



TOWNSHIP OF ESSA
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

In attendance: Sandie Macdonald, Mayor/Chair
 Jason Coleman, Manager of Parks & Recreation/ Chair
 Ron Henderson, Councilor
 Brandy Rafeek, Member
 Jim Hunter - Member
 Baileigh White, Municipal Staff Support/Secretary

Absent: Willy Parkinson, Member
 Eric Villani, Member
 Colleen Healey, CAO

1. Opening of Meeting (Orientation)

1.1 The meeting was called to order by the Mayor/Chair and the minutes of December 19th accepted as circulated.

1.2 Discussed the purchase of Pinnies from last meeting, Pinnies were purchased and received. Hopeful to put them to use when programs start up again.

Moved by Henderson and **Seconded by** Rafeek

2. Approval of Agenda

2.1 Be it resolved that the agenda as presented be approved.

Moved by Henderson and **Seconded by** Rafeek

3. Ice Protocols

3.1 Sandie Expresses that user groups are grateful for the opportunity to utilize recreational spaces and happy to follow protocols.

3.2 The Parks and Recreation Department is working with the Health Unit, continuing to change protocols as times change. Most recent changes to the protocols were made to allow users to enter right up to the start of their rental as opposed to only up to 10 minutes before. It has been challenging but the department is taking all possible measures to work with the community.

3.3. Still receiving a number of Ice inquires

3.4 Parks and Recreation Department was thanked for being flexible

3.5 Question arose from Jim Hunter– RE: spectators allowed in stands, Answered by Jason Coleman. We allow one spectator per participant they must remain in the stands for the entirety of the rental and are not granted in and out privileges.

3.6 New battery powered sanitizer/disinfectant backpack sprayers were purchased in order to effectively and efficiently clean all major touch points and regularly used spaces. They have also been purchased for Public Works and the Admin Centre and Fire Hall.

4. Thornton Arena Chiller

4.1 Thornton Arena Chiller malfunctioned. The chiller was deemed unsafe too operate. The contaminated components were safely removed. An order for the new chiller was placed, the chiller is currently being manufactured.

4.2 Questioning whether or not to install Ice this season, could be up and running as early as January but it would be a matter of how high the demand for ice is.

4.3 Questions arose RE: the effect on Minor Hockey. Answered by Jason Coleman, Thornton Minor has been moved over to the Angus Arena and both Minor Hockey teams are playing out of one pad. Thornton's numbers are slightly down but we can also attribute this to the pandemic as well as the arena closure.

4.4 Sandie Mentions we are fortunate as a township to not have to lay off any staff and in fact we are more busy than normal.

5. Basketball Net at Stonemount Park

5.1 We ideally would have several more basketball nets out in the community at this time but in any regard we are happy to be making progress. More nets have been put in the budget for 2021, there seems to be a strong demand.

5.2 Success story, as soon as the nets were installed, kids were playing on it instantly.

5.3 Hopefully the space will be used more and prevent further vandalism,

6. 2021 Budget –Items requested.

6.1 We are working hard to not overlook the needs of the community and would love input from this committee. Some of the items on the budget include, Basketball nets, filling in the beach volleyball court to make it a basketball court, cutting down vandalism by improving security procedures, improved signage in parks, second off leash dog park, Pickle ball at Stonemount, New/ Repaired vehicles and equipment, wall repairs, clock tower amplifier, in house grass cutting and other service contracts, staffing and equipment, the canoe and kayak launch.

6.2 Speaking further to the canoe and kayak launch, it has been deemed necessary and would improve our economic development and tourism. The project is not as simple as originally planned. NVCA has authority over the area, we are still seeking approval from the Ministry of Natural Resources and other governing bodies over this area for approval to proceed with the project. The response from these organizations has been slow to non-existent. In terms of an actual dock we have selected PM Docks, a company who specializes in creating docks in areas like this, they did the Niagara Escarpment previously. They say the project is doable but again will be more work than originally planned. The dock needs to be anchored to concrete and we need to improve the landscape to make it safe for the public and accessible to all. We need to make sure we are in compliance with all governing bodies. We will be requesting additional funds to ensure that we can comply. There will be a significant increase from the originally proposed \$7,200 quote. The area is currently being used on a “use at own risk” basis. Encouraged to reach out to MP’s to get a push on the project.

6.3 Motorized boats are banned. It is too dangerous to bring them down the slope to the water. Often people are fishing at the bottom. No wakes are allowed from Angus to Wasaga beach.

6.4 Bob Geddes – Play Power bought out Little Tykes and has subcontracted Hooves, the installation has been delayed by two weeks as parts are on back order. The parts on back order are essential for the installation. Monday October 26th is the new installation date. They wanted to push it into November but it was expressed that that was unacceptable.

6.5 Michael St Park – Follow up- The Park is 30 years old, the company has been bought out twice since we purchased the original play structure. We cannot modify or add to the play structure, but we can trade it back for “x” amount of dollars, however the structure is so old even the company doesn’t want it. The new structure should cost approx. \$15,000. Lots of young families around that use the park it is in need of an overhaul.

6.6 Parking lot at Bob Geddes – This project was cut when covid hit to reduce costs towards non-essential projects. As we create the 2021 budget we will prioritize this item once again.

6.7 Dump truck – No dealerships in Ontario were able to provide us the truck we require. It should still be possible in 2021. We have a tractor but no truck for snow removal. This truck would bring us one step closer to having more in house services (i.e. snow removal) our staff do a better job, pay better attention to detail and have a higher standard when it comes to services like this and we would like to bring a lot more of our contracted services in house.

6.8 Gym wall divider – Airing on the side of caution we have brought a structural engineer on to sign off on the project. We inferred that this would have been done by the company installing the divider but that was not the case, hence the delay. Having the structural engineer will help alleviate any liability

6.9 Pickle Ball is on the rise, it has been requested to have more outdoor courts. Sandie addresses concerns of vandalism

6.10 Jason Explains booking procedures.

7. Vandalism - Community Park (Costs, other vandalism costs, what is being done to prevent)

7.1 The vandalism at Community Park took place back in December. We originally went with the restoration company our insurance company recommended (First-On-Site). The company delayed the project by 6 months, we cancelled our contract with them and went with a local company. The repairs cost \$27,000 and we paid a \$2,500 deductible. We are looking at getting cameras on the property.

7.2 The outdoor arena's require paint for the walls to cover up the vandalism spray painted on them, there is also glass broken their regularly as a result of the glass panes used to shield the public from flying pucks. We have proposed a plan to get steal fencing and remove the glass, we also miscellaneous items like benches being vandalised.

7.3 The steal fencing required for the outdoor arenas needs to be a certain gage to live up to its necessary purpose at the rinks. The plan is to complete one rink at a time, starting with the worst rink and moving our way up; removing the glass from each one as we go to serve as a surplus for those with glass still.

8. Open Discussion

8.1 Concerns with students not wearing masks and adhering to physical distancing while visiting stores in the plaza next to the high school.

8.2 Covid concerns for Halloween – Not a high risk activity. We do not have the ability to say no to Halloween, all three levels of government are saying it's safe.

8.3 New Tecumseth delivered picnic tables to local schools to promote outdoor learning, we have followed suit. Essa Township has brought some over to Baxter and are waiting to hear back from other local schools.

8.4 Traffic advisory committee – Many good reviews, signs go out in May until end of the school year. Doing a full survey eventually. One took place on Cunningham Dr. in Thornton after seeing results a speed bump was installed. Speeding is a big concern in the area

8.5 Fishing has been super busy this year. Waste receptacles being emptied more regularly. We have contracted a new company, the smell is extreme when going to long before emptying.

8.6 Looking to call another meeting before Dec 31, after budget has been curated, if schedules and times permit. Wednesday's typically work best (off week from council).

8.7 Compliments to parks crews regularly cleaning splash pads, community is grateful.

8.8 Council is blessed to have such a dedicated team of staff

8.9 Meeting was called to a close by the Mayor

Moved by Hunter and **Seconded by** Rafeek