

**Park Commission Meeting
January 14, 2010**

Present: Bob Christiansen, Mike Interbartolo, Joan Bell, Frank Olivieri, Phil Friel, Bill Gardiner, John McLaughlin, John Mercer, Mike Farrell, Mike Ford, Susan Tsoukalas, Cindy Brickley

I SIGNING OF WARRANTS

Warrants were reviewed and signed.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion: By Bob Christiansen to approve the minutes of the meeting 11/10/09

Second: John McLaughlin

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: By John McLaughlin to approve the minutes of the meeting 12/10/09

Second: Bob Christiansen

Vote: Unanimous

III. RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Frank introduced his assistant, Susan Tsoukalas, who has been helping for the past 2 months. The PC and GMC introduced themselves. Susan was thanked for her help.

A. Status Report on Revolving Fund Account FY10

Frank explained the Red Sox ticket/Navigator specifics on his budget. He also has rough estimates on what the MBA and Travel Basketball will be generating this year. Frank estimates that \$25,000-\$26,000 will be generated by these programs, which is \$5,000 more than last year. Travel teams raised over \$10,000 to help defray their costs. The \$38,000 on the budget includes the fundraising. All travel programs cost \$275-\$330 per player. Another budget item to note is the donation line. Frank was made aware, by Bridget Geehan, that there has been and still is a separate account of donation money that has gone into a line item just for recreation. This has been in existence for the last 3 years. There is approximately \$3600 in that line item now. This money can be used as recreation sees fit. Mike I. would like to know who donated to this in the past and in the future. Make sure thank yous are sent. Frank is showing a \$27,000 shortage right now.

B. Winter Program Updates

Frank reported that he did not have the report with him, but, to the best of his recollection there were 820 children in MBA last year and 705 this year. The drop is in grade 5-8 where there are many options for travel basketball within and outside of the city. Elementary school numbers were similar to last year.

C. Gym Rental Fees

Frank had meeting with Greg Zammuto and Julia Anderson over rental problems. Gyms were closed several times if Frank had no one in a gym for a short period of time. The next groups coming in could not get in. Issue was thought to be

resolved, until it happened again over winter vacation at the Roosevelt School. Mr Zammuto told Frank that recreation would still have to pay the rental fee. Frank argued this and Mr Zammuto dropped the charge, but, he still stands behind charging for the gym rental if a team does not show and the custodian leaves, and other teams can not get in. Frank is frustrated with this. Also, all of this information and more has been passed down to the custodians, which has made it difficult to now deal with the custodians on site.

John McLaughlin, the Mayor, Mr. Zammuto and Supt. Casey have spoken about gym rentals once and plan to meet in the near future. John McLaughlin will be set up a meeting soon.

Joan B. spoke about a Focus Meeting that was had recently. It was mediated by Beth McCarthy. They were looking for ways to work together.

John Mercer, suggested a plan for dealing with this situation.

Frank just got an invoice for \$12,000 for gym rentals. The PC told Frank not to pay any fees until the meeting takes place. Mike I. would like the chairman of the school committee, Margaret Driscoll, to be at the meeting too. The PC feels that the group they would like to meet with probably does not know about it and should be informed.

Motion: By John Mercer that the Park Commission will not sign any gym rental warrants until a satisfactory meeting has been held.

Second: John McLaughlin

Vote: Unanimous

John McLaughlin will communicate this to the Mayor tomorrow and Frank can let Julia Anderson know of this decision.

C. Mt Hood Events

Frank gave out a memo with what he plans to run at Mt Hood until the end of FY10. The total cost is Approximately \$4500. Laura Farrell has been working with Kathy Piget-Brodeur to learn how to get permission to show a movie, etc. These dates have been coordinated with GMC.

Motion: By Bob Christiansen that \$4500 can be spent for the events at Mt Hood that recreation would like to run in FY10.

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

Mike I. commented that age restrictions/suggestions should be included in the advertising of these events. Frank will get the whole program description out.

D. Future Program Concerns

Frank voiced his concern that running both MBA and Travel Basketball at the same time has been very draining. The PC would like Frank to put what he needs for next year in writing.

IV. MOUNT HOOD REPORT

A. Mount Hood

1. Report on membership list for 2010

There are 5 renewal members.

2. Outstanding Gift Certificates

\$32,000

3. Monthly Financial Report on Golf Course

Given that June is a typically one of the busiest months and it was very rainy this past year, the golf course held its own over 2009. October was also very rainy. A summary of 2009: The Daily Fee rounds were up 500 and the Member rounds were down 700. The Greens Fee revenue was up \$18,000. Cart revenue was up \$4,000. Melrose charities were up \$4,000. Memberships were down \$27,000. The Pro Shop was down \$12,000. Food was up \$8,000.

Mike I. would like a list of the Melrose Charities at the next meeting from Mike Farrell.

2010 Total Golf Revenues:

MTD \$3647.00

YTD \$1,480,643.00

4. Reports on requests for rental of club house, league play and golf tournaments

Mike F. handed out the flyers for the winter events that Laura F. is running (Valentines Dinner 2/13, Comedy Night 2/27 and Kids movie 2/19). Joan said that Leo Colborne told her there is not a need for a special license for the comedy night. Joan said she would make sure they were publicized in the papers.

Menus for 2010 were handed out to be reviewed by the PC. Prices will be approved at the next meeting.

Mike I. asked if the clubhouse has been open for restrooms and drinks. Mike F. said that it is open daily 9am-3pm. The doors that are open are limited though, since there is not a lot of staff on duty, GMC does not want people in the building without knowing. Signs will be put up to direct people.

5. Marketing Plan Update

Mike F. worked on a marketing plan for 2010 till April. He will email it out to the PC for the next meeting.

6. Report on General Operations of Golf Course

a. Report on staffing

6 employees on staff

b. Copy of Maintenance Log and Current Certification

A copy was submitted and is on file.

c. 2010 Membership Packets

Packets went out.

d. Follow up on Trees on second fairway

Tom Friel had a letter from Phil Friel assessing the effectiveness of the tree plantings on the second hole. Ralph Sarni would like a third tree and

the Friels do not object to this, but, it up to the PC. Mike I. would like to table this decision until next month, when Ralph could be in attendance.

Motion: By Bob Christiansen to table any decision on planting a third tree on the second hole until next month (February), giving Ralph Sarni a chance to be at the meeting.

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

e. Guidelines for snow removal on ice

Joan, GMC and the Fire Chief came to an agreement on clearing the ponds. The national standard to skate on ice is 4inches thick. An auger was purchased so that GMC can check the depth. The agreement is that any time there is 4inches or more of ice GMC will clear off an area of First Pond to skate on. The Fire Department is willing to help when available. If the ice is 4 or more inches signs will be posted “Skate at Your Own Risk”. If there is less than 4 inches signs will be posted “Danger Thin Ice”. Joan will advertise this new endeavor in the papers.

Motion: By Bill Gardiner to approve the policy that at the direction of the PC GMC will clear First Pond if the ice is 4inches or thicker. If it is less than 4inches the pond will be closed. GMC will be responsible for measuring the ice if in doubt of its depth, clearing the ice when it is 4inches or deeper and posting signs “Skate at Your Own Risk” or “Danger Thin Ice” depending on if the ice is 4inches or less.

Second: Bob Christiansen

Vote: Unanimous

f. Kitchen Update

This has been tabled until further notice. Take off of agenda.

g. Update on AC

Equipment has been approved. The electrician should be in on Monday to start the work. Joan will check on the schedule that was put in the bid document. She believes it was 30 days.

h. Update on Windows

Tabled

i. Update on Feasibility Study

1. Update on Topography Study

Joan just received the topo survey results today. Beals and Thomas mailed a mylar copy, paper copies and a CAD file with the study on it today.

2. Update on Environmental proposal

Beals and Thomas will be back in touch with Joan in March to talk about the Environmental Study. Mike I. confirmed that the Supplemental Budget request is going before the Appropriations Committee on Jan 25th.

j. Update on Wind Turbine Study

David Shakespeare, 14 Lodge Ave, Melrose spoke about the study thusfar. A site assessment has been done for free by the Mass Technology Collaborative. This is the first step. It was done Dec 4th. The report was basically favorable. For a number of reasons to put a turbine near the FAA tower is not a good idea. The place that they came up with is the “meadow”. There are several concerns here also. There would need to be a geological study to make sure the fill could withstand the turbine. Also, getting a turbine to this area could be difficult. Microwave beams pass through this area, and there is not clarity as to where they come from.

The next step is to file for a Hazard Determination with the FAA. This is a free 1 page application. The ruling is good for 18months; hence the turbine must be built with in this time or a new

Mike I. is concerned about the location that the MTC is looking at. Mike I wanted to know if there is a minimum distance that people have to stay away from it. The PC would like to have the perimeter of the meadow looked at. Bob C. says where they are looking is the teeing area for the kids. He believes it will not be in the way. Mike I. would like David to go back to the MTC to see if the location could be altered.

It takes 4 months for the Hazard Determination study. If that comes back favorable then there is a \$500 fee for a year long feasibility study. If that also comes back favorable then grants can be applied for for different sizes of turbines. By the time it was built the management company’s contract would be up for renewal, so that adjustments could be made pertaining to power usage.

The PC requested that David not file for the Hazard Determination Study until he checked on the possible change in location. David said he will have this by the next meeting.

Things to consider are the new AC that is being installed, and the possibility of changing over to electric golf carts. All this would be looked at before a turbine size was determined. Questions were asked about how the power gets transferred to the locations necessary.

k. FY10 Budget

Mike I. would like a hardcopy of the budget each month. He is not in favor of it being sent electronically. To save paper Joan will print the budget with only the headings and not each line item.

l. Weekend Twilight Rates

Joan received an email about this from Bruce McDonald again. See enclosed. Tom F. has enclosed a suggestion. Discussion was had over emailing members a calendar of when the course would not be available or how it could most effectively be communicated.

Motion: By Bill Gardiner to approve the “Suggested Weekend Twilight Rate for Weekday Members” that GMC and the PC subcommittee has come forward with.

Second: John McLaughlin

Vote: Unanimous

This will be sent out to the members by email now, and added to the membership packet in the future.

V. PARK DEPARTMENT REPORT

A. General Park Dept. Report

B. Update Dog Park

Joan is still in the process of meeting on the possibility of a dog park at Ell Pond. She met with Dave Dickerson, president of The Ell Pond Committee. He is dead set against anything in the back area near the pond. He is not as against using an area closer to the road.

Joan has also suggested to the Dog Committee to get in touch with National Grid and that she would again go over Mt Hood with them.

Discussion was had about the Dog Park issue.

C. FY11 Budget

No questions

Motion: By Bill Gardiner to agree to open public participation.

Second: John McLaughlin

Vote: Unanimous

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Myron Dittmer, 93 Altamont Ave, requested a copy of the Wind Study survey. Joan said she would try to get it put on the website. She would also see that the Topo gets put on the website.

Allan Swarze, 16 Stillman Rd., asked if the student population is changing. The PC suggested going to the school committee/department for this information, or check with the census at city hall.

Allan noted that the Feasibility Study mentions that a feasibility study was going to be done on the rest of the city. Mike I. responded that the city did not fund this. Allan asked if it didn't make sense to do the other study after Mt Hood's feasibility study. Mike I. does not feel that this would happen. Allan asked how each of the Park Commissioners stood in terms of the athletic field. John Mercer answered that they are all committed to the process and to make an informed decision.

Ed O'Connell, 20 Leland St., would like to register his opposition to the proposal of the athletic facility at Mt Hood. To the extent that funds are committed to this study it seems the PC is on a path that they want to see to the end. Ed would like to know what the end is? Is it a vote at the end of the study when permits are applied for? Mike I. answered that there are several steps along the way, the next step being the topo study to look at two areas, one where golf improvements might take place and one where a field might be built. Based on the topo study the consultants could come up with better cost estimates.

The environmental studies also need to be done and then be presented to the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Committee would then make their determination. A traffic study would be done next. After this a decision would be made whether to move forward with the contract documents. At any point along the way it could be that the Commission could decide the project is not feasible. Mike I. expects that there could be several votes along the way. Ed pointed out his opinion that this type of project rarely gets stopped, once it has some commitment towards it. He is trying to figure out if the Park Commission has made up its mind that they want the project to go through.

Ed asked if the monthly agenda could be posted on the website. Mike I. responded that it could be done, and Joan will look into it. Mike I. pointed out that the agenda is not set until just a few days before the meeting though.

Allan Swarze, 16 Stillman Rd., would like to know what would happen after the traffic study. Mike I. described his thoughts. Allan wanted assurance that the Board of Aldermen would have to approve the financing. Mike I. said that the funds would come from Mt Hood and not the city, but, the BOA have to approve it.

Myran Dittmer, 93 Altamont Ave, asked for the costs of the different studies. Joan reported the feasibility study was \$20,000. The topo study is \$14,500. The environmental study would be around \$9,000 and she does not have a cost estimate for the traffic study.

Ed O'Connell, 20 Leland St., asked what other permits would be necessary. Mike I. answered to the best of his knowledge they would need a permit from the conservation commission, a site plan review and DEP sign off and possibly something to do with the financing of the project.

Motion: By Bill Gardiner to close public participation

Second: John Mercer

Vote: Unanimous

VII. NEW BUSINESS

None

Motion: By Bill Gardiner to adjourn

Second: Bob Christiansen

Vote: Unanimous