

**Town of Barre  
Recreation Board  
Meeting Minutes  
May 4, 2020**

The Town of Barre Recreation Board held a public meeting on Monday, May 4, 2020 in the Municipal Building at 149 Websterville Road and by videoconference. Board members present were Doug Farnham; and by videoconference, Dave Rouleau, Terry Smith, Stacey Lynds, Amanda Gray, and Moriah Fraga. Absent was Rolland Tessier. Also present were assistant town manager Elaine Wang, town manager Carl Rogers, and by teleconference: Peter Kopsco, Christopher Young, and Recreation Supervisor Dwight Coffrin.

1. Chair Farnham called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.
2. Rouleau made a motion to change the proposed agenda item 3 to “Consider approving the April 6 meeting minutes.” Smith seconded and the agenda was adopted with that change.
3. Smith made a motion to approve the April 6, 2020 meeting minutes as presented. Rouleau seconded the motion and it was approved 6-0.
4. **Facility Requests** – The Websterville Christian Academy requested a field for high school soccer with practices every weekday, and games one to two times a week, 4pm-6pm, with the first date of practice of August 13, 2020 and games August 28 to October 17, 2020. They also requested the field use fee be waived. Rouleau made motion that the use be allowed contingent on practices and games not conflict with public school sports schedules or any executive orders, and to waive the fee. Lynds seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

5. **MTA Agreement** –The Millstone Trails Association serves as the Corridor Manager for the town for the non-motorize recreational trails in the Barre Town Forest. The Rec Board had received a draft agreement with some changes suggested by Wang, and other changes proposed by the Millstone Trails Association.

The Rec Board discussed the MTA-proposed language allowing electric bicycles, or ebikes, in areas of the town forest to be mutually determined. Wang noted that, because MTA has been a good partner, the proposed agreement was for five years, while the ebike landscape has evolved quickly recently and may continue to. Her recommendation was for the Board to leave out the MTA-proposed ebike language from the agreement, but to adopt that language separately as their informal policy. Smith indicated her preference for a formal policy for the sake of transparency. Rouleau asked for clarification on what constituted an ebike. Wang and Pete Kopsco, the President of MTA, said MTA was seeking to allow the common definition of Class 1 ebikes only: pedal-assist only, with no throttle, and having a maximum assisted speed of 20 mph. Kopsco noted MTA was fielding a lot of inquiries and hoped to have a trial of Class 1 ebikes this summer. If the result was additional trail damage and required maintenance, they could revisit the use. His own opinion was it would be like having people more fit than him riding the trails and so it would not be a problem. Rouleau asked how the Class 1 restriction would be enforced. Kopsco said it couldn’t be, much as they don’t currently enforce purchases of trail passes. Rouleau made a motion to recommend the Selectboard adopt the Corridor Management Agreement without the ebike language. Smith seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Rouleau made a motion to allow Class 1, pedal-assist only, no throttle, maximum assisted speed of 20 miles per hour ebikes on the town forest trails for the 2020 season, with the season determined by the Millstone Trails Association.

Rogers asked how often a non-ebike would reach speeds of 20 mph, and whether more bikers at that speed in the town forest would pose a safety hazard. There was discussion of how often an ebike would reach 20 mph, and signage and education being the way to address speed concerns the way they are for snowmobile speeds. The Board directed Wang to draft a standalone policy for their consideration at a next meeting.

6. **MTA Donation** – Pete presented their winter grooming report, and expenses totaling \$1,344.28. Rouleau asked why MTA did not groom the Rec Area, which provided a beginner option that was part of the basis of previous years’ donations. Kopsco said they have had trouble crossing railroad tracks. Rouleau made a motion to approve a donation of \$1,344.28 to MTA. Smith seconded. In discussion, Kopsco was asked what types of users took

advantage of trails in the town forest in the winter. Kopsco said many cross-country skiers and snowshoers as well as bikers. He also said crossing the railroad tracks action caused one of the most expensive repairs for the groomer in 2019. Farnham proposed MTA meet with the Rec Board in November to decide on a plan or find another way to provide a beginner trail. Kopsco agreed. The Board voted 6-0 in favor of the donation amount.

**7. COVID-19** – The Rec Board discussed facility uses they have seen. There were some disallowed uses, but most observed activity was people walking the bike paths. They discussed the town manager’s decision to close the port-o-lets at the town forest and the East Barre Park. Rouleau said with the increased use of the town forest, there should be a port-o-let available, and trust people to use it safely. A sign saying that they are only being cleaned once a week could be posted. Rogers noted that this would make it easier for users from other towns to come to the town forest, and nearby users should be able to go home. Rouleau said people are probably not doing that, and just going in the woods. Rouleau also read from the CDC guidelines for recreation allowing for port-o-lets. Wang read from the same guidelines that restrooms should be cleaned regularly, which the town does not have the capacity to do. There was discussion what “regularly” meant since the guidance did not provide a definition. By consensus the Board indicated their recommendation to the town manager that he re-open the port-o-lets.

Because the Governor’s Stay Home order was scheduled to end May 15, the Board agreed by consensus to have a special meeting on May 18 to discuss facility use guidelines.

**8. Disc Golf VT Tournament** – Chris Young presented his modifications to the typical disc golf tournament format to be consistent with COVID-19 best practice. These included a tee-time format, 2 days instead of 1 day, three-person instead of five-person teams that may not arrive prior to 10 minutes of their tee time, pre-payment, a virtual players meeting, no awards ceremony, no post gatherings, digital scorecards, and restricting participation to Vermont residents. The Board agreed to discuss at their May 18 special meeting. In case Governor’s Orders allowed the tournament as modified, Rouleau made a motion to approve the Disc Golf VT tournament for May 31 as well as the previously approved May 30. Lynds seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

Wang said she had overlooked adding the Recreation Supervisor’s Report to the agenda and asked the Board to hear from him at this time. The Board agreed.

**Recreation Supervisor’s Report** – Coffrin said the rec crew returned to work that day and spent most of the day planning. They also took the required COVID-19 training. He said water to the Rec Area would likely be turned on next week.

**9. Other Business** – Wang reported that tennis lessons were in wait-and-see mode, and advised the Board against organizing a grand opening for Lower Graniteville Playground.

**10. ‘Round the Table:** Lynds said the bear hunt was very popular, until someone took down the paper bears. She suggested making more permanent bears with stakes that could be relocated every so often.

Gray asked about the Upper Graniteville basketball hoops. Wang said she would follow up.

Smith said she informed the Spring into Summer Fest vendors that the event was canceled and floated a way to still hold them in 2020. She asked whether the Board wanted to resume playground inspections, but that she felt better about how things were going. Farnham suggested they wait until next month.

Farnham noted the center post at the Websterville Rd gate was heaved.

At 8:07pm on a motion by Rouleau, seconded by Gray, the board voted 6-0 to adjourn.

Recreation Board Members

\_Signed by Doug Farnham\_\_\_\_\_  
\_ Voice vote to approve by Dave Rouleau,\_  
\_Terry Smith, Amanda Gray, Moriah Fraga\_