



# TOWN OF BARNSTABLE

## BARNSTABLE RECREATION DIVISION

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### RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

#### MEETING AT STURGIS LIBRARY, RTE 6A, BARNSTABLE

#### 31 MARCH 2008

**Commission Members Present:** Joe O'Brien – Vice Chairman, Kevin Turner, Andy Gauthier, Rene King, Kathy Pina

**Commission Members Absent:** Clyde Takala - Chairman

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm, roll call was taken, and Kevin Turner made a motion to accept the minutes from March 3<sup>rd</sup>, seconded by Rene, the Commission voted and it was passed unanimously. Vice Chairman Joe O'Brien acknowledged Councilor Ann Canedy from Precinct 1 and thanked her for letting the Commission hold their regularly scheduled meeting at the Sturgis Library to discuss and show a presentation on a possible campground at Hathaway's Pond.

Joe introduced Jeff Avery, a former Recreation Commission member and former Town of Barnstable resident. Jeff said it was the Commission's objective to hire a campground consultant to see if a campground would be financially viable for the Town of Barnstable. He began his presentation by stating some of the main Commission goals: to fill a tourism gap with affordable family vacations, create opportunities for educational and recreational excellence, add value to the community, and provide a new revenue stream; these campsites would be tenting only, no RV's whatsoever.

Jeff showed aerial maps of the area and surrounding areas and showed a potential for another beach. He discussed phase 1 of the plan. He said that they would clear paths and fallen, dead trees for tent camping, have fire pits; upgrade the bathhouse to an environmental friendly facility (no effluent), new parking lot. Jeff went on to discuss the other two phases. But he also said that if phase 1 did not work, then they would not seek to continue with the other two phases and if anything Hathaway's Pond would have a new bathhouse facility and a clean area for patrons. Phase 2 and 3 included more tenting areas, 2 additional bathhouses, and paths to include a total of 136 tenting sites at the area.

Jeff said that Barnstable could fill the 136 tent sites with the overflow from Nickerson State Park alone. He said the campground would create more opportunities for the Town of Barnstable and with the 136 tent sites could create a projected \$489,600 in revenue a year during the shoulder and prime season of camping and a projected profit of \$49,939 (10.2%) based on RMA index as of 2005. Jeff believes that the campground would fiscally maintain itself.

Concerning the educational aspects, there are so many studies and tests that could be done using the area around Hathaway's Pond such as: Water quality testing, Lincoln Indexing, Species Inventory, Sediment Testing, Kettle Pond Ecology, Pit Trapping, Succession, Seasonal Variations, Ethology, Ornithology. Also, additional "hands on" science curriculum options would add value to the Town of Barnstable. A number of permanent studies could be setup to study effects over time by contiguous classes, educational partnerships with Nickerson and other campgrounds with educational programs, and there could be environment and other grants available for these opportunities.

Jeff gave a brief review of police calls to the Hathaway's Pond area and said that a 24/7 on site manager would stop these calls. Joe O'Brien believes that by creating a campground the condition of Hathaway's would improve and be a money making venture for the town. Kevin said that the Recreation Commission is interested in the opportunities it would provide the area schools and to see if it is a financially

viable undertaking. Andy also believes it would be a great opportunity for the community. Rene believes the educational aspect is very attractive and there would be availability of grants for educational purposes at the campground. Joe O'Brien opened up the meeting for public comment. The following spoke:

Pete Jason of Barnstable Village, he had major concerns about the financial aspects of the project and services such as trash removal, maintenance, manager costs, etc. were not accounted for. He didn't think there was adequate parking at the site now and adding 2 cars per camp site would be an overload. Also he thought that putting in 136 tenting sites would mean too many people in a small area. He thought that an analysis of the area should have been done first before the presentation.

Avery Revere, who is a dog walker at Hathaway's Pond doesn't think there should be a campground, but was all for the educational aspect of the area. She doesn't think that one bathroom is sufficient for an entire campground. Avery did say that there were primitive camp sites at Sandy Neck, but you did have to hike to get to them.

Ralph Cahoon asked how the campground would be run and what type of account it would be set up as; an enterprise account? Would the profit be contributed to the general fund? Would the parking be increased? Ralph was against it 5 years ago, he is against it still, and he thinks it is the wrong place, wrong time, and wrong project. He thinks that the project would create additional traffic; it is a fragile ecosystem. He brought up his concern for semi permanent residences of the campsite. But he did think the school based projects were a great idea.

Loretta Feeney who is an artist loves the area, thinks it is pristine and wonders why we have to wreck every beautiful space.

Rob Stewart, a former Recreation employee, thought Jeff's presentation was great, but he had reservations. It is tough to staff a beach in the summer for 10-12 weeks and thinks it will be difficult to staff a campground for 4-5 months. Traffic is hazardous and it will get worse. He said that Hathaway's and Millway are always the first to close down for the season.

Marilyn Fuller said that Eugenia Forts said Hathaway's Pond served well those who are not comfortable other places. Marilyn thinks that the campground would disrupt the town people who visit that beach.

Matt Bresette used to be a lifeguard for the Town of Barnstable and is in favor of a campground, but he is not sure it is the right spot at Hathaway's Pond. He thought it might be a good spot for a ropes course.

Phyllis Willman asked if there was other trouble at Hathaway's other than what Jeff reported on. She didn't think that Jeff's report on the police calls was beneficial or accurate.

Ann Canedy, thanked the Recreation Commission and Jeff for coming to Barnstable for their meeting, thought Jeff did a great presentation but she still had some concerns about the environment, traffic, Conservation Committee, fire/water districts, and if a campground would raise taxes for the district. She wanted to know what impact a campground would have on the area and Barnstable Village.

Avery Revere wanted to know how a decision would be made to go forward with a campground or not. Kevin said that Recreation was involved with many projects and that they decide if it is worth it to pursue it and then they go to the Town Council for support, but if it isn't supported then they move on to another project and idea. Rene said that her main concern was education and how can Hathaway's Pond be used to link camping and education. She said that the financial aspects of the project need to be addressed, but she was there today to open a dialogue with Barnstable Village. Jeff asked Pete Jani if he wanted to take on the campground for his cost analysis class. Pete said he was very busy, but he could help him out.

Jeff did go on to try to address some of the concerns. He said that he would have to talk to Mark Milne, financial Director, and see what type of account would be best for a campground. He said that camping would be limited to 7 days to stop semi permanent residences. He said that he was firm on keeping the beach open to the public and two beach sites would be cleaned and available for the residents and campers. Jeff took a preliminary vote for those for or against the campground. Nobody was for the campground. Jeff did say that he believes that a campground would only benefit the area, not disrupt it or lessen the value of surrounding areas. He thanked every one for coming. Kevin made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Andrew, the Commission voted and it was passed unanimously at 7:10 pm

**For Harold:**

Respectfully submitted by Samantha Garfield, Principal Division Assistant, Recreation Division