

The Richlands Recreation Commission held a special called meeting on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 7:30PM with the following present:

**Recreation Department:** Jessica Reynolds

**Other Attendees:**

**Richlands Town Council Members:** Mary Ann Strong, Jeff Hurst

**Recreation Commission Members Present:** Corey Whited, Craig Earls, Frances Meadows, Tony Cordle, Joe McCall, Joel Horn

**Recreation Commission Members Not Present:** Mike Webb, Ronnie Cordle (resigned), and LaRhonda Lindsey

Tony Cordle welcomed everyone to the Richlands Recreation Commission Special October meeting. We would like to open with a prayer by Joel Horn.

**Old Business:**

**August 17th Meeting Minutes Approval**

Tony Cordle: For old business, we need to approve the August 17<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes. Does anyone have any corrections, additions, or deletions to the meeting minutes? Corey Whited made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Joel Horn seconded the motion. No further discussion, motion carries 6/0.

**New Business:**

**Public Comments:**

**Recreation Commission Interim President Appointment**

Craig Earls: Ronnie Cordle notified myself and Mary Ann last night that he was resigning from the Recreation Commission due to his work schedule. We appreciate him temporarily filling in the President's position while Jeff Hurst serves on the Town Council.

Corey Whited: I make a motion for Tony Cordle to be the interim Commission President. Joel Horn seconded the motion. No further discussion, motion carries 6/0.

**Lake Park Handicap Accessible Playground (Jessica Reynolds)**

Tony Cordle: I talked to George Brown and he was in favor giving the land to the town for use. It does need a lot of work, and there is an area there were you could put 2 practice fields. He said that he was willing to lease it to the Recreation Park for a small amount for use by the town. If we put the playground at Lake Park we would need to remove the practice field. He was in favor for that, and maybe a walking track a Lake Park. It is possible down the road we can get a grant to help fix it up. It is grown up, but it would work if we can clear it out. It has some trees etc., but there is electricity and water there. It is very flat and it was filled in with gravel from the cuts road work.

Craig Earls: Will we need to remove the backstop at Lake Park?

Jessica Reynolds: Yes, we think it will need to be moved or people will use it.

Craig Earls: We can probably reuse the backstop on the Brown property.

Jessica Reynolds: We hope that the existing playground equipment can be rehabbed as well. AASC (Appalachian Agency for Senior Citizens) presented to the Commission, with help of America Carpet Care, to put a committee together to invest in a handicap accessible playground that will also have

sensory equipment. They have \$25,000 to start, but want to spend \$100,000 overall. They want to integrate for non-disabled children, adults and children with disabilities. It is very nice, and they also want a walking trail. At Lake Park, recently the bathroom window was broken and the sinks damaged. The bathrooms are huge and that will be easy to move to handicapped bathroom.

Tony Cordle: We may need to look at security cameras.

Jessica Reynolds: We are looking for approval from the Rec Commission to allow the project to proceed at Lake Park. Once we have approved, then the Town Council can make a decision.

Joe McCall: We may need to talk to the family as well to make sure they are ok with it.

Tony Cordle: The volleyball is well used, and we did have some noise complaints. We want to make sure it is reasonable and maybe some nets to help keep the volleyball in.

Mary Ann Strong: If I cannot bring it to the meeting Jeff can (if I am out).

Joel Horn: Will the town maintain it?

Jessica Reynolds: We will maintain it like the other parks.

Jeff Hurst: We may need to think about ongoing costs.

Jessica Reynolds: We have grant writers that will also be able to get us some money and they already know of one additional grant to help with the upkeep.

Corey Whited: They (AASC) are playing a major roll so they want to help keep it up.

Jeff Hurst: We just need a motion to proceed.

Mary Ann Strong: We will also need to get the legalities for the Brown property. Tony - Can you come to the council meeting with George to present?

Tony Cordle: Yes, I can speak about what we want to do with it.

Jessica Reynolds: I will be there as well to discuss it.

Mary Ann Strong: And you will reach out to George?

Tony Cordle: Yes.

Jeff Hurst: We need to also make it clear that the name will be the same for the dedicated Lake Park.

Corey Whited: I make a motion for the Recreation Commission to approve and endorse the project to put the handicap accessible park at the WW Fields Park – Dr. J A Robinson Field (Lake Park) and move the backstop/practice field to the Mr. George Brown property. Tony Cordle seconded the motion.

No further discussion, motion carries 6/0.

Tony Cordle: We also talked about handicap accessible parking spaces at Williams's field.

Craig Earls: Yes, and some of the areas are not actual parking, I think we need to talk to the town first to make sure this is possible. A lot of times people drive into the grass areas and park. These are not designated parking spaces. However, I think the town can designate a couple of areas as handicap parking and that will be great for the fields.

Jessica Reynolds: I think it is a great idea and I will talk to George. How many spots do we need?

Tony Cordle: I think 2 per field.

Jessica Reynolds: Can we ask Mark Gillespie with Little League if they have an old set of bases.

Mary Ann Strong: He told me they did not have any spares.

Tony Cordle: We also need to look at the field over here for usage for softball here at the rec park. Is there times where there are conflicts?

Jeff Hurst: We typically go in the fall, but we are looking in the spring now due to Covid. It will make it tight.

Tony Cordle: Maybe soccer first, then other time spaces if we have them. Maybe we can look at a schedule through the Rec Park.

Jeff Hurst: We had a plan to remove the field as well to make more parking during the season. I am good with whatever.

Jessica Reynolds: I have the field usage and that will help if we can schedule them.

Craig Earls: That is something we can address in the near term. I think the agreement is needed.

Tony Cordle: We can wait on the soccer field to see how it goes.

Jeff Hurst: We do plan to run spring soccer this coming year and next fall.

Tony Cordle: We also need to discuss how we want to handle the Little League field usage agreement. We are obligated to approve it each year. Do we want to address the field usage, keys, and senior league baseball field?

Jessica Reynolds: Regardless, the town needs a key to the buildings. We need it to do maintenance. My other issue was storage. I think we need keys to storage areas.

Tony Cordle: After all stars the bases are took up and the bases are locked. If anyone is wanting to clean the fields, they don't access to storage for rakes etc.

Mary Ann Strong: There is so much money that goes into the fields and a lot of emotions come out.

Tony Cordle: If girls had their own fields it would help?

Mary Ann Strong: When do we want to look at the agreement, it is October.

Tony Cordle: We need to address it next meeting. He is also wanting the agreement for 5 years.

Jessica Reynolds: We don't have access to the concession stand and we would like to do that.

Tony Cordle: I think it is important to not tie down too much the parks etc., so that they can be used by the community. I think it is important for the Rec Director to be able to work to use the facilities and get more options.

Jessica Reynolds: Mr. Taylor did mention that we should never give full power to one person or group. I don't think we want to have the agreement for 5 years. There is never a perfect solution.

Craig Earls: I think we should do an annual agreement, with a yearly auto-renewal. If the agreement is going to be the same, and no issues to address, then it should just auto-renew.

Tony Cordle: We should look at it next month and put it on the agenda for sure.

Mary Ann Strong: We need to get it right for sure.

Tony Cordle: Do we want to meet an hour before the next meeting to review it?

Group: Yes, let's meet 30 minutes early for those who can.

### **Recreation Updates and Sports Approvals (Jessica Reynolds)**

Jessica Reynolds: We are getting requests for recreation sports, and I spoke to Heather about the Wrestling request to use upstairs. Heather is HR for the Town and my Covid contact. I asked Mr. Taylor as well, and I was concerned that it was not structurally sound. He said they cannot due to Covid. So it is a no, we cannot allow them to use the room due to Covid restrictions.

Jeff Hurst: Here is the Phase 3 guidelines (handed out to the group) and we need to make sure to follow them. We are seeing more cases locally.

Group discussion: The recreation park is seeing a lot of out of town basketball players come to the gym because this is one of the only gyms open for several counties.

Tony Cordle: On the professional side, I think we should do what we can, limit it to 10 per court.

Corey Whited: Do they have mask requirement?

Mary Ann Strong: They do check temperatures when I come here for Pickle Ball.

Jessica Reynolds: We check temperatures here, and we are considered a medium exposure risk here. They are supposed to wear masks in the lobby area. We are one of the very few that is still open under the guidelines.

Jeff Hurst: HR does have a town Covid plan.

Mary Ann Strong: Will it help if I go to the Town Manager?

Group: Yes, we fell like as the Commission's Town Council representative it will help.

Corey Whited: We want to make sure we find the guidelines and are only open if we are sure we can meet them.

Frances Meadows: It is great that we have slots for the weight room.

Jessica Reynolds: Yes, we have a wait list

Tony Cordle: We discussed maybe moving the meeting to 6PM or 6:30PM. Do we still want to do that?

Mary Ann Strong: I think earlier will help with participation.

Group: Agrees.

Corey Whited: I make a motion to change our scheduled Recreation Commission meeting time from 7:30PM to 6:00PM. Tony Cordle seconded the motion. No further discussion, motion carries 6/0.

Next meeting – November 16<sup>th</sup> 2020, 6:00PM

Tony Cordle Adjourned meeting.