

**Town of Barre  
Recreation Board  
March 7, 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 were Nathan Federico, Robert Nelson, Lori Bernier, Kevin Spaulding, Steven Maas, Philip Kolling, Tracy Wright, Justin Bolduc, Barre Town Police Chief William Dodge, and staff liaison Assistant Town Manager Elaine Wang.

1. Chair Farnham called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. **Agenda** – Morse motioned to approve the agenda as presented. Gray seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

3. **Minutes** - Rouleau motioned to approve the February 7 minutes as presented. Morse seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

4. **Neighbor** – Nathan Federico lives next to the 44 Brook St. parking lot for the town forest and had asked to discuss his concerns with the Rec Board. His three main concerns were discouraging cliff diving in the town forest quarries, that the neighbors be notified of significant changes to the forest such as the recent parking lot expansion, and speeding on Brook St.

To discourage cliff diving, Farnham encouraged him or the other neighbors to call the police department with any details, such as time of day and plate numbers. Federico said he has called before and the officer told him they couldn't walk 20 minutes into the woods. Rouleau said there is signage in the town forest marquees but that those cliff diving probably aren't reading those.

For notifications, Federico suggested a poster at Lawson's Store, which many of them frequent. Farnham and Wang agreed that could be done. Wang said for significant changes the town could do a direct mailing. Federico said that would be good. Farnham said the purpose of the parking lot expansion was to get visiting cars off Brook St. on busy forest days, not to invite more use. Farnham said the next planned change was to raise up the old truck at 44 Brook St. to celebrate the quarrying history of the property. Federico said that was a great idea.

For speeding, Wang said that would be a matter the Transportation Safety Advisory Committee and she would provide him the details. Federico said there's a child in the neighborhood who rides their bike up and down the street and cars speed right by the child. Farnham said the committee could do a speed study and consider traffic calming. Farnham said the Rec Board could have town forest event organizers tell their participants to be thoughtful of neighbors, and perhaps place cones on the road during those events.

Rouleau and Morse thanked Federico for bringing his concerns to them, as the Board might not know of issues otherwise. Chief Dodge commented that unfortunately it is true, often his department cannot afford to be 40 minutes away from any other part of town, but encouraged Federico to call the police non-emergency line, 802-479-0508, with safety concerns, or 802-479-0509 to speak to him, the police chief. Federico thanked the everyone. Wang said the next agenda item was about a possible change to the forest, if he would like to stay.

5. **Deer Exclosure** – Wang said Washington County Forester Robert Nelson proposed a 20 foot by 20 foot deer exclosure in the town forest. Nelson explained that the purpose was to use fencing to exclude deer from the small area for ten years to show the negative impact deer grazing has on regeneration of tree seedlings and forest health, and educate the public with signage. Farnham asked if Nelson had selected a location. Nelson said no; somewhere that had been recently harvested would be good. Rouleau asked who would remove the fencing after 10 years. Nelson said the Washington County Forester's office. Rouleau and Morse voiced their support. Rouleau mentioned it could be sited to not impact trails. Kevin Spaulding, representing Millstone Trails Association, said they did not have concerns.

Farnham recognized guest Lori Bernier. Bernier had concerns about whether the fencing could trap small animals. Nelson said he did not have details on the fencing and would share them. Bernier asked what the purpose is since we know deer eat vegetation. Nelson said it would raise awareness of the negative impact of deer across the forest landscape across the northeast. Bernier asked what would change. Nelson said how the Barre Town Forest was managed might not change, but the public might discuss with legislators. Wang said it

has been asked whether to continue to allow hunting in the town forest. So, a possibility is the deer exclosure demonstration might result in support for continued hunting. Nelson commented that hunting is the primary feasible way to control deer populations. Federico said people do hunt the town forest, including himself.

Farnham asked Nelson to provide more information on the exclosure, and a GPS location of a proposed site for the Board's next meeting. Nelson agreed, and offered to meet onsite to discuss location. Wang, Farnham and Spaulding said they would participate. Rouleau and Morse said they would try to come also.

**6. Gravel ride** – Steven Maas introduced himself and Philip Kolling as the co-founders of Green Mountain Gravel, a new business that promotes cycling on dirt roads in Central Vermont. Maas said gravel road cycling has become popular, with organized group rides elsewhere in Vermont at capacity within a couple of hours of registration opening. They propose a bike ride centered in Barre Town to add another opportunity and bring spending to the area. Maas described their ideas so far, including starting and finishing at the Rec Area picnic shelter, and estimated they might see up to 250 riders. Rouleau noted port-o-lets and trash service would be needed for that many people. Wang said from the Rec Board they would need approval to use the Millstone West bike path. The town manager's office will handle the picnic shelter reservation. The Selectboard will need to approve use of the roads. Wang asked what happens once riders are on the roads. Kolling said it is typical for gravel riders to be self-supported, partly for insurance reasons. The pair said they would like to partner with the town. Lynds asked about them tabling at the fall and spring festivals. Rouleau made a motion to approve Green Mountain Gravel's reservation request for the Millstone West bike path on October 9, 2022. Wang suggested they plan on appearing on the Selectboard's March 22, 2022 Selectboard meeting.

**7. Facility requests** – a) Vermont Agency of Agriculture requested the Rec Area for a staff day. Because they would not be playing games, Wang said there was no fee. Rouleau made a motion to approve the use pending any other conflicts and receipt of compliant insurance certificate. Gray seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

b) Tracy Wright of Vermont Rustic Moose requested use of the town forest for 4 summer weeks for their kids day camp. Wang reminded Wright of the leash law for dogs. Gray made a motion to approve the request as presented conditioned on compliant insurance. Morse seconded. The motion passed 6-0.

**8. Guests** – There were no guests for a matter not on the agenda.

**9. Egg Hunt 2022** – Gray led the discussion on further planning. She said she would buy the special eggs and prizes. Rouleau made a motion to authorize Gray to spend up to \$100 for this purpose. Morse seconded and the motion passed 6-0. Gray said Bob Bartlett would host a hot chocolate station. Wang read absent Rec Board member Carol Hebert's update, that the Agency of Natural Resources would staff a table to promote their conservation camps, if we provided a table and tent. The Board said they would come up with a table and Farnham said he would collect the town's tent the day before. Those volunteering on the day, April 16, starting at 9am, are Rouleau, Hebert, Fraga, Farnham, Lynds, and Morse. Wang said she would have the bunny suit dry cleaned.

**10. Movie night** – Rouleau said the Rotary agreed to loan us their projector and FM transmitter, but can't provide volunteers. Lynds shared options for screens. Wang asked for details to ensure the town had space to store it if the Rec Board decided to buy a screen. Rouleau said we would borrow movies under the library's license. Lynds said she would ask the library for a list of recommended titles suitable for ages 8-15, and Wang could conduct a survey asking which movie(s) to show. Gray said she would ask the Boy Scouts to provide concessions.

**11. Other activities** – The Board discussed having self-guided math activities at the playgrounds, similar to the self-guided animal hunt activities they did on the bike path, and noted few of them had time to organize this. Lynds said she would try.

**12. Other business** –Farnham gave an update on his initiative to convert the baseball field to also be usable for softball games. After pushback from baseball stakeholders, he revised the idea to be a small portion of dirt at the three bases, leave grass between bases, have dirt at the pitcher's mound, and a portable mound. He shared a picture of the 220-pound, wood and rubber mound. The proposal includes a portable plastic fence. Pins would


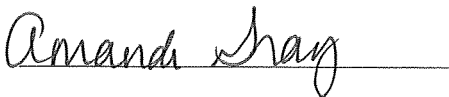
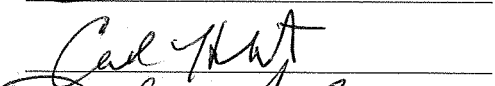

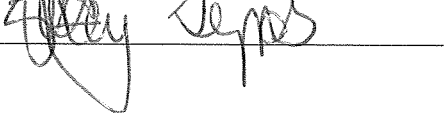
be placed for easy placement of all. Farnham said the president of Barre Community Baseball and Softball was not against this revised idea and they were discussing it at their board meeting on Monday March 14. Wang asked about the lifespan of the mound. Farnham said he didn't know, but that it cost \$3,700. Farnham said the plan was to fundraise for the purchase. Wang asked the Board consider memorializing that baseball uses would have first priority. Farnham said it could be similar to the schools, who have right of first refusal.

**13. Round table** – Rouleau said he would not have capacity to organize the ice cream socials this year, though he would still volunteer the days of, and ask his Ben and Jerry's contact if they could donate ice cream this year. He reported that Green Mountain Fitness fabricated sturdier (still temporary) pickleball nets than the portable ones and wants to provide two for the Barre Town outdoor courts. He asked Wang to work with him to draft an agreement that Green Mountain Fitness would maintain ownership of the nets and be responsible for transporting them at the beginning and of the season.

Farnham asked minutes be emailed to the Board the day they are drafted.

At 8:19pm on a motion by Morse, seconded by Lynds, the Board voted 6-0 to adjourn.

Recreation Board Members

	
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