

The Richlands Recreation Commission held a regular meeting at the Richlands Recreation Park on December 18th, 2017 at 12:00PM with the following present:

Recreation Department: Fred Phillips

Other Attendees: Mark Gillespie (RAL), Tim Taylor (Town Manager)

Richlands Town Council Members: Mary Ann Strong

Recreation Commission Members: Craig Earls, Jeff Hurst, Brannon Breeding, LaRhonda Lindsey, Joe McCall

Mary Ann Strong opened the Richlands Recreation Commission meeting and welcomed everyone to the December Meeting.

Old Business:

Bathroom Updates

Fred Phillips: We think these will be finished by the opening of the RYBL basketball season. The bathrooms are super nice and worth the wait. The next step is getting the weight room complete and possibly a small water park. This would all be completed through private donations. The town staff did a great job in getting these bathrooms ready.

Mary Ann Strong: We need the bathroom complete in order to offer memberships etc.

Tim Taylor: The town has worked hard and as we could to get them complete. If we had all the money to complete it, we could have it early with outside help (contractors etc.) The delay in completing the bathrooms is not the fault of the town or Fred.

Fred Phillips: The HVAC people will wrap-up this week. I have also heard that we need to look into hosting local tournaments. If people see the results of the updates they will want to help more towards these types of things.

Mary Ann Strong: Especially for youth sports, people will volunteer to help.

Tim Taylor: When looking at outside funding most people will not give to a budget, but they will for youth programs etc.

Mary Ann Strong: I think the commission will want you to move forward with all of these plans.

Tim Taylor: Have we looked at the numbers to see if tournaments will be profitable? The business model will show if it will work.

Fred Phillips: The tough thing is that tournaments require a lot of help, and does the town want to pay all of the extra help to run these? I think we can get some volunteers, but we will need to pay some as well. It is something we need to keep looking at. I am open to tournaments if it makes sense.

November Meeting Minute Approval

Mary Ann Strong: We need to approve the November meeting minutes. Does anyone have any corrections, additions, or deletions? Jeff Hurst made a motion to approve the November minutes. Joe McCall seconded the motion. No further comments, motion carries 5/0.

Cornhole League:

Mary Ann Strong: Fred, how is the cornhole league going?

Fred Phillips: We are seeing a lot of people come for this. Tony did a great job in helping to get all of this organized. We are seeing a lot of older adults come as well, which is a great activity for them. We hope to see this continue to grow.

Mary Ann Strong: How is Jessica Reynolds doing?

Fred Phillips: She is starting a “Ripped” class and some other classes after the New Year. She will watch and stay to work as we need her. She has been a great addition here for the Rec Park and she is always willing to help where needed. We are lucky to have her.

New Business

Mark Gillespie – Little League Enclosed Batting Cage at Flanary Field

Mary Ann Strong: It was good to see Mark and Phillip come to the December town council meeting to discuss building an indoor hitting facility for baseball and softball. We did not have a quorum to vote during the meeting, will you be coming to the January meeting Mark?

Mark Gillespie: Yes, we will be there to discuss.

Joe McCall: Did we resolve the power issue?

Craig Earls: This will be a powered facility.

Tim Taylor: If money is involved I am sure we will have discussion on it, but I think we are usually good with approving these things for youth.

Mary Ann Strong: This will be used for a lot of people in the community.

Joe McCall: We have a lot of good facilities that we can be proud of.

Tim Taylor: Sometimes people want these facilities to be based on a business model, but it is for the good of the town and the people. Otherwise, it would be a country club. This is not about making money; this is a governmental function. This is for the community so that all citizens get access to recreation facilities. We do have people outside of the town that come to the Rec Park, but we can maybe have a way to charge the difference. Membership will help, and any governmental function is there to help. The taxes here in Richlands are just not as great, so we don't have the funds. Good debate is always a plus. Everyone likes to have the facts. We pay about 320K for just recreation, but local taxes go to fire, rescue, police and recreations.

Joe McCall: What about the proposed gas lines?

Tim Taylor: They did a survey, and not many want gas it seems.

Brannon Breeding: What about businesses?

Tim Taylor: Yes, some businesses have expressed interest.

Tazewell Recreation Development Authority:

Mary Ann Strong: We wanted to meet with them, but we did not get a chance to. I met with Travis Hackworth and Tom Lester about the recreation commission. We are looking to cut costs, and I told them. They were questioning why the tournaments could not generate revenue.

Joe McCall: I get tickled to see us need a cop to direct traffic because it so busy.

Fred Phillips: It is easy to feel good, but we have times that we are not as busy. It is easy to pick and choose times to see an amount of traffic.

Jeff Hurst: I think we have ways to help and lower expenses. There are things the town can do, like upgrade the old heaters in the gym, etc.

Tim Taylor: The old resistance type heaters are costing a lot. We talked in the past about getting solar panels in to offset costs. Sue with the town is retiring in March, so I have to deal with this a lot.

Fred Phillips: We have 12 overhead lights, and the quote to install LED's is \$7500, but we can turn them on and off without the wait. Currently, it takes up to 10 minutes to turn the lights back on after they are switched off. By putting in LED's we could save some on the power.

Craig Earls: Replacing those lights will be a great help. The existing ones buzz a lot as well.

Tim Taylor: You probably will not see a significant savings with the lights, because the money is in the heat for sure. However, we should pursue replacing the existing lights with LEDs.

Joe McCall: What is the amount we pay now?

Fred Phillips: I think it is \$47,000 per year.

Other Comments

Mary Ann Strong: I would encourage everyone to attend the January meeting.

Fred Phillips: John Willis did a great job at the meeting, and he would like to be more involved with the commission and recreation.

Mary Ann Strong: Next month we need to look at membership for the Rec Park

Fred Phillips: I can talk to Buchanan County, YMCA, and Comb Center to look at the membership types and amounts.

Brannon Breeding: We can look at Council as well, they have really nice facility.

No further comments.

Next meeting - January 15th 7:30 PM at the Richlands Recreation Park, pending research on what time works best for the group.

Mary Ann Strong - Adjourned meeting.