

Portsmouth Recreation Board

February 21, 2024

Attendance: Carl Dimer, Kory Sirmaian, Jackie Cali Pitts, Bob Bogardus, Rich Duddy, Todd Henley, Nicole Finitis, Brinn Sullivan, Lauren Krans

Public Comment:

Mr. Lawrence requested a status update on his request for the memorial at the Senior Activity Center.

Letters and Communications

Letter from Kathie Lynch RE: Senior Center Monument

Old/Unfinished Business.

Rich Duddy motioned to accept the monument application as presented at the January meeting.

Jackie Cali Pitts second with discussion.

Discussion. Rich Duddy stated that the amount of money spend on the monument should not be considered, as this would create an unfair

Rich Duddy reviewed the timeline of the original monument proposal and discussion.

He stated that he does not believe money should dictate who gets the largest monument and that a formal review and approval process is pivotal to ensure equity going forward.

Bob Bogartus requested more information on the timeline of the original proposal of the monumne.t

Nicole Finitis explained that the first piece of the proposal was the photo included in the boards packet. The monument she explained was to be a second step. Nicole reviewed the photo in the packet explaining that the original proposal for the monument included a picture of a rock, not the shape of New Hampshire. Nicole reviewed that she saw the picture of the current monument for the first time on the fridge in the senior activity center.

Jackie Cali Pits point of order, the Chair usually speaks last as their opinion traditionally holds more influence. She also visited the senior center site. Jaqui explained that she was under the impression that Mr. Lawrence and department staff would meet to review alternatives to the monument location to find a compromise.

Carl Diemer inquired about the photo of a chair in the packet.

Bob Bogartus explained that the senior center requested donations from the public when it originally opened. His family donated several items. He explained that such items were gifted to the center and that there was no expectation to identify them.

Carl Diemer explained that the monument as presented does not meet the existing criteria for a memorial or plaque at a city recreation facility. Preference is that the concept of a memorial wall is explored.

Rich Duddy asked Mr. Lawrence if locating the plaque in the rear of the building was acceptable. Mr. Lawrence said he would not prefer this location, but if it was the only alternative, they would accept it.

Rich Duddy explained he visited the center several times to seek alternative solutions and that his alternative solutions were deemed not acceptable by Mr. Lawrence.

Rich Duddy referenced Robert's Rules pertaining to the Chair. There are separate set of rules for groups under 12.

Rich Duddy requested a vote on the motion on the table to accept the monument application as presented.

The group voted unanimously to deny the application as presented at the January Meeting.

Rich Duddy reviewed Robert's rules to determine a quorum.

Mr. Lawrence asked the board if the monument had been denied. Rich Duddy explained that the board is not a deciding board, but an advisory board. Rich explained that the monument as proposed was denied. Mr. Lawrence explained that this was very upsetting.

Rich Duddy explained that he met with staff to review the monument and alternative locations at the center for the monument.

Mr. Lawrence explained that the problem is the process with the monument review. Mr. Lawrence explained that the process should be outlined in writing.

Mr. Duddy explained that the board voted not to move forward with the monument as proposed.

Discussion pertaining to the process.

Director Henley reviewed the request for the monument was for the specific location. The presentation was for

Rich Duddy summarized his approach to the monument review over the past few weeks. He provided alternative on-site locations for the monument as presented.

Discussion and vote on inquiry to record meetings.

Director Henley explained that during Covid he inquired with the City A

No directives have ever been received to record the meetings.

Assistant Director Sullivan explained that the room has the technological capability to

There are two types of meetings-recorded and live. A live meeting would require additional staff to operate the cameras.

New Business

Director Henley stated that a new Recreation Supervisor Connor Mullen will be starting on March 4. Connor comes from Concord, MA Recreation Department. He will be in attendance at the next meeting. His office will be at Community Campus. His focus will be on Community Campus and After School Programs. Assistant Director Sullivan explained that the caliber of candidates for these positions were extremely high.

Director Henley provided a summary of summer camp programs. Seven out of the eight weeks filled withing 19 minutes of online registration opening. This is a testament to the high-quality product that Recreation Supervisor Schaff and his staff put out. Registrations for nonresidents do not open until later, so all of these spots are residents.

Next summer one of the Recreation Supervisors will focus on teen programming.

Bob Bogartus inquired about financial support for families who may need assistance. Director Henley explained that the department participates in the Are U In Program.

Director Henley reminded the group that there would be some movement of tenants at Community Campus. The council allocated funding for enhancements to the facility to help support recreation programming. Anticipated start is this summer.

Jackie Cali Pitts inquired about the RFP regarding the hockey rink. Director Henley explained that the City received RFQ, Request for Qualifications, but there was no forward movement because there is no city land identified as available.

Bob Bogardus explained he told the City Manager he would sit on a site committee to represent Portsmouth with other communities.

Rich Duddy explained that leading up to budget meetings he would like to have recreation staff at the meeting. Rich encouraged board members to visit recreation facilities to show support for staff and programs.

Rich Dudy requested names tags for all board members so that everyone can events and be identified.

Rich Duddy proposed that a group work on a better location and idea for monument locations going forward.

Jackie Cali Pitts explained a place to acknowledge those who have passed that enjoyed recreating there.

Rich Duddy motion to adjourn. Kori seconded.

