

Building and Facilities Committee
Minutes of 2-13-20
Whipple Hall Conference Room; 2:00 p.m.

Members Present: Bowers, Cardillo, Beasley, Lewis, Cross, Sherman, Cannon, Hoglund

Absent: Bianchi

Guests: Scott Blewitt, Director, Recreation Department; Robyn Boisvert, Camp Director, Rec. Dept.; Janet Kidder, Selectman and Recreation Commission member; Lyndsay Lund, Recreation Commission member; Joy Kubit, Recreation Commission member; K.C. Fitzgerald, instructor, Rec. Dept. program; Kim Hallquist, Administrator

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting of February 6, 2020 were reviewed by the Committee and were then approved unanimously. The Committee requested that the Chair contact the relevant individuals to ascertain the answers to the questions posed in those Minutes.

2. Reports

There were no reports.

3. Discussion Recreation Department

The Chair thanked Mr. Blewitt, Director, Recreation Department for meeting with the Committee and providing extensive information to the Committee (attached hereto, and made a part of these minutes); and welcomed the Commission members and others in attendance. He indicated that Mr. Blewitt would first make a presentation; and suggested that the Committee then tour the Recreation Department space with Mr. Blewitt, and the reconvene at the sewer plant so that Mr. Blewitt can explain what the Recreation Department stores there, and what other use it makes of that property. The Committee should ask questions of Mr. Blewitt during this process, and then the Committee will reconvene at the Whipple Hall conference room to discuss with Mr. Blewitt his report to the Committee and his concerns.

Questions were raised and discussion ensued during Mr. Blewitt's presentation and during the tour of facilities and space. Mr. Blewitt and Ms. Boisvert explained the various activities and locations, with the indoor activities mainly taking place in the Rec. Dept. "conference room," which is also used for other Town functions and activities when not in use by the Rec. Dept.; and in Whipple Hall proper, mainly for dance, exercise, and other group activities. Mr. Blewitt estimated there are "thousands" of people served by the programs, and Ms. Boisvert noted there were probably 100 people involved in programs in any given week.

The Rec. Dept. has a large work area which is also used as a storage area for many items and materials; Mr. Blewitt's office, which is also used for storage; a kitchenette area with a sink and microwave; a small storage closet; and, off the Whipple Hall lobby, a storage closet with shelves for the orderly storage of skates and snowshoes for general use by Town residents. In addition to Mr. Blewitt and Ms. Boisvert (whose position is funded by fees generated from activities, and not from Town taxes), the Rec. Dept. has one intern from Colby-Sawyer College, and sometimes up to three; as well as seasonal part time staff such as lifeguards.

There is a general lack of adequate storage space, both for staff personal items, and for day camp equipment and materials at Buker, the latter being largely stored at the sewer plant office. There are buildings under the Rec. Dept. umbrella of operations at both Elkins Beach and Bucklin Beach, which are also used for storage of the small water use items and canoes during the winter; while the sunfish and larger items are stored outside at the sewer plant property.

There is some storage of karate equipment in the back hallway to Whipple Hall, and a few Christmas items, as well as some Emergency Management Committee property, stored in the balcony area of Whipple Hall. Mr. Harrington, DPW Director, joined the group at the sewer plant. About three-fourths of the sewer plant former office is used for Rec. Dept. storage, with the hope that shelves will soon be built to better organize and store the materials. The remaining area is used by DPW (Matt Grimes) for some storage of work materials and minor tasks, and DPW would like to take over the entire space for a workshop for Matt, who has now become a full-time employee. There is a garage on the

property used by DPW, mainly for the sewer department, and for storage of the Rec. Dept. snowmobile and tiki torches. There is a second storage shed for Rec. Dept. materials, as well as outside storage of fire pits for the beaches, and various water craft. There is also a separate conex box on the property used by the Emergency Management Committee for its materials and supplies.

Mr. Harrington noted that there would be a safety issue in having people coming in and out of the property for Rec. Dept. purposes, and he was opposed to that. Mr. Blewitt reiterated that the Rec. Dept. has a great need for more storage space, and preferably storage space adjacent to the indoor activities it sponsors, such as day camps, so that Ms. Boisvert will not have to pick up materials related to those activities from the sewer plant office, and return them to that office, on a regular basis.

Discussion continued after returning to the Buker building, and Ms. Lund noted that there was not adequate parking at Buker for the activities which take place. Mr. Blewitt noted that, as Director, he needed an office adjacent to indoor activities in order to collect fees from parents and others related to the programs. Mr. Blewitt and Ms. Boisvert also noted that there were some issues related to safety and protection of chandeliers and windows for certain programs using Whipple Hall for certain “active participation.” The Rec. Dept. would like a larger area than afforded by the current Whipple Hall lobby area, for parents picking up and dropping off children; and would like a larger and better equipped kitchen area to serve food for various reasons.

At present, the Rec. Dept. manages with the space they have, but it is constrained and the Dept. would like more space, particularly for storage, just to provide the programs they offer. The Rec. Dept. would also like to offer more programs, but would need more space to do so. Mr. Blewitt stated that if the Police Dept. were to move out of Buker, the Rec. Dept., in conjunction with the EMC, could use all of the space that would be available at Buker.

There followed more discussion on the issues, including the suitability of Buker/Whipple, possible use of space at the SAU (former middle school) or the elementary school; any proposed building constructed by the Outing Club; and perhaps other locations in Town. Mr. Blewitt said that the Rec. Dept. and the

Outing Club have different missions and activities, with the Outing Club mainly involved in group sports activities, while the Rec. Dept. does not engage in those activities, but focuses more on community oriented programs.

After further discussion, the Committee formulated several questions, which follow, which it would like Mr. Blewitt to respond to, and asked the Chair to forward these questions to him after the meeting. Those questions are:

- a. What is the square foot present need for storage as to each program offered by the Rec. Dept., as it relates to: Whipple Hall; the Rec. Dept. conference room; the beaches; and any other facility.
- b. What is the square foot present need for each program offered by the Rec. Dept. (other than for storage), as it relates to: Whipple Hall; the Rec. Dept. conference room; the beaches: and any other facility.
- c. What is the square foot present need for administrative/office space.
- d. What is the present need for parking and dropoff.
- e. What are the important issues for the Rec. Dept. in terms of location, availability of outdoor fields, availability of indoor space for “active participation” programs, and other concerns of the Rec. Dept.
- f. What are the square foot needs future activities, programs, storage, Administration and parking.

4. *Other items to come before the Committee*

None.

5. *Action Items.*

(1) With regard to the building inspector discussion from the meeting of February 6, the Chair will contact the relevant individuals to ascertain the answers to the following questions:

- a. What do the Fire Chief, the Town Health Officer, the Zoning Administrator, and the Conservation Commission do to review issues within their purview, and what do they do to enforce decisions/ensure compliance?
- b. What specific inspections/certifications would a building

inspector review/performance not covered by the Fire Chief, the Town Health Officer, the Zoning Administrator, and the Conservation Commission?

c. Do the Selectmen/Planning Board/Zoning Board have the authority with regard to commercial properties to require commercial properties to certify compliance with the Building Code through third-party review paid for by the applicant; and, if so, is there a procedure established for doing so and following through to assure compliance?

d. If the foregoing procedure is adopted, what would a building inspector add to the process as to review of commercial properties?

e. Can the Selectmen/Fire Chief expand the current role of the NLFD for inspections as to fire-related code matters to include code enforcement under the State Fire Code related to one- and two-family residences as to matters of serious concern? If so, does that provide more safety value than a building inspector would provide as to fire safety concerns related to such construction? And, if so, does the NLFD, with its new hire, have sufficient manpower to perform such inspections where the Town had 21 new home construction permits in 2019, and lower numbers in the eight preceding years?

f. What work/construction/certification does the Town's current "building permit" process cover?

g. What data exists that demonstrates that the Town has a significant problem related to serious safety issues by not having a building inspector?

(2) The Chair will forward to Mr. Blewitt the questions posed by the Committee as set forth in the discussion above.

The next meeting is in the Syd Crook Room, on Thursday, February 20, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 4:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Robert Bowers, Chair