicamp, saw an increase in participation when compared to the summer of 2010. He stated that the program started the school year with very low attendance. Holtzer stated that many of the local preschools which have traditionally had a waitlist have openings in their programs this fall. She stated that she assumes that part of the reason for this is that parents are holding their children back from entering kindergarten, but that they are not sending these children to an extra year of preschool. Donery mentioned that the Living Social deals have three children stay with the program. He stated that a Parkside deal for the fall had eight people purchase a one-week deal. Casey suggested trying another service such as Groupon. Lopin suggested that an article be written on PATCH.COM. Kelly stated that he will write a blog about Parkside on PATCH. Donery stated that staff has enrolled in a holiday fundraising program, and are looking into getting set-up with the scrip-type programs at United and Safeway. Bergman stated that she believes that there are two main issues with the current program. The first is looking in to allowing for a certain number of slots for children that are not potty trained. She believes that this, along with the lowering of the age requirement, could bring in additional students. The second is the fact that the program's hours do not serve families where both parents work. Donery replied that he has asked his staff to explore the licensing issues regarding offering diaper-changing. He stated that he will get the information and bring it to the next meeting. He also stated that he and the Town Manager have been talking about the possibility of changing the hours from 8:00AM to 3:00PM to 7:30AM to 6:00PM to allow for participation from working families. He stated that this would take a potential investment from the Town because it would take time to get additional children enrolled. He stated that the risk would be taking on a greater annual deficit but the reward could be eventually receiving enough revenue to get the program financially stable again. Holtzer asked that staff put together a report showing profit and loss numbers on a monthly basis. Donery stated that he will take a look at this and agreed that this could be valuable information. Donery stated that the only option to reduce expenditures is to eliminate one of the two benefitted staff positions and rehiring part-time employees to cover the hours at the school. He stated that this would save the costs of health care and retirement. Holtzer mentioned that she is not in favor of laying off a long-time employee. Donery stated that as of this date, there is \$9,800 in monthly revenue coming in and \$11,500 is needed to break even.

B. Town Council – Dog Rules Decisions: Kelly reported that the Town Council reviewed the recent dog-specific rule changes at Memorial and Robson Parks. The Council voted to keep the Memorial rules as they are and voted to make Robson-Harrington Park on-leash only.

C. Holiday Event Schedule: Donery reported that the Town is sponsoring two events during the holidays. The annual Holiday Lighting Ceremony will be held at Town Hall on Saturday, December 3rd from 5:00 to 6:30PM. This event is cosponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. The annual Breakfast with Santa event will be on Saturday, December 10th with seatings at 8:00 and 10:00AM. Donery encouraged the commission to come volunteer or come as a participant. He encouraged any commissioners who would like to volunteer to contact him.

D. November Meeting – Council Meeting on 11/15: Due to the Town Council moving their first meeting of November to our regularly-scheduled date. The commission chose to move their November meeting to November 29th. Donery also mentioned that traditionally the commission has held a holiday social. Bergman offered her home as a potential spot for the event.

11. Commission comments and questions, requests for future agenda items – Tennis court lighting review, Parkside Preschool, monthly work parties.

Meeting adjourned at 9:29PM