

Town of Isle LaMotte Recreation Department
Meeting Minutes – September 14, 2024
Zoom Only

NOTE: Meeting details were provided through the meeting's Zoom Summary Report

Attendees: Anne Jobin Picard, Ruth Casey, Mike Simanskas, Kathy Simanskas, Carmine Centrella, Mary Brennan-Centrella, Laura Miraldi, Andrea Carbone

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 AM

Approve meeting minutes from August 26, 202

Motion, 2nd
Carmine Michael
Approved

Quick recap

The team discussed various administrative duties, roles, and responsibilities within their community, particularly focusing on event planning and equipment maintenance. They also discussed the organization and maintenance of recreational equipment, the challenges of fundraising and grant writing, and the need for regular financial reviews.

Next steps

- Ruth to gather financial information and prepare a report for the next meeting.
 - Michael to take inventory of current recreation equipment and supplies.
 - Ruth to check on playground mulch options and costs from North Hero School.
 - Andrea to put Rec Department on Select Board agenda to discuss playground equipment maintenance responsibilities.
 - Michael to move a bike rack from Town Hall to the park.
 - Andrea and Laura to work on AARP grant application for kitchen repairs and community meals.
 - Andrea to send out email gauging interest in trunk-or-treat event on October 26th.
 - Anne to confirm poetry reading details and email Andrea for poster creation.
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Administrative Duties and Calendar Clarification

The meeting began with Anne checking for a quorum and confirming the attendance. Andrea presented a detailed spreadsheet on administrative duties. Anne discussed the new calendar added to the Rec Department's website to resolve confusion about the town's calendar. Ruth offered to take charge of finance and provide reports at the next meeting. Anne highlighted the contributions of various team members in events and activities.

Roles, Responsibilities, and Event Planning Challenges

Anne, Ruth, and Town discussed the roles and responsibilities within their community, particularly focusing on event planning and equipment maintenance. They agreed that event planning should be a team effort, but acknowledged that some tasks, like equipment maintenance, might be beyond their capabilities as volunteers. They decided to communicate their concerns to the select board, suggesting the need for additional support or volunteers. The group also discussed the importance of coordinating with the town Clerk for access to keys and buildings and synching events at the Town Hall. Mike suggested hiring someone part-time or contractually for equipment maintenance, but Anne indicated that this responsibility falls under the Select Board. Mike offered to coordinate the effort but emphasized his limited availability during winter months. The team agreed that someone needs to lead this effort and follow through on the action items over the next few months.

Town Park Maintenance and Playground Equipment

The team discussed the responsibility for maintaining the town park and its facilities, including playground equipment. It was clarified that the Rec. Department, as a part of the town, is responsible for bringing activities to the park, but not general maintenance. The town now owns the park and its facilities, making it the collective town's responsibility to maintain them. The team also discussed the need for a dedicated person to inspect and maintain the equipment, with Toby Peacock being a potential candidate. The conversation also touched on the need to communicate this responsibility to the select board and to add maintenance costs to the Rec. Department's budget. The team agreed to put the issue of equipment maintenance for the playgrounds on the agenda for the next select board meeting for further discussion. Additionally, they discussed the feasibility of managing the inventory of supplies needed for summer activities, coordinating installation, storage of equipment, and procurement efforts for equipment.

Recreational Equipment Organization and Maintenance

The team discussed the organization and maintenance of recreational equipment, particularly for summer activities like soccer and basketball. Mike volunteered to take on the responsibility of ensuring the equipment is ready for use each year, and he also agreed to conduct an inventory of the current equipment. Laura offered to send Mike a spreadsheet of the inventory they had done previously. The team also discussed the need to take down the equipment at the end of the season, with Mike expressing willingness to handle this task. The conversation ended with the understanding that the team would work together to ensure the equipment is ready for the next season.

Grill Inspection, Maintenance, and Committee Responsibilities

Mike and Anne discussed the condition of the grills and nets at the park, with a focus on the rusty grill. They decided to inspect the grill and a hibachi during their next visit. The team also discussed the responsibilities of their committee members, with Ruth handling finance and grounds and landscaping, and the Town being the point of contact for any issues. They agreed on the importance of marketing, with a mention of beautiful flyers created by Andrea and Kathy. Carmine was assigned to lead agenda drafting and posting, with Andrea assisting when needed. Ruth will work with Anne to develop items for the agenda, which will be sent to Carmine to prepare the agenda document. Carmine will take the meeting minutes and send them to Andrea, who will post them on the website.

Fundraising Challenges and Volunteer Recruitment

The team discussed the challenges of fundraising and grant writing for their organization, acknowledging the need for more volunteers and a clearer structure for the committee. They agreed to start recruiting volunteers at their next event and emphasized the importance of committee members taking on responsibilities. The team also discussed the need for more volunteers to participate in the Rec Department and take on fundraising and grants.

Regular Financial Reviews and Budget Discussions

The team discussed the need for regular financial reviews and the upcoming town budget discussions. They acknowledged the potential for surplus funds and the need to communicate their plans for future projects, such as a playground project. The idea of setting up a reserve account was also raised. The team agreed to bring these issues to the attention of the select board, with a focus on equipment maintenance and budget allocation. They also discussed the need for clear guidance on budget usage and the importance of spending allocated funds.

Playground Mulch, Wish List, and Grant Application

The meeting discussed various topics, including the procurement of playground mulch. Mike suggested contacting a supplier from New Hampshire, but Ruth proposed checking with the North Hero School, which is in the same school district, to see if their mulch is playground certified and locally sourced. The team agreed to wait for further information on this. The meeting also touched on the creation of a wish list for the upcoming budget, with Ruth being tasked to compile the list based on suggestions from the team. Lastly, the team decided to apply for a \$4,000 grant from AARP to improve the community room and kitchen for community meals, with Andrea taking the lead on the grant application with assistance from Laura.

Motion to move forward with the AARP grant application

Motion 2nd
Michael Laura
Approved

Playground Relocation and Maintenance Discussion

Anne, Mike, and Carmine discussed the cost and feasibility of relocating the playground at the Town Hall to the Veterans Park. Mike suggested that the cost would be too high (\$22,000) and that it would be better to leave the playground as it is. They also discussed the possibility of moving a bike rack from the Town Hall to the park, with Mike agreeing to do so. Lastly, they discussed the removal of rotting timber, with Mike stating that the responsibility for this task lies with the Town Hall, not the Rec. Department.

Motion to leave the Town Hall playground equipment at the Town Hall

Motion 2nd
Michael Ruth
Approved

Love Your Park Day and Pavilion Project Planning

Anne committed to attending the 'Love Your Park Day' event but leaving early. Mike and Ruth confirmed their attendance and offered tools like chainsaws and wheelbarrows. Anne suggested a tarp for debris collection. The Pavilion Project was discussed without committee financial support. They agreed on needing topsoil and mulch, with Ruth checking mulch availability. The community potluck was discussed. A Halloween Trunk or Treat event was discussed and possible collaboration with the Isle LaMotte Library. Mike discussed Rec Department plans with Terry from the library. The main focus for Halloween at the library is help setting up decorations which usually need to be up by the first Saturday in October.

Volunteer Meeting and Trunk or Treat Planning

Mike and Anne discussed the idea of organizing a volunteer meeting and a "Trunk or Treat" event. They decided to reach out to potential volunteers to gauge interest and participation, with a tentative date of October 26th. The event would likely take place in the evening, around 5:30 or 6:00 PM, in the Rec. Field parking lot, and would involve 10 cars. Participants would be responsible for their own candy. The team also considered reaching out to Sylvia and ILMCO for potential collaboration. The event's details were to be posted publicly once enough participants were secured.

Organizing Monthly Community Events and Park Improvements

Monthly community Rec Dept. events were discussed, including a poetry reading event and a stargazing night in November. Anne suggested a winter program and a 2025 calendar discussion for the next meeting. Carmine suggested phasing out the slide in the park due to safety concerns and lack of functionality, with Mike agreeing to assess it on the next love your park day. The conversation ended with a motion to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn

Motion 2nd

Carmine Michael

Approved – Meeting adjourned at 9:17 AM

Submitted by

Carmine Centrella

September 17, 2024