

LSSE Commission Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2014 7:30 p.m.
Bangs Community Center, LSSE Conference Room
Amended, Voted, Approved 1-21-15

Present: Angela Mills, Chair, Jon Foster, Vice Chair, Jim Brissette, Anna-Beth Winograd, Linda Chalfant, LSSE Director

Absent: Nate Budington

Approval of the Minutes

On November 19th, J. Brissette moved to accept the Oct. 29th minutes as amended. AB Winograd seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Public Comment- None

CPA Proposals

1.) Town Staff Recommendations-

L. Chalfant reviewed the process used to consider potential CPA grant proposals which included a series of meetings coordinated by the Assistant Town Manager with input from Town staff and representatives from the LSSE Commission at the Fields and Facilities meetings.

J. Brissette moved that the CPAC fund grant request be a proposal for Groff Park and the Joint Capital Planning Committee request be a proposal for the Master Plan for Community Field. A. Mills seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

2.) Amherst Baseball Proposal-

J. Foster moved to support the Amherst Baseball proposal to CPAC. AB Winograd seconded the motion. The vote was 3-0-1 with A. Mills abstaining.

FY 16 Operating and Capital Budgets

L. Chalfant provided the LSSE Operating Budget, the Recreation Revolving Budget and the Adult Education Revolving Budgets. The LSSE Director stated she would not be requesting additional tax support for fee subsidies this year as the department's guidelines were to submit level funded budgets.

J. Brissette stated he was deeply concerned the Town is not providing enough fee subsidies for low income families to participate in LSSE's recreation programs. J. Brissette asked that his following statement be included in the official record of the minutes.

Although I am not going to make a motion to increase subsidies for this fiscal year, I (and I think the commission as a whole) remain deeply concerned that we are not providing sufficient support for all those children who qualify for free and reduced lunch and need a subsidy in order to participate in many

LSSE programs, especially the after-school program. It is difficult to understand why more money has not been allocated for this year when the facts have not changed from last year: greater need for subsidies because more children qualify for FRL; subsidies for the past few years have run out about halfway through the FY for several years now.

More troubling perhaps is that both the finance committee and school committee, who voted against relatively small increases for subsidies because of budget concerns, then turned around later in the past FY year and voted raises to the town manager and superintendent that would have covered a fair share of the requested subsidies. With all due respect to those committees, I fail to understand how they can claim that more money is needed for the two highest paid town employees rather than used to improve access to LSSE programs for multiple children whose families have limited financial means. A dollar spent on recreation goes a long way in terms of improved health, academic performance, and reduced disciplinary problems in school.

With the push for more affordable housing, presumably children will be part of those households -- and most likely need subsidies in order to be able to fully participate in the life of the community, especially the enriching and health-promoting programs that LSSE offers. Ensuring that all children get to participate regardless of family income should be an absolute priority for the town as it is concrete proof that we live out our values of equity and equal access for all members of our town. Failure to take significant steps do so in the very near future – that is, starting in the next fiscal year – suggests that the town does not walk the talk. And I worry that it may lead to legal action and other conflicts because this could be considered a discriminatory act by the town.

J. Brissette moved that the LSSE Operating budget of \$542,917 be accepted. J. Foster seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

The Cherry Hill Golf Course and Outdoor Pools budgets were provided. These two budgets were submitted to the Town Manager prior to the LSSE Commission meeting. In the future, the Commission will receive all budgets in advance of their submission to the Town Manager.

Capital Project Request intended for submission to the Joint Capital Planning Committee were reviewed. More information was requested on the Aquatics Climbing Structure request. It was also suggested that the request for the Pool Resurfacing/Liner be moved to a later year along with the Climbing Structure as other items had been discussed in prior years that had not yet been included. Concerns were raised that the Five Year Capital List was incomplete. L. Chalfant explained additional items were being prioritized as a result of the joint staff and Fields and Facilities meetings recently held. These meetings, however, were not held in time for the Capital List requested during LSSE's budget hearing.

Next Meeting/Agenda Setting and Adjournment

Angela Mills moved and J. Brissette seconded a motion to adjourn. The vote was unanimous. The next meeting was set for December 17, 2014 at 7:30 p.m. in the LSSE Conference Room.

Handouts:

Meeting Agenda 11-19-14, Minutes 10-29-14, FY 16 Recreation and Adult Education Revolving Accounts Spreadsheet, FY 14 Actual Recreation and Adult Education Revolving Account Spreadsheet, FY 16 Revenue History, FY 16 Expenditure History, LSSE, Cherry Hill and Outdoor Pools Capital Requests, LSSE, Cherry Hill Golf Course and Outdoor Pools Recent Accomplishments, Goals, Service Levels, Amherst Baseball Proposal to Restore Mill River Baseball fields to CPAC.

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