

**Town of Barre  
Recreation Board  
January 3, 2022 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, Moriah Fraga, and Tyler Morse. Absent was Carol Hebert. Also in attendance was Assistant Town Manager Elaine Wang.

1. Chair Farnham called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.
2. **Agenda** – Rouleau motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Gray seconded. The motion passed 6-0.
3. **Minutes** - Rouleau motioned to approve the December 6 minutes as presented. Lynds seconded. The motion passed 6-0.
4. **Guests** – There were no guests for a matter not on the agenda.
5. **Facility requests** – There were no facility requests. Wang advised the Board to expect Freezing Fun for Families’ charity fundraiser softball tournament request at the February meeting, as the website is showing tournament dates of March 4-6, 2022.
6. **Rec Board draft charge** – Rouleau said the Rec Ordinances working group had reviewed the charge drafted by member, and Selectboard member, Norma Malone, and agreed with it, and now were looking for feedback from the Rec Board. He said the charge assumed there would be a Recreation Director, a new position. Wang added that the gist of the charge was for the Rec Board to have an oversight, rather than operational, role. Gray asked whether the Recreation Director would take on youth sports. Rouleau said that would be a lot for a Recreation Director to do. Morse agreed. Gray observed it would also be tricky, since any youth sports would need to be a joint Barre City and Barre Town effort. Morse said he saw the Rec Director’s relationship with the existing area youth sports organizations as a liaison, with at least the initial goal of understanding how to better partner with them. Gray asked what a Rec Director would do that would be new for the department. Farnham said requests that now go from the Rec Board to the town manager or assistant town manager and then to the Rec Supervisor would just go to the Rec Director. Lynds said a Rec Director could take on more grant writing, like for an indoor facility in Barre Town, and be more proactive with partnering with other programs, like the new mixed martial arts gym. The Board then discussed where candidates could come from. By consensus, the Board indicated their support for a Rec Director position. They also indicated consensus on the draft charge. Rouleau said the working group’s next step would be to work on the job description.
7. **Baseball field skinning** – Wang said she was looking for any consensus from the Board as to whether to do this project, given the concerns expressed by stakeholders at the October 2021 Rec Board meeting. Farnham said he had another proposal that would not involve skinning the field, but only movable bases and mound, and possibly mowing the grass differently. He said he had not discussed that proposal yet with stakeholders. Morse commented that proposal would address the safety concerns raised in October. Gray, reading from the October minutes, said there was also a field availability concern. The Board directed Wang to provide the baseball field request history for the last several years to help inform their decision. The Board by consensus agreed they would like Farnham to continue researching how to make the baseball field multi-use without skinning.
8. **Budget requests** – Wang reviewed the memo of items discussed by the Rec Board to date. They agreed what they would propose to the Town Manager. Among the items was to purchase a field line striping machine. Wang recommended against this as the partnership with Spaulding High School had been going well for several years, partly because the town does not charge them field use fees. The Board directed Wang to discuss with the Spaulding athletic director having a memorandum of understanding to formalize the arrangement.
9. **Egg Hunt 2022** – The Board agreed by consensus to continue working with Barre City on the annual Egg Hunt. Gray and Rouleau indicated Barre City seems to be in a wait-and-see mode regarding 2022. Gray said it could be a chance to work with the Barre Partnership also and she would reach out to its director, Tracie Lewis.

**10. Movie night** – Rouleau reported the Rotary Club was interested in partnering. Lynds discussed several locations in the Rec Area or school it could be held. Farnham brought up that if it was held outside, lights would be needed after the movie was over. He suggested having it in the spring because of it not getting dark in the summer until 9pm, which might not work for families with young children. Lynds commented it would be good to also target young teens, an age group the Rec Board had previously noted was underserved. After some discussion, the Board agreed by consensus on June 4. Fraga noted spring was rainier. Wang suggested the softball field, where there are lights, and using the school parking lot with people watching from their cars if it was raining. Lynds said she would check with the school and another town and how they get their movies. Rouleau said he would ask the Rotary to reserve their equipment for June 4.

**11. Open Meeting Law** – Wang reviewed what was most relevant to Board members from the Open Meeting Law FAQ by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns that was in the Rec Board’s packet. She said the purpose of the Open Meeting Law is to ensure that the public has the opportunity to participate in decisions of public bodies and that the Recreation Board is considered a public body. She said the law applies whenever there is a quorum of the body in a discussion. In the Rec Board’s case, that would be any four members when they are discussing anything related to Barre Town recreation that they might reasonably expect the Recreation Board might take up at a later time. The reason why Open Meeting Law is concerned about a quorum discussing business outside of a publicly warned meeting is because, in the Rec Board’s case, four members could have a discussion that results in agreeing on an action outside of a public meeting, and then take that action in a public meeting, without revealing the earlier discussion. So, the public wouldn’t know that the earlier discussion had occurred or have been able to participate in it. She said the primary exception, to no more than three Rec Board members being able to legally have a discussion outside of a warned meeting, relevant to the Recreation Board, is when scheduling meetings. The Rec Board is not a quasi-judicial body so they would not need deliberative sessions, and Wang said it was very unlikely they would ever need an executive session. Wang said, other than scheduling meetings, it would be safest to avoid discussing Barre Town recreation matters with any more than two other Rec Board members. She noted that “discussing” does not just mean in person. Discussing can happen in a group email, or even serial emails, or a series of emails and phone calls. If for some reason the Board needed a poll taken of the Rec Board members between meetings, she advised responses be sent to staff. She said many of the other Open Meeting Law items regarding posting agendas, posting minutes, and contents of minutes are currently staff responsibilities.

Farnham added that information could be distributed to a quorum of the Board for the purpose of discussion during a publicly warned meeting. Wang agreed the FAQ indicated that was not a violation of Open Meeting Law, but if Board members wanted to be on the safe side, they were always welcome to share information to her and she would distribute.

**12. Other business** – Wang asked if the Board wanted to discuss Spring into Summer Festival at their February meeting. They indicated yes by consensus. Wang shared that the Christa and Mikayla Memorial Playground in East Barre has received \$110 in donations from four individuals to date, in memory of Barbara Taylor.

**13. Round table** – Rouleau asked whether the Rec Board should take any action in response to the complaints of a neighbor of the 44 Brook St parking area of the Town Forest. Wang said if there had been a specific or straightforward request staff could have acted on it, but that she was not aware of one, and did not suggest the Rec Board needed to take action at this time. Farnham advised that he was expecting someone to donate money to the Little League Field.

At 7:52pm on a motion by Morse, seconded by Gray, the Board voted 6-0 to adjourn.

Recreation Board Members

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