

**Town of Barre
Recreation Board
January 13, 2022 Special Meeting Minutes**

The Town of Barre Recreation Board held a hybrid (in person with a virtual option) public meeting. Attending Board members were Doug Farnham, David Rouleau, Stacey Lynds, Amanda Gray, Tyler Morse, and Carol Hebert. Absent was Moriah Fraga. Also in attendance were Corey Touchette, Chris Cadorette, and Assistant Town Manager Elaine Wang.

1. Chair Farnham called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m, stating that the purpose of this special meeting was to consider the Freezing Fun for Families facility request for their 2022 winter softball fundraising tournament.

2. Freezing Fun for Families facility request – Chair Farnham asked Rouleau to provide a background on the event. Rouleau said the Freezing Fun for Families softball tournament had been held at the Rec Area for many years to raise money for families with children with cancer. He believed the organizers did a good job in this year’s request of keeping it smaller due to COVID, while balancing the need to raise money for the cause.

Executive Director of Freezing Fun for Families (FFFF) Corey Touchette. said at the tournament’s peak it has had 75 to 80 teams from around New England, bringing in 3,000 to 5,000 people between participants, volunteers and spectators. The year that they broke the Guinness World Record there were 7,000 people. He stated it would not be the right move to return to that volume. FFFF consulted the state, which said there were no state restrictions, but made some suggestions that were helpful. Touchette said he ran many scenarios and a safe flow of people could be maintained at 30 teams in a double elimination format. He said last year, 8 teams raised \$50,000, and focused on fundraising as opposed to winning. He said they hoped to continue that focus, with the goal of raising \$75,000 between team fundraising and corporate sponsors, and \$250,000 by their 25th anniversary in 2023. That amount in an endowment would allow the current programs to continue in perpetuity.

Wang asked how 30 teams would allow for COVID safety. Touchette said usually they play 45 minute games. This year’s plan is for 1 hour of game time, allowing teams to come in, compete, and leave before the next teams come in. On Friday they would use 3 fields and be done by 8:30pm. On Saturday, half of the teams would be eliminated by 1pm, leaving 15 teams scattered across 5 fields. Having this flow would discourage congregation. They will also not have a gathering at the ‘midway’ at noon, as has been traditional and has been their biggest time of concession sales.

The National Guard will be providing a warming tent, and Freezing Fun for Families will require and enforce mask wearing in that tent. Touchette said that while they don’t have the volunteers or expertise to check vaccination status or test results as suggested by the state, they will require participants, staff, and volunteers to attest to vaccination or a negative test within 72 hours of coming to the field. They will ask people to monitor symptoms, have volunteers help with that, and offer masks to everyone. Wang said she had recommended the Rec Board require masking or social distancing be required. Cadorette said they said they do not have the staff and volunteer capacity to enforce masking or social distancing. Touchette said he did not want to put their volunteers in the position of having a political mask debate. Wang said allowing spectators creates that issue, since Freezing Fun for Families has no direct communication with spectators as compared to teams. Cadorette said the majority of spectators are friends or family of the players and will hear the same message the teams do.

Hebert asked how many port-o-lets they would provide. Touchette said Wind River Environmental will supply a number based on the participant number, and sanitize and maintained them over the tournament.

Rouleau motioned to approve Freezing Fun for Families request for a maximum 30 team, double elimination softball tournament using the Little League, lower soccer, baseball, and softball field on March 4, 5 and 6, 2022, with the fee waived for the fields and lights, conditioned on receipt of a certificate of insurance naming the town as an additional insured; all participants, staff and volunteers attest to being vaccinated or having a negative test within 72 hours of participating; spectators are encouraged to wear masks and socially distance; and masks are required in the warming tent. Lynds seconded and the motion passed 6-0.

At 6:39pm on a motion by Rouleau, seconded by Lynds, the Board voted 6-0 to adjourn.

Recreation Board Members