

Shelburne Recreation Committee

Minutes for Thursday, March 19, 2019

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m., via Zoom.

Members present: Bill Buck, Diana Hardina, Jackie Walsh, Stefan Topolski and Norman Beebe

1---- Minutes from February are coming at our next meeting from Norm.

2---- Closure of the Cowell: The Cowell is closed because of the coronavirus. The town has shut down all town buildings. We discussed when we might open. The consensus was that when the town says it's OK to open town-owned buildings, we'll discuss whether we agree and then decide whether to open.

Meanwhile, the food pantry does have access to the building. The staff will bring food out to tables, and the client will stay in their cars. The staff will bring the food to the clients in their cars. The clothes closet is closed.

3. Softball-- Norm was about to send out a message to potential players when everything got closed down due to the virus. He will send out a message on the BSE Facebook page about the softball season. The league has shut down so it's unlikely we'll have softball until that changes. Certainly nothing will happen until the schools reopen. An Ashfield mom asked if her daughter could join the team as Ashfield doesn't have a team this year. So we may advertise in Ashfield, too.

Normally, we often don't start until after spring break, Norm noted. Stefan and Norm agreed that it would be good to get some work done on the field this spring.

4. Securing the Cowell -- Diana and Bill don't think there have been break-ins lately. Diana told one kid to not skateboard on the tennis courts recently. Bill will identify a suitable indoor that will likely go into the foyer overlooking the gymnasium. Norman will order it. He will also order replacements for the two outdoor signs that have been vandalized, which gave the basketball/tennis courts' hours, welcomed people to the area and thanked the department that donated money for its creation.

Jackie noted that a neighbor living across from the gym asked a couple days ago for a sign with hours on it because last year people played basketball at 1 a.m.

5. Director's report -- Bill reported that the Cowell took in \$600 in March, which is good for 4 weeks. Now there will be no income while the gym is closed, except for the \$1,900 the Academy at Charlemont owes the Cowell for using the gym for its basketball season. Bill has put up the tennis court net.

6. The basketball/tennis courts -- to lock or not lock

The committee decided to keep the courts open. There was a lively discussion about whether it's worse for young people to be playing basketball during the coronavirus pandemic or not. Jackie was the most worried about this because of the lack of a 6-foot buffer and touching the basketball. Stefan pointed out that some of the players may be safer on the courts than at home and that there is no scientific evidence that the virus is transmitted on basketballs. He urged for science and reason over emotion.

7. River Trail -- We are receiving a grant for creation of the trail. But we've run into a problem. Right now, there is no access point on the Shelburne Falls end of the trail (the other end is the Mahican-Mohawk Trail head on the Mohawk Trail). The owners of the land where the proposed access point would be -- the property adjacent to the Sweetheart on South Maple Street -- don't want the entry point near their property. Norm suggested going back to the plan to have people access the trail via Deerfield Street, a lovely area. A raised platform would be needed and a handful of abutters (maybe just one) need to be contacted.

8. Town Report – Norman is working on this.

The next meeting will be at 6:30 on Thursday, April 17, 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 7:27 p.m.