

Burrillville

Recreation Commission

RE: Minutes, March 14, 2005

**Present: Cheri Hall, Director Juliette Lopez David Marcotte
Kurt Schatz Albert Musso Niki DeCubellis
Alice Lavigne Al Low Nancy Binns-Town Council Liaison**

Guest: Peter Bouley, Dave Gamache and Bruce Pilling

Absent: Albert Musso

Excused: -----

Meeting called to order at 6:40 p.m. by Kurt Schatz, Chairman, at the Burrillville Town Hall.

Minutes of February 14, 2005 Regular Meeting were accepted. David Marcotte questioned the date of the NYSCA training as March 23, 2005 or March 30, 2005. Training was actually scheduled for March 24, 2005. Kurt Schatz stated the date change took place after the meeting. Consequently, the minutes stay as they are. Motion to accept made by Alice Lavigne. Seconded by Al Low. Motion passed 7-0.

Good and Welfare:

The Director announced the Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for this Saturday, March 19, 2005 weather permitting.

Guest:

The Director introduced Peter Bouley to the Recreation Commission. A meeting was held regarding an idea for a town project with the Director, Town Manager Michael Wood, Edward Bonczek and other members of Mr. Bouley's organization. The Parks and Recreation Department would be part of the project through a State of Rhode Island grant for the acquisition of land. The project would include a bike path between Harrisville and Pascoag and an educational component introduced to the School Superintendent today. Mr. Bouley would like the Recreation Commission to be on board and came to the meeting to present his project ideas.

Mr. Bouley and three other Burrillville residents formed the Blackstar Museum Organization, which is a Rhode Island non-profit corporation and is in the process of applying for 501C3 status. The mission statement is for 100% educational purposes with a goal to work on anything steam fired. Currently, a steam locomotive from Alaska, which was originally built in 1897 with the value being precious, was given to the Blackstar Museum with the intention for it to be restored and operational in Burrillville forever. Peter Bouley shared with the commission photos demonstrating previous completed steam

locomotive projects with assistance of local high school students and the working crew. The local Fairbanks newspaper called it the “Great Locomotive Chase” where a gasoline locomotive was chased by the steam locomotive after the restoration was complete.

Mr. Bouley stated that there is no reason why the Burrillville High School students couldn't complete such a restoration project here in Burrillville. Someone from Northstar Rail of Watertown New York would assist with the building of the needed cars. Mr. Bouley, a certified welding instructor and inspector, would teach the Burrillville High School students to weld the steel framework for the cars and Chuck Boucher's Technology Department would assist with the blueprints, which would be kept as a historical artifact to make other cars in the future.

The project would entail gaining access to the existing railroad beds that New Haven Railroad ran on between Harrisville and Pascoag for approximately 1 ¾ miles and with a right away of a minimum 50 to 100 feet wide at the intersection of Kennedy Lane, Steere Farm Road and Main Street with the sewer line having an easement of 20 feet wide in the middle. The engineers stated no adverse impact on the sewer pipes due to the 8 to 14 foot depth.

The project would not be completed until approximately 3 years after the acquisition of the land. Local contractors can be utilized for most of the work except Northstar Rail would be utilized for the rail

and panel track. This project would be a great project for the children of the town. The Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad, the largest railroad in the United States, is looking for high school students to fill approximately 6,000 positions with a starting pay of approximately \$50,000. Barbara Menard will be contacted to offer these positions to students who are not going to college but could learn at Burlington Northern Santa Fe's training facility in Kansas.

The Director stated the land to be acquired is owned by Barnes Concrete and could be purchased with the next land acquisition grant round through the State of Rhode Island in September 2005. The land is an important key for the proposed bike path. Bob Billington of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council is very excited about this project and would offer a letter of support. The project would not only be beneficial to the youth but also for tourism. Birthday parties and other type functions could be offered on the train. With the support of the commission, another presentation would be made to the town council for a partnership to be formed for a tourist entity with an educational aspect to be offered and would bring revenues to the town, not necessarily Blackstar Museum Organization, with a rate structure to attract tourism.

David Marcotte questioned the purpose of the railroad. Mr. Bouley stated the main purpose of the railroad is to be an educational tool. The Federal Rail Administration, who regulate anytime a public highway is crossed, that only signs marking the railroad crossing are

needed. No crossing bars or lights with electricity are needed with the train only ringing bell to cross at a speed of 5 miles per hour. The train would run during the spring and summer months only.

David Marcotte questioned if a building would be utilized as a type of station and gift shop. A building was being looked at across from Stillwater Mill but it was recently sold. On Spring Street there is a possibility to make a 30 car parking area.

David Marcotte questioned what funding sources are being sought. Mr. Bouley stated the train project would be self supporting, with collaboration with the town for educational opportunities for the Burrillville youth.

Niki DeCubellis questioned safety concerns related to the train project. Mr. Bouley stated safety measures will be taken to assure safety at all times. If anyone approaches the moving train, it would be stopped immediately.

David Marcotte questioned how any future educational projects working in conjunction with the schools would be funded. In the years to come, it can eventually turn into the school youth being able to rebuild a full train on site in Burrillville with income from the company requesting the repairs.

David Marcotte questioned that since there are only three people in

the United States who have the knowledge he has about steam engines, is there anyone being trained as an apprentice at this time. Mr. Bouley stated he is currently training a couple of people. This idea was presented in a smaller scale to the Town Council previously but wasn't thoroughly planned. The abutting residents will be notified of any public hearings regarding the project. The bike path will be incorporated into the project with the acquisition of the land. A lease from the town to Mr. Bouley's Organization for the tracks on the proposed town owned property would be given for this project to occur.

A motion was made by David Marcotte to support the acquisition of land for the Town of Burrillville for a bike path with a portion of the land to be possibly utilized by the Blackstar Museum Organization for a railroad project. The project would have to be presented to the Town Council for their approval. Seconded by Alice Lavigne. Motion passed 7-0.

Old Business:

Spring Lake Beach

The Director stated that the contractor will be contacted regarding the construction of the new Spring Lake Campground. The subcommittee will also discuss the Criteria of Use during their subcommittee meeting immediately following tonight's Recreation Commission meeting.

2005 League Budget Requests

A meeting of the Recreation Commission Subcommittee regarding League Budgets is scheduled this evening immediately following the Recreation Commission meeting.

Hauser Field/Branch River Project

The contractor contacted the Director regarding the electrical connection by Pascoag Utility District for the work to continue on the project.

BEC Update

Nancy Binns has asked for reconsideration of the vote taken by the Town Council concerning the structure of Burrillville Extended Care. This reconsideration will be part of a Town Council workshop after the budget process is complete. The Town Manager requested background information on the BEC program. The Director shared a

copy of the book of information given to the Town Manger including license information, mission and goals, organizational chart, Board of Directors list and meeting dates, background information including the three resolutions and the original Request for Proposal, employment procedures, collection procedures, payroll procedures, financials, press releases, correspondence, survey information, community contributions by the BEC program and the parent information packet.

A new “Toddler Playgroup” program was introduced through BEC with both sessions already full to capacity with 40 children. The second new program being introduced this summer is the “Junior Police Academy” for middle school age children. Every Monday at the Burrillville Middle School will be a different activity each week. David Beachemin of the Burrillville Police Department will be assisting with the program, along with Kathan Mospaw introducing a mock trial situation at District Court with an actual judge for the kids to experience. A grant from the Rhode Island Foundation for \$5,000 is being sought and a Legislative Grant for \$1,000. The estimated total budget for the program is approximately \$11,000. Kurt Schatz stated he can offer an Environmental and boat safety aspect for middle age youth through his employer. The new group name “The Colts” with their own shirts, hats and graduation, along with a step down program for when they are home alone.

A Bargain Buyer ad was placed for summer employment opportunities for Spring Lake Beach lifeguards and maintenance

help, along with Burrillville Extended Care Counselors.

David Marcotte mentioned the newspaper articles reflecting the unionization of daycare providers. The Director stated this union is for private daycare providers, not public daycare providers. Consequently, if Burrillville Extended Care became separate and apart from the town, the unionize issue could occur, which would increase the program costs to the parents. Discussion took place regarding the Town Council's concerns regarding BEC at an upcoming workshop. The town's assessment report will be presented to the Town Council before the BEC workshop takes place, which will be beneficial since the assessment supports the BEC program.

A Steere Farm Elementary Parent group has requested to put a canopy type structure behind the school to offer shading during the warmer months. The group has approximately \$2,000 to offer and BEC will support the balance needed to purchase an appropriate structure at a total cost of \$5,000 to \$6,000. Department of Public Works will assist with the installation. This would benefit BEC during the warmer months also. David Marcotte stated he has a contact in Florida that would charge less than \$1,000 for the canopy or will donate a 10' x 30' canopy. It was also recommended that a canopy be installed at Spring Lake Beach and near the Branch River Park playground.

Concerts

A number of letters requesting support of the Burrillville Concert Series were sent. Mark Brizard has committed funding by the Holly Brizard Memorial Foundation for the Toe Jam Puppet Theatre performance at the Family Fair in the amount of \$500. Duke Energy has also committed funding \$250 for our storyteller show at the Town Common. Ocean State Power and Citizens Bank have also been sent letters requesting support.

Relay for Life

The planning meetings have begun with the next scheduled for Thursday, March 17th. Burrillville Extended Care will have a team participating in the Relay for Life this year and welcoming the Recreation Commission to be on the team. A letter was received from Joe Raymond stating the Relay for Life request will be on the April 12th agenda for the Zoning Board. This would be for a five year renewable permit. Alice Lavigne stated Rachel Auclair was asking if Ocean State Power had been contacted to be a sponsor. David Marcotte stated CVS should be contacted even though they are not having teams participating this year. The Director will bring this to the attention of Kareena of the American Cancer Society.

Family Fair

Family Fair committee meetings are being held at the Millhouse Restaurant. Registration forms and Invitation letters were offered to the Recreation Commission. Alice Lavigne questioned if BOSAP was taking a more active role in the planning process of the fair. The Director stated that the fair will most likely stay under the Parks and Recreation Department due to three BOSAP committee members leaving this year. BOSAP will provide funding for the food and other events. The theme of this year's fair is Mardi Gras with Angela of the Town Manager's office and Nicole McConnell as A.T. Levy School parent representative handling the Teddy Bear parade.

David Marcotte will again be donating the helium for the Family Fair balloons. The seat belt demonstrations, pizza challenge, programming demonstrations, cub scouts to help with set up and take down, re-dating of the banner are all being done. BEC has again donated bags to be given to the guests.

New Business:

Land Acquisition

Already discussed previously.

Grant Rounds

There is a State of Rhode Island grant round in June 2005 for trails and greenways. Richard Bernardo of Department Public Works is interested in purchasing a Bobcat at an approximate cost of \$30,000. This equipment could be utilized to complete the walking path at the Hauser Field project, since the larger equipment would damage to new fields. It could also be utilized at Spring Lake Campground project, White Mill Park trail, Downtown Pascoag trail and numerous other uses. The town's investment would be \$6,000 as the needed 20% match.

The other State of Rhode Island grant round is in September 2005 for open space acquisition and land development for a maximum request \$200,000 for a total land purchase price not to exceed \$400,000. This could possibly be for the railroad/bike path project.

Two State of Rhode Island small grants at a maximum of \$25,000 each for a total project of \$50,000 for each will be offered. One of these grants could be utilized for the resurfacing of the track at the Burrillville Middle School Branch River Park, which is already included in the CIP plan for next year. The second grant round could be utilized the winterization of the Spring Lake Beach Champlin Recreation Hall as a support facility to expand recreational opportunities.

Proposed Budget

This was already discussed at the last meeting with no changes to report at this time.

Alternate Recreation Commission Member

A letter was received from the Town Clerk regarding the recommendation for Allan Gerew to be added as an alternate member for the Recreation Commission. The Director gave her support of this recommendation since he is the President of the Burrillville Junior Hockey League and is extremely organized.

Duck Race

The Duck Race is scheduled for August 7, 2005 and will be organized with the Lion's Club.

Summer Programming

A baseball camp, basketball camp, football camp, safe sitter class, concerts and much more being offered this summer. Flyers and more information will be given at next month's Recreation Commission meeting.

Snakes Alive Road Race

Dana Gould recommended at the last Lions Club meeting that all the

race proceeds be given to the Parks and Recreation Department for recreational purposes. Benches are going to be purchased for the new skateboard park and Hauser Field from the 2004 Snakes Alive Road Race proceeds.

Meeting Adjourned: Motion made by Juliette Lopez. Seconded by Al Low.

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 p.m. Motion Passed 7-0.

Next Meeting: Monday, April 11th, 6:30p.m., Town Council Chambers.

Workshop of the Subcommittee regarding League Budgets met after the meeting.

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