

**BRUNSWICK RECREATION COMMISSION**

**DATE: February 13, 2019**

**ROOM 206, TOWN HALL**

**TIME: 7:00 pm**

**85 UNION STREET**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chair, Mike Lyne and Commissioners Melissa Archbell, Brianne Weaver, William Wilkoff and Eric Foushee

**Absent:** None

**Also Present:** Director of Parks and Recreation, Thomas Farrell; Deputy Director, Troy Smith;

Chair, Lyne welcomed everyone and then asked Commissioners and staff to introduce themselves.

1 **MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 26**

Minutes will be available for consideration by the Recreation Commission at an upcoming meeting.

2 **CITIZENS INPUT AND CORRESPONDENCE**

Chair Lyne shared that there weren't any pieces of input to discuss.

3 **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA**

Chair Lyne introduced old business on the agenda as the first order of business, moving the Recreation Program Report to be delivered by Deputy Director Smith to a point later in the meeting.

5 **OLD BUSINESS**

5a **UPDATE ON RUN BRUNSWICK FUNDRAISING EFFORTS FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE TRACK AND FIELD FACILITIES AT BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL**

Chair Lyne introduced Cindy Patterson, Secretary of "Run Brunswick". Cindy mentioned that she will be providing a brief overview, similar to the one she delivered at the Town Council meeting the previous week. Patterson explained that Run Brunswick was incorporated as a 501-c3 in August of 2017 with the sole purpose to move along renovations of the track at the Brunswick High School, which is in disrepair. Patterson outlined how the group has received over 130 donations and pledges from individuals, businesses, and grants from the Nathaniel Davis Fund and others since incorporation for a total of over \$115,000. Patterson also outlined how the group has held three different fundraising events in the community at Portland Pie Company in the spring, Pat's Pizza in the fall and then Gelato Fiasco. Patterson detailed how there were really great, large and supportive crowds at each event. She also detailed how each business donated a portion of their profits that night to the Run Brunswick, based on their own percentage. Cindy then summarized that it was a great event for getting the word out and there were many kids and families who run, as well as other members of the community attending.

Cindy noted that fundraising efforts currently include shirts on sale at Fleet Feet. She highlighted that these shirt sales have been great. Cindy also highlighted how fun it is to see these shirts out and about in town, noting that many of the indoor track participants are wearing the shirts. Patterson then discussed their presence at local outreach events like road races and cross country running meets where the goal was to get the word out about what the group was looking to do. Cindy then introduced a funding ordinance that is set for a public hearing on Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. This ordinance will include joint funding from the Town, as well as the school department, in addition to the contribution from funds raised by Run Brunswick to date. Patterson informed the group that fundraising efforts are still ongoing and Run Brunswick would like to contribute as much as they can to this project.

Ms. Patterson highlighted the positive relationship that has developed between the Town of Brunswick, the Brunswick School Department and Run Brunswick as she detailed Run Brunswick's appreciation for the level of creativity involved in putting together the ordinance. Patterson further noted that the group is heartened that although this will have an impact on taxes and budgets, the impact will be minimal. Patterson commended the group for coming up with a workable and logical solution. Patterson then detailed how over the past 16-18 months of this process they have received both yes and no in response to requests for donation. Patterson explained that those who denied were of the opinion that the track would be a public facility and should be funded completely by public dollars or were in support of the project, but had other priorities with regard to their available funds. Patterson further explained that there were some folks who did not respond or were not interested in meeting to discuss the project. Finally, Patterson detailed the ongoing cultivation of relationships between Run Brunswick and potential donors, but that this effort takes time.

Secretary Patterson concluded that Run Brunswick feels great that they were able to raise \$115,000, after investing in this project not knowing what the project would entail. She added that group hopes and intends to keep raising funds for the project, but noted that there are a lot of worthwhile causes in Brunswick vying for donations from the same organizations that Run Brunswick had reached out to. Patterson mentioned that because these banks and different businesses are being targeted by folks, who are all doing worthy work, like Midcoast Hunger Prevention. Patterson, naming 3 prominent non-profit action groups in the Town of Brunswick, further concluded that while there are so many great organizations and people in town doing great things, Run Brunswick is very fortunate that they have achieved this much in the way of donations and have kept the conversation in front of the Town of Brunswick and school in order to get this project going.

Patterson added that the group is very excited that this funding ordinance has come through and that the hearing is scheduled for the 19<sup>th</sup>. Patterson then acknowledged an agenda item later in the meeting that would introduce a support letter and Patterson, on behalf of Run Brunswick, thanked the Recreation Commission for drafting a support letter. Finally, Patterson invited the members of the Recreation Commission to attend the hearing if they will be in the area during school vacation week and welcomed them to speak in favor of the project. Patterson finished her remarks by reaffirming how excited Run Brunswick is and established that the group is cautiously optimistic that there will be a new track this summer.

Chair Lyne inquired what the timeline would be in the ordinance passed. Patterson responded that if the ordinance does pass, they would turn right around and request bids for the construction project. Chair Lyne then inquired how long it would take for the track to be built. Patterson replied that it would take about 3 months to complete. She expanded on this point, noting that there may be impacts with regard to spring and fall weather, but established that based on conversations with contractors the three month timeline should be feasible since it has to happen during the summer months.

Chair Lyne asked of Patterson what the best way of making contributions would be for the public. Patterson informed the group that folks can donate right on the website by visiting 'www.runbrunswick.org' or by mailing a check to P.O. Box 823 in Brunswick. She also noted that the group has a Facebook page. Cindy concluded by mentioning that the public will hear more from the Run Brunswick group at the February 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and she thanked the Recreation Commission.

Chair Lyne thanked Patterson for coming and delivering remarks at the meeting. Lyne also noted that the Recreation Commission appreciated Patterson coming to deliver remarks. Chair Lyne personally commended the effort of Run Brunswick and thanked them for driving the conversation. Lyne concluded that it has clearly been an effective effort. Patterson agreed that Run Brunswick believes that this is a worthwhile effort.

6

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

6a

#### **REQUEST FROM SUPERINTENDENT OF THE BRUNSWICK SCHOOLS, PAUL PERZINOSKI, FOR A LETTER OF SUPPORT FROM THE RECREATION COMMISSION FOR THE TRACK FUNDING ORDINANCE MOVING TO PUBLIC HEARING ON FEBRUARY 19TH**

Director Farrell began his remarks by directing folks to reference their packets and an email from Paul Perzinoski that was addressed to Farrell. Farrell explained that the email was a request for the Recreation Commission to consider a letter of support for the proposed Brunswick High School Track Reconstruction Ordinance. Farrell reminded the group of the Land and Water Conservation Fund application and the fact that when that application was put together, it was a collaborative effort and the Commission authored a letter of support for the grant application as part of that process. Farrell named himself, Superintendent Perzinoski, Finance Director Julie Henze, Business Manager Kelly Wentworth as folks all working on this application project over the last three months. Farrell, noting that the Recreation Commission has authored a letter of support before, explained that the request is for a letter supporting the council's adoption of the proposed ordinance that was heard at their last meeting where they set the public hearing for next Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Director Farrell further explained additional information was received ahead of the Recreation Commission meeting today, February 13<sup>th</sup>. He stated that he received an email today because the Town of Brunswick was the applicant on the Land and Water Conservation Fund application from the Maine Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF) regarding the status of the previously submitted LWCF application to partially fund the project. Farrell continued on to note that the information received today was in regard to the map that was sent along with the application where the 6f boundary

needed to be identified. Farrell handed out copies of this map for reference, then noted that the 6f boundary is a topic that the Recreation Commission has heard about many times. Director Farrell explained that on this map the boundary was drawn as conservatively as possible and is represented in green. Farrell continued to explain that you have to provide public access from the right of way to the facility and provide enough parking to support the proposed use of the facility (ie, track) at minimum. Farrell then informed the group of what he learned during the site walk with Doug Beck, State Administrator for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) for the State of Maine, which is based out of the DACF's Bureau of Parks and Lands. Farrell stated that typically the National Park Service, if they are going to consider an allocation of money and when it comes to school sites, want to draw the boundaries as liberally as possible, to include all of the athletic and recreation facilities on the site and that the whole purpose of LWCF is to preserve these lands in perpetuity for public recreation specifically. Farrell then read the email received from Doug Beck on February 13<sup>th</sup> as he directed everyone present to reference the map handout while following along:

*"I won't be surprised to hear that the 6f map as proposed is not acceptable to the National Parks Service. With just the area colored in green proposed as protected park land they're not in support as indicated during my on-site visit."*

Farrell then explained that the site walk was done with Director Farrell, a Run Brunswick Representative, Superintendent Paul Perzinoski, the Assistant Town Manager, and Councilor Watson, in addition to others. Farrell indicated that at the previous site walk prior to submission of the LWCF application, Mr. Beck mentioned that the NPS would likely want bigger boundaries. Director Farrell then continued his narration of the letter:

*"And this is the case in terms of this map. What the National Park Service is willing to consider of making a \$300,000 grant allocation of funds is based on the entire site, absent the building."*

Farrell then directed everyone present to look at the map again and notice that they are speaking about everything within the yellow boundary drawn on the map, except for the physical structure of the school. Director Farrell further explained that upon receipt of the email he forwarded it to the Town Manager, who then forwarded it to the Superintendent of Schools. Farrell explained that he spoke with Superintendent Perzanoski shortly thereafter regarding the email.

Director Farrell then began to read from an email sent by Town Manager, John Eldridge at 5pm this evening:

*"Today we heard from the state with regard to our Land and Water Conservation Fund Grant Application. We were told that our proposed boundaries for the project are insufficient. The National Parks Service is requiring the entire parcel of land be included in the boundary. I cannot imagine that this will be acceptable to the town. We are being asked whether we still want to go forward with the National Park Service boundaries and we need to let the state know one way or the other. I had reservations about going forward with even*

*a minimal boundary, so I cannot recommend that we go forward with the National Parks Service's recommended boundary."*

Director Farrell asked how this correspondence will impact upon what the Recreation Commission had been asked to do at this present meeting in regards to the proposed ordinance letter of support. Farrell then began a follow up discussion stating that the ordinance, as it is written, does not presume that \$300,000 will be in the form of grant funds. Farrell further explained that it gives latitude to accept other funds which could be these types of funds (ie, LWCF), but it isn't predicated or necessitated on the receipt of these funds. Director Farrell explained to the Commission that when the ordinance goes to the Town Council for public hearing and consideration, John Eldridge will have some prefacing statements about the new information received.

Farrell noted that the boundary as now drawn, it will tie up infrastructure to the point that if that school ever left the site at some subsequent date, and the land were to be considered for some other use, the Town would have to replace the value of those facilities within the 6f boundary elsewhere in the Town at a cost far in excess of the \$300,000 LWCF grant total. Farrell summarized that to tie up a few million dollars in infrastructure, it doesn't make sense in response to dealing with a potential subsequent reuse of the property to accept the \$300,000 should it be awarded to the town.

Director Farrell stated that this topic was going to be the debate if the town was allocated the money based on the green boundaries, which wasn't a certainty by any means. Farrell further summarized that, now that the whole site is being considered encumbered by the 6f boundary, in his opinion, it is not financially prudent to even consider it. Farrell added that he wanted to give the Recreation Commission this information because it does speak to the previous decision made to support that application and the commitment to put it all together.

Farrell then explained that he sent an email to Doug Beck telling him that staff for the Town and School would discuss this in the near term and did not respond one way or the other, but also explained that they are looking for an answer to whether or not interest remains in proceeding with the application based on the larger boundary area.

Farrell then stated again that he just wanted to inform the Recreation Commission about this recent development. Farrell also stated that he has copies of the emails to disseminate as well.

Commissioner Foushee then inquired of Cindy Patterson, Secretary of Run Brunswick, whether or not this was related to the ordinance. Patterson explained that the ordinance was drafted regardless of whether or not this money came through. Patterson further explained that when this came up as an option it seemed good because they were trying to overturn as many stones as possible and this was the possibility for \$300,000, with the hope that they would maybe accept the smaller boundary as drawn in the application submittal. Patterson continued on to state that the town had agreed to go ahead with it and that Run Brunswick was in support of it, but that, as a tax payer and citizen of Brunswick, what they have come back with for a request is a bit excessive.

Commissioner Foushee stated that he agrees with everything Cindy Patterson said since this does not impact the ordinance discussion. Foushee also stated that it makes sense to forego acceptance of their request for the larger 6f boundary and this decision is the right one to make.

Director Farrell agreed, adding that this will likely be the consensus among the Town Council when they have the discussion about it. Farrell added that it also does not impact the willingness of the Recreation Commission to support the ordinance as it is written. Farrell then mentioned his suggestion to Chair Lyne to draft a letter for the Recreation Commission's consideration.

Farrell recommended using a lot of what was in the letter of support from the Recreation Commission for the original LWCF application because that letter addressed the usage that the Town was looking for with the track and quantified the participation numbers. Farrell included in these remarks that it also talks about public use that would be non-programmed activities. Director Farrell concluded that a lot of what's in that letter translates very well to what this letter of encouragement and positive consideration to the council could include because it is based on recreational use of the facility, as well as the greater community, not necessarily the school's use of the facility. Farrell concluded that this is an important piece that should be broadcast and the focus should be on the comments in that letter.

Chair Lyne, in response to Director Farrell's remarks, asked Farrell to summarize what the road to funding would look like for this project with regard to the consideration of the ordinance.

Farrell explained that based on his understanding, Run Brunswick's contribution (whatever it may be) would go towards to the total cost and the bond ordinance is written to not exceed \$1,000,000. Farrell further explained that the estimate for the construction of the track was in the \$850,000-\$865,000 range, but that this initial estimate is more than 3 years old. Farrell added that inflation has been factored in and brought the total to about \$900,000. Farrell stated again that the ordinance is written to not exceed \$1,000,000, adding that Run Brunswick had raised just over \$100,000 and the town is planning to commit to \$250,000. Farrell then noted that the remaining balance of the project would be fronted by the town and paid back over a number of successive years by the Brunswick School Department, similar to a relatively recent capital project that was designed to improve air quality at the Brunswick Junior High School. Farrell explained that the town fronted the money for that project as well and the school has been paying the town back somewhere between \$90,000 and \$100,000 per year.

Director Farrell further explained that the track construction ordinance, as it is written, would include an annual payment that would continue until the town is reimbursed in full for the track project. Referencing Cindy Patterson's point about the discussion at the Brunswick Town Council meeting, Farrell highlighted that this ordinance would not result in an increase in the budget as a line item because it is one capital expense that is in the budget already and will just continue once the other one sunsets. Farrell concluded that how

one chooses to articulate that fact might differ, but in this case the Town is not requesting \$1,000,000 to finance a new track that will be reflected in a percentage tax increase for homeowners.

Cindy Patterson then inquired of Director Farrell as to whether or not the Town would be contributing the \$250,000 from the undesignated fund balance. Director Farrell affirmed that this information is correct before Patterson reminded the group of an allocation of \$300,000 from that fund balance for the air conditioning upgrade in Crooker Theatre. Patterson added that project came in at only \$125,000 after they had already taken that money out so they still have \$175,000 remaining and it will take \$75,000 more to get to the \$250,000 out of that fund balance. Patterson also added that the fund balance is above the limit that they, by town charter have to maintain so there are extra funds that can be and should be used to fund one time capital improvement projects. Patterson concluded that the expenditure of the \$250,000 is completely valid according to the Town Charter. Director Farrell agreed with Patterson's remarks, stating that this use of funding is consistent with the Town's policy on the use of surplus funds.

Patterson continued on to state that Run Brunswick's funds will go towards paying back the School Department's debt to the town, for example it would cover one of the \$90,000 annual payments. Chair Lyne synthesized Patterson's remarks, stating that Run Brunswick will hopefully be able to pick up another year's debt service one year from the initial payment. Patterson agreed, adding that she is hopeful that Run Brunswick will be able to satisfy a couple years of this debt service.

Lyne noted that based on this planning, the project should be revenue neutral for the Brunswick School Department and the Town of Brunswick will be retiring one debt, while continuing another. Lyne then restated his interpretations saying that the town is instead retiring one loan, while beginning another loan; a statement with which Farrell agreed.

Commissioner Weaver inquired how the project would be impacted if this undertaking would not be going through the National Park Service, as well as whether or not the land is currently tied up as a result of this shift in funding outreach.

Farrell replied first, stating that the encumbrance on the land does not occur until the Town Council actually executes a project agreement for the funds with the National Park Service, but the process has not reached that point yet. Farrell noted that the State of Maine has reviewed all of the applications. Farrell added that, it is his belief that, since the National Park Service has made this request in response to the funding application, the state must be looking favorably upon the Town of Brunswick's application as a potential recipient of funds. Farrell then added that it is possible that the state may have then made this recommendation to the National Park Service when they sent along applications that they recognized as those that should be considered for funding.

Additionally, Farrell said that this information is not yet confirmed, but that this hypothesis can be made because it is clear that the National Park Service was asked to look at the question at hand, but now they have come back and said that they would only allocate funds

if the boundaries encumbered the entire site. Farrell concluded that the town is not committed to do anything at this point and the question posed in the email is about the Town's position on this point, whether acceptable or not. Farrell deduced that if there is some funding available in the cue totaling \$300,000 or some lesser number, they will allocate it to another project that they couldn't fund initially.

Commissioner Foushee inquired as to whether or not this is a once a year process for the National Park Service. Farrell affirmed that this is a once a year occurrence. He then stated that the LWCF has been in existence since 1965, but Congress has gradually over time reduced the appropriation annually. Farrell added that in his time serving as Parks and Recreation Director, elimination of the LWCF program has come up for discussion in Congress however such an action has yet to take place. He explained that the source of the funds come from off-shore drilling rights revenues, and there have been attempts by some in Congress in the past to sunset the program, take the revenues and send them to some other federal program. Farrell concluded that while the apportionment each state gets has gone down dramatically, this program will likely continue at some level as has been the case since 1965; even as there have been some hard fought battles to extinguish or sunset it completely.

Ms. Patterson affirmed Director Farrell's understanding of the longevity of this program, noting that Congress has just recently voted to reauthorize the program. Foushee responded with an inquiry regarding whether or not the current application could be withdrawn and another application submitted, with perhaps a different site like the Recreation Center, since the program funding has been reauthorized. Foushee added that choosing the site where we hoped to build a pool and hockey rink would make really great use of a \$300,000 allocation of funding. Director Farrell confirmed that this is possible and Chair Lyne agreed, noting that a future application, including Recreation Center land for example, would then include land that will in fact always remain for recreational use as is required. Commissioner Foushee asserted that the Commission should move forward along these lines and all members of the Commission looked to one another, seemingly in agreement, that it makes sense to withdraw the application and re-submit at a later date for a different project entirely.

Chair Lyne added that even if funds were awarded with the restricted boundary, the town would have had a decision to make with the new sources that have become available and the town might not have gone with this package with the restricted boundary because of the strings that are attached.

Foushee, in response to Chair Lyne, noted that with the Parks and Recreation Department land adjacent to the Recreation Center, there would be less of a discussion to be had because it will always be public recreation land. Both Director Farrell and Chair Lyne responded, affirming this awareness that the land must remain for recreation purposes in perpetuity. Foushee then noted that any grant application on this land would be for improvements to the land and it would be logical to employ the fund application for this purpose.

Commissioner Archbell inquired as to whether or not there are other grant opportunities



being pursued for the track site. Cindy Patterson informed the group that Run Brunswick submitted an application to the Alford Foundation. Patterson then stated that Run Brunswick is not optimistic about the likelihood of being awarded the funds, but felt that it was important to at least ask. Patterson told the group to plan on hearing back from them later on in the springtime. Patterson also told the group that there aren't a lot of funding opportunities for a public site like this one.

Director Farrell replied, noting that 11 projects have acquired funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund over the course of the program to develop facilities upon land owned by the town. He added that while they have successfully funded 11 projects, applications are not submitted to the Land and Water Conservation Fund annually. Farrell also added that when applications have been submitted in the past, they have generally been very successful. Chair Lyne added that one such project was the track at Edwards Field. Lyne added that one may or may not know that it is there, but because funds were allocated for the track at that site, it restricts movement with regard to the baseball fields out there.

Foushee spoke with regard to the application's success with the Land and Water Conservation Fund, noting that if the Town of Brunswick were to withdraw this current application, it would set the stage in the new year for a different grant application towards something else. Foushee highlighted that the Land and Water Conservation Fund already looks favorably upon the Town of Brunswick and added that this would plant seeds for future development.

Farrell stressed that one of the reasons that the Town of Brunswick has been so successful in comparison to other communities is that some of those towns who receive apportionments of funding are not able to deliver what is written in the application. Farrell named challenges with meeting local funding or match funding as an example. Director Farrell made the case that the Town of Brunswick has consistently met their end of the application agreement and also maintain the facilities to the standard expected. Farrell explained that facilities built with these funds are inspected every 5 years to determine whether or not facilities are still operating with the monies we said we would use to construct these facilities and the Town of Brunswick consistently meets the expected operational standards as outlined in the applications. Farrell further explained that there is an evaluation system that is utilized and very seldom is the Town of Brunswick found to be deficient in any areas so it bodes well for future application.

Chair Lyne then inquired as to whether or not there is still drainage infrastructure in the design for the track at the football field. Both Farrell and Patterson affirmed that the drainage system is still present in that design. Patterson further explained that if the efforts ever arose for a turf field, that structure would already be in existence.

Chair Lyne then welcomed a motion from the Recreation Commission to support a letter to Town Council and the Brunswick Superintendent of Schools in support of the Town Council's consideration of the resolution or supporting town's adoption of the resolution. Lyne restated that this is a motion for a letter of support from the Recreation Commission for the track funding ordinance moving to public hearing on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

Farrell stated that the motion is for the Recreation Commission to consider drafting a letter encouraging the Town Council's adoption of the ordinance.

COMMISSIONER WEAVER MOVED THE RECREATION COMMISSION SEND A LETTER TO THE TOWN COUNCIL EXPRESING ITS SUPPORT FOR PASSAGE OF THE ORDIANACE TO FUND THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE BRUNSWICK HIGH SCHOOL TRACK; SECONDED BY CHAIR LYNE; VOTE 5-0 UNANIMOUS OF THOSE PRESENT.

Chair Lyne then thanked Patterson for her time and effort and she departed the meeting after noting that she will hopefully see everyone present at the Town Council meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>.

4 **RECREATION PROGRAM REPORT – TROY SMITH, DEPUTY DIRECTOR**

Deputy Director Smith presented the monthly recreation program report highlighting the program offerings that are currently in process for the winter season and those that were recently completed. These included;

- 3<sup>rd</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth Basketball
- Kids on the Court- 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade Program/League
- 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Cape Elizabeth Travel League
- Lost Valley Learn to Ski & Snowboard
- Fundamental Basketball for Grade K
- Indoor Running Club
- Winter Vacation Camp
- Cross Country Ski Lessons
- Hip Hop Dance Club 207
- Brick by Brick LEGO Fun!
- Community Swim
- Start Smart Basketball
- USATF Indoor Track Meets
- Mad Science- Take a Bite out of Science
- Valentine Ball- 383 Participants!
- Youth Wrestling

Smith then summarized the programs that are upcoming. These included;

- Indoor Early Bird Golf
- Kick Start Soccer
- Co-Ed High School Basketball
- Mid-Winter Basketball Tournament
- March Youth Basketball Tournaments
- February Vacation Camp
- Preschool Open House

- 2019-2020 Preschool Registration

Deputy Director Smith explained in greater detail the upcoming program offerings and efforts to prepare for basketball tournament season. Smith began by highlighting Co-Ed High School Basketball, noting that registrations are still being accepted for the program that begins after February School Vacation Week. Smith further explained that the program was offered earlier in the season, but did not attract the numbers desired so this is the second attempt to offer this program.

Mr. Smith discussed the Mid-Winter Junior High Basketball Tournament and noted that each year the Parks and Recreation Department hosts close to 100 teams during tournament season. He highlighted that this upcoming tournament season marks the 18<sup>th</sup> year for the Annual Girl's Midwinter Classic, the 38<sup>th</sup> year for the Boy's Midwinter Classic Tournament and this year is also the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Boy's 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Basketball Tournament. Smith explained that these games are held at Harriet Beecher Stowe School from February 18<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup>, all-day Monday and Tuesday and throughout the afternoon and evening Wednesday thru Friday. Smith further stated that this year there are 12 Boys' teams and 6 Girls' teams from all over Maine competing to be the best team in the state. Smith invited listeners to visit the Parks and Recreation Department's website to find more information about this tournament and to join in the fun at Harriet Beecher Stowe School during the February School Vacation week.

The Deputy Director stated that the Parks and Recreation Department is preparing to host basketball tournaments for kids in grades 3-6 located at the Recreation Center. Smith noted that they are occurring over the course of 3 different weekends in March and also noted that while there are still a few spaces available, this has been a very popular program that continues to generate registrations daily. Smith added that last year there were about 16 teams and he anticipated similar numbers for this year.

Smith then introduced a challenge within the world of Recreation programming which is the frequency of tournaments hosted by other organizations. In response to these competing offerings, Smith announced the Die Hard Basketball Weekend from March 22<sup>nd</sup> to the 24<sup>th</sup>. Smith noted that there are 5 different divisions for 8 teams. Smith concluded that between these 3 offerings, children in the surrounding area have the ability to participate in at least one, if not all three tournaments. As an added incentive to participate, Smith informed the commission of a small discount which is afforded to those teams who register.

Next, Deputy Director Smith began delivering remarks about the February Vacation Camp which runs Tuesday, February 19<sup>th</sup> through Friday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Smith added that this camp typically is held at Harriet Beecher Stowe School. Smith then acknowledged the challenge of running both a tournament and a camp at the same location and informed the group that the camp will now be held at the Brunswick Junior High School. Smith explained that potential registrants can sign up for the entire week or for individual days as desired and that there will be either a theme or trip planned for each day, including the Children's Museum, ice skating at the Ice Vault in Hallowell, a movie and bowling at Yankee Lanes, and snow-tubing at Seacoast Fun Park. Smith further explained that the staff running the camps are familiar faces from the Summer Vacation Camp program.

Finally, Deputy Director Smith delivered remarks with regard to the Recreation Department's Preschool program. Smith first introduced the 2019 Preschool Open House event, stating that this is the 5<sup>th</sup> annual open house event aimed at providing an opportunity for folks to explore the preschool space and meet the teaching staff. Held on March 30<sup>th</sup> from 10-12pm this event features music, face painting, balloons and visits from the Brunswick Fire Department, Sparky the Fire Dog, and the Merrymeeting Wheelers. Deputy Director Smith closed his remarks by announcing that registration is now open for the 2019-2020 Preschool year for families. Smith noted that the program has a 2, 3 and 5 day option and is a half day program. Smith encouraged families to visit the Parks and Recreation Department's website for more information and encouraged interested families to set up a time to come in and meet the head teacher one-on-one, as well as tour the facility.

Deputy Director Smith closed his remarks by highlighting that Recreation Center is open throughout the winter for public recreational usage, including Pickleball, open basketball and open track, and noted that the schedule is available for reference online.

Chair Lyne thanked Deputy Director Smith for his very thorough reporting and commended the Parks and Recreation Department for the breadth of offerings, noting that the length of Smith's report tonight is indicative of all the great things the Parks and Recreation Department is doing for the Town of Brunswick and its citizens.

Commissioner Archbell inquired of Smith what kind of reception the Valentine Ball had after there had been a lengthy discussion about the changes to the Valentine Ball at the previous Recreation Commission meeting on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 2019. In particular, Archbell inquired whether or not there were complaints about the music level and if there was a diverse population in attendance.

Smith replied that he had not received any negative feedback in regard to the event and that feedback was generally positive. Smith noted that many people were very happy that it was also inclusive. Smith indicated that he responded to feedback on Facebook as well. In regards to the complaints about the volume of the music, Smith explained that there weren't any music related complaints. Director Farrell added that there likely weren't any volume related complaints because he had approached the DJ in advance of the event.

Director Farrell, in response to Commissioner Archbell's inquiry about the diversity of the attendees, noted that there were unique pairings of children and their adult chaperones, including mothers and sons and mothers and daughters. He also noted that there were no obvious discussions about the changes in the messaging. Farrell explained that in the past, when people had a hard time with the messaging, the Parks and Recreation Department had been made aware of these unique pairings on a case by case basis, but that none of these folks would have been turned away. Nonetheless, it wasn't a significant change in terms of the people coming to the event.

Chair Lyne then inquired as to what the turn out of the event was in comparison to the previous year. Smith informed the commission that the turnout last year was 407

individuals, but that this year they had 383 in attendance.

Farrell emphasized that this dip in the numbers should not be looked upon a negative, highlighting that there are often ebbs and flows with regard to this type of event. Farrell accentuated the fact that this is the largest event that the Recreation Department hosts and even noted that, before the Naval Base closed, the attendance at the event reached into the 700s. Farrell concluded that this event was really well received; people had a great time, and had some really positive comments in response to the event.

6. **NEW BUSINESS**

6b **PROCESS TO EVALUATE THE POSSIBLE RELOCATION OF THE BRUNSWICK FARMERS MARKET FROM ITS CURRENT LOCATION ON THE NORTHERLY END OF THE LOWER MALL TO AN ALTERNATE LOCATION**

Director Farrell explained to the Recreation Commission that he added this item to the agenda

so that everyone can be aware of a process that is underway. He then reminded the Recreation Commission about conversations had between himself and Parks and Facilities Director, Jay Astle, about the impacts of the Farmer's Market on the Mall in terms of the landscape. Farrell explained that the vendors have been at different locations on the Mall over time, but that they are currently at the northern end of the Mall. Farrell then referred to two images, one of what the Mall looks like currently and one that shows what it looked like prior to them being there. Director Farrell, referencing these images, made mention of the new Veterans Plaza which will be installed at the northern end of the Mall.

Farrell then noted that the Town Manager asked him to put together a group of stakeholders to start a discussion about potentially moving the market because, upon completion of the veterans plaza project, the area adjacent to the monument will be void of any grass. Farrell further noted that there has been a lot of discussion amongst staff, council members, and the Brunswick Downtown Association, in addition to others, about how to keep the Mall as plush as possible and still keep the use there. Farrell explained that these discussions have revolved around the main conundrum at hand—that these spaces are heavily used and keeping the turf there plush is challenging under those circumstances.

Farrell added that he and Astle have been meeting with the officers of the market over the course of many months and have discussed options. Farrell explained that these discussions have resulted in the Manager's request for Farrell to compile a list of stakeholders. Director Farrell further explained that the first of those meetings occurred this week and in attendance were the Assistant Town Manager, Councilor Millett, Deborah King the Executive Director of the Brunswick Downtown Association, and the current president of the Farmer's Market, Abby Sadaukas.

As a result of this first meeting, Farrell mentioned that the group has made a commitment to meet weekly in the near term. Farrell noted that, at the second meeting, the first order of business is to discuss alternate locations for the Farmer's Market in the downtown area. Farrell highlighted that some of the considerations with regard to this move are the strong opinions of where the market should be located and the potential use side streets off of

Maine Street as possible optional locations. Farrell explained to the Commission that this isn't the future plan necessarily but simply is an option being researched. He noted that there are other municipalities that look to utilize such streets and will restrict access to allow for the market to operate. Farrell concluded that all of these considerations will be discussed in an effort to keep the Farmer's Market as close to the Mall as possible. Farrell then added that one more step includes revisiting the year 2000 Mall Management Plan, which delineated how land could be used adjacent to the Mall. Farrell detailed what these delineations looked like, including use of a portion of the street along Park Row as well as one that would restrict one lane on Maine Street. Farrell restated that there aren't any definitive plans, highlighting that this is controversial topic and requires further analysis. Farrell then indicated that the group was tasked with coming up with a list of pros and cons so that a discussion could then be had with the Town Council. Farrell identified that there is some support on the part of councilors to try and mitigate the impacts on the landscape and that all of the impacts on the turf will be included in this discussion.

Farrell added that the Farmer's Market group met on Monday, two days prior to today's meeting, and they had had a discussion about putting together their own list and Farrell had encouraged this activity. Farrell then added that at the upcoming meeting on Monday the group will be brainstorming to identify every possible location and then all relevant issues will be factored in, including safety, visibility, residential and business impacts. Farrell then circled back to the images, summarizing that these items were included to give the Recreation Commission an idea of the problem that the group is trying to manage. Farrell referenced the image that shows the year that they had to move the market off of the ice rink site so that the land could be re-sodded, and noted that he is aware that many folks would like to see that vision for the Mall. Farrell added that, while people would love to see the Mall as plush and green as in that photo, it won't always be so plush and green given the intensity of the use it gets.

Director Farrell acknowledged that, to the majority of people, it is important to keep the market downtown or as close to this public space as possible because of the benefits it brings to downtown Brunswick and the vendors there.

Farrell again stated that his purpose was to let the Recreation Commission know that the evaluation of alternative locations has begun and at some point will go to the public in terms of public presentation. Farrell noted that when it goes to public forum they will have an opportunity to comment with respect to the top areas that meet the criteria that everyone feels needs to be met in order to keep a healthy Farmer's Market in an area that is acceptable to the largest number of stakeholders.

Commissioner Foushee made reference to the alternative planning at Park Row and asked whether or not the plan to shut down Park Row was already established. Director Farrell responded, noting that this alternative location was proposed in the year 2000 Mall Management Plan. Farrell continued on to note that more recently they have taken another look at this plan and specifically have looked into closing down one lane of Park Row on those days and have considered closing down some streets in total for the period of hours that the market would be there. Farrell emphasized that these are strategies that are being

looked into, but that no decisions are being made, rather they have been asked to list all potential locations and evaluate them based on a series of criteria that will be the same for each. Farrell concluded that from that listing, the top 3 or 4 locations would then go to the Town Council for discussion.

Chair Lyne then inquired what the hours of operation are for the market. Farrell explained that the vendors are allowed to be out there as early as 7:00am and they are typically there no later than 3:00pm. Commissioner Archbell added that the official hours are 8-2:30pm and Farrell clarified his statement, saying that they are able to set-up at 7:00am. Farrell added that this issue of arrival time arose in the past due to noise and it was a problem for those who operate the bed and breakfast on Park Row. Additionally, Farrell noted that some of the vendor's vehicles are larger than others and some have greater quantities of product that they need to get unloaded. Farrell concluded that very few are there at 7 and the majority of them arrive closer to 8:00am.

Director Farrell then made mention of a particular request from Farmer's Market stakeholders. Farrell continued on to note that one of challenges where they are currently located is rain and when there is a large amount of rain on a Tuesday or Friday, there is standing water and the ground is soft. Farrell explained that because there is so much compaction, the water cannot drain properly causing this issue. Farrell further explained that the assembled group of stakeholders are specifically considering the months of April and May, since they can be out there as soon as April, and are looking to find a permanent hardscape so they can be completely off the mall throughout those weeks. Director Farrell included that such a location would also be considered for use when there are hard rains throughout the summer as well.

Commissioner Foushee inquired as to whether or not this change would be in place for the coming summer. Director Farrell answered that it would not. Farrell added that it does not seem feasible to go through the thoughtful processes and have the solution ready for implementation this year. Farrell explained that the vendors have been told that they will start out the season where they have historically been located at the northern end of the Mall and then when the Veterans Plaza construction begins, assuming the necessary funds will come in by June, the market would then move to the rink area to finish out the season there. Farrell added that at the same time that plaza is being constructed, the land devoid of grasses would be rehabilitated with sod in the early fall as well.

Commissioner Archbell inquired about the agreement with the market and whether or not it allows for certain square footage or for a certain number of vendors. Farrell replied that he did not have that information with him, but that the answer is both yes and no. Farrell explained that the space allows for 15 double stalls and each stall has so many square feet, typically for a vehicle and then a space to serve from. Farrell further explained that some of the vendors, in terms of what they produce, are much larger than others so they are allowed these 15 vendor spots for vehicles and serving space, but the market within themselves determine how many stalls a vendor may need. Farrell indicated that he does not have the exact dimensions of those stalls, but would be able to provide that information at a future meeting.

Chair Lyne then inquired if the vendors rent the spaces that they vend from. Director Farrell explained that the market in total pays the town \$3,500 annually to be on the Mall. Director Farrell then segued into another topic that had been discussed, which was the re-sodding of the rink area and the possibility that the Farmer's Market could be responsible for some of the cost-sharing. Farrell explained that the last time the rink area was re-sodded, it cost about \$12,000 and the market's stakeholders indicated that they would be willing to share as much as \$7,500 of the cost to re-sod when necessary. Farrell further explained that they are not willing to exceed that cost sharing as it is not solely their impacts that are causing the conditions on the Mall. Farrell also noted that when the rink was re-sodded in the past, it was after multiple years of damage to the Mall and over a much larger square footage so this would not necessarily be the case year-to-year. Director Farrell summarized that they are exploring many things and this will all be part of the report that Town Manager John Eldridge has requested be submitted to him.

Commissioner Wilkoff then inquired as to whether or not there have been talks regarding changes to the Mall, adding a drainage system for example, that would improve to the longevity of the area. Farrell replied, noting that a number of years ago they looked into using a surface treatment, like a heavy grate system, that would allow the grass to grow through. Farrell added that he has only seen this type of system used at the Pineland facility if folks are interested in seeing how this works. Farrell continued on to explain that at Pineland they host a lot of weddings and in response they installed this porous material to allow grass to grow through, but it is also does not achieve the aesthetic appearance that one might expect and is an expensive treatment to purchase and install. He also explained that the root system of existing trees on that side of the mall is so extensive due to maturity of the trees, it would be extremely difficult to install this type of surface treatment Farrell concluded that these trees are yet another reason that the move is necessary because the trees are beginning to show serious signs of distress.

**7 OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

- 8 The next Recreation Commission meeting will be Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 7pm at the Brunswick Town Hall at 85 Union Street in the Town Council Chambers.

**9 ADJOURNMENT**

COMMISSIONER FOUSHEE MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING; SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WILKOFF; VOTE 5-0 UNANIMOUS OF THOSE PRESENT.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.