

Town of Winchendon
Winchendon Parks and Recreation Commission
August 6, 2024 Minutes 6:30PM
DPW Office, First Floor, Town Hall

Call to Order: 6:32pm

Members in attendance: Shaina Cunningham (Coordinator), Deb Bradley (Chair), Dawn Higgins (Vice Chair), Dylan Romanowski, Jennifer Phelps, Deb Kane, Melanie Franklin (Secretary)

Absent Members: Emily Bradley

Non-members present: None

Address any membership changes

Some people have voiced their interest in joining the commission, but have not submitted their letters to Deb Dennis in the Manager's office.

Coordinator's Report

- Action Items Updates
 - Past
 - Spoke to Woo Trucks, food truck festival is scheduled for the last Saturday, June 28th 12-5pm in June. They will bring in the Midway games. Having more food trucks is an ongoing conversation. Do we want more food trucks or just specific trucks. If trucks do not get the revenue they are looking for, they will not book for our event so we need to be intentional with what trucks we choose and what we think will be the most successful.
 - food trucks that we want:
 - Grilled Cheese
 - Pizza
 - Sausage and Peppers
 - Kid friendly ones
 - Drinks –Bubble tea?
 - Woo Trucks also offers vendors that can come too and we could put our vendors in a different location. This will help bring more focus into the town, making it more of a destination for them. Surround the fields with the truck, mid way games and Woo Trucks vendors on the field closest to Grove st. and our vendors on the circle and the side of the field with the battle of the bands.
 - All of the social media pushes have been great! Keep it coming ☺
 - Present
 - Buy local campaign:
 - Working on a contract to put the \$25 vendor season pass out for local vendors. This would exclude some of the specific events such as the Ren faire.
 - Future

- Assistant Coordinator will be joining the team on August 12th and she will have office hours and be event support.
- Financial Update
 - Working on reconciling the accounts to ensure that all of the accounts are up to date.

Old Business

- Recap of past events
 - Movie Nights:
 - Jumanji, Wonka, Shrek
 - These were more successful once we made them free events. The sunshine café also had more success in selling snacks.
 - Make sure the sunshine café sets up a little later than they have been so they can stay through half of the movie.
 - A suggestion was made to walk around with popcorn and snacks to help encourage sales.
 - Another suggestion was made to create snack carriers
 - Concerts
 - Cailte Kelley
 - He is a staple! We had about 75 people out for this concert, which is a great turnout for the GAR venue.
 - For future, we should have yard games for the next one-corn hole, giant jenga, bocce ball etc.
 - Scott Brown
 - 88 attended-low attendance for what we paid.
 - Little Mermen
 - Roughly 200 people attended

We should have something paired with these events. Have an opening band come to get exposure and help enhance the event.

Enchanted evening to offer mixed drinks (both alcoholic and non-alcoholic) that would cater to both generations.

A suggestion was made to have misters at the end of the rows of the amphitheater for the hot days and make the middle island water/splash pad-ish and to sell misting fans at the general store.

- Comedy Night
 - Great turn out. Will go back to the tickets to get a head count.

New Business

- Upcoming Commission Events
 - The Remedy @ GAR
 - Everything Animal's Day with Mr. Aaron 2-4pm on the 17th

- Animal Craze is coming with a full petting zoo but there are no ponies available
 - If it's hot have sprinklers (kept away from the animals)
- Anderson Daniels 7-9pm with touch a truck event.
 - Next year we should building out a touch the truck event to have a roll over demo, vehicle extraction and life flight event.
 - There is a company in Phillipston that has construction trucks we should reach out to as well.
- The Reminiscents with a Cruise In on Sept 7th.
 - Meeting with Gregg on Thursday who is plugged in to the cruise in circuit. Also putting flyers out there and adding them on FB. Putting together a people's choice award.
 - We could get a fancy plastic vehicle, spray paint it gold and glue it to a piece of wood for the trophy.
- Crafternoons
 - Oct. 20th at the senior center-Snack for attendees
 - Create your own luminary
 - Good time to highlight the Ren faire
 - Make one for the faire and make one for yourself
 - Could we do a craft supplies exchange portion for these events
 - "Like new" donations of Material, ropes, ribbons, glue sticks, tape, etc.
 - BYO glue gun
- Renaissance Fair Planning
 - Chair recommends doing a third party audit on the Ren faire financials so that there is a firm grasp on what we are look at for a budget moving forward.
 - Red Apple Farm meeting for Ren Fair 2025
 - A meeting is setup with Al and Nancy to help find a collaboration. The meeting will be either Wednesday or Thursday of this week.
 - We would also like to loop in the Red Apple Farm at our other events
 - Fall fest
 - Haunted trails
 - Festival of lights
 - Etc.
 - Ren Faire Scheduling
 - Melanie made a motion to schedule the Ren faire on April 26-27th due to conflicts earlier in the month
 - Jennifer 2nd
 - All approved motion carried
 - Deb B. made a motion to hold the Wyndonshire Ren Faire annually on the last weekend in April Annually.
 - Dawn 2nd
 - All approved, Motion carried
 - We need to have kids' events going on.
 - Puppet shows

- Paint your own dragon?-check in with the vendors from 2024 to see if they would be willing for us to buy some for this—pricing.
 - Deb B. made a motion to create a Ren Faire sub-committee to help plan the faire.
 - Melanie 2nd the motion
 - All in favor, motion passes
 - This sub-committee will be made up of 2 WPRC committee members minimum with the lead POC being Shaina. Then encourage and incorporate the community/region members' involvement. Meet on 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.
 - First order of business is to build systems that will help make this work much more smoothly.
 - Schedule out our vendors for the following year.
 - Discuss vendor pricing
 - Jousting- waiting to receive quotes
 - Have a crafternoon/workshop to create some things for the Ren faire such as bunting things etc. (include snacks for people)
 - Contest for the food trucks-who decorates the best
 - Dawn should have a booth for information at the faire
- Barn Clean up
 - We will make checklists on August 20th WPRC of all that needs to be done in the Barn.
 - Shaina registered for the day of caring with United Way on Friday September 20th. Getting in on August 20th will give us a sense of what we want to do with the barn so that we can have a list of what needs to be done so we don't waste anyone's time.

Private Events

- Chili Cook Off August 3rd
 - We supported them in advertising, they had a pretty good turn out.
- Winchenstock August 10th
 - Potential rain date being discussed.

Marketing Strategies

- Systems and Clarity
 - Deb B. made a motion for the first 45 minutes of our September 3rd meeting for WPRC standards of operation.
 - Dawn 2nd
 - All approved motion carries
 - Meeting with Clover (POS system)
 - Meeting with Brian and Oketo
- Shaina has a sponsorship magazine she is going to be printing and putting out to the community.

2025 Calendar Planning

- Setting up meetings with all of the local committees putting on events.
- Partnering with Farming is Life
- The Amphitheater needs its own website.

Minutes

- Approve minutes from July 16th, 2024
 - Dawn made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from July 16th 2024.
 - Deb K 2nd
 - All approved motion carries

Other Business

- Committee comments or feedback
 - Fall Festival:
 - Reached out to table talk pies and there is a new department to contact about them donating, Shaina is continuing to follow up.
 - Brian will be pied in the face by the winner of the pie-eating contest.
 - We need to start pushing the Pie baking contest
 - Posting recipes
 - Posting on FB etc.
 - We need better signage and to be more of a focal point
 - Bring back pumpkin painting
 - Do a photo booth with a scarecrow (Dylan volunteered to be on the list for this)
 - Pet parade costumes exchange (prepping for the pet parade at the Halloween event at the park)
 - Start asking people to bring in costumes to the senior center so we have costumes to exchange.
 - We spoke about changing the date of the Halloween haunted trails party.
 - We need to find out when the Clark is having their trunk or treat

Action points:

1. Reach out to the Clark about when Trunk or treat is
2. Research compatibility of dates for the neon alley and haunted party
3. Start advertising for volunteers for the haunted trails

Ensure that we post that animals are not allowed on the trails as they were getting hurt because of owners/pets getting scared.

- Winchendon Wheels: family bike run to get people out and active on their bikes.
- We would like to create anchor events to happen with full day events
 - Wyndonshire
 - Founders day
 - Food Truck Festival
 - Haunted Happenings
 - Festival of Lights
 - Etc.
 - A suggestion was made for a Comicon/Steam punk event, video game event
- Bring back Trivia and maybe Bingo

- Holiday Decorations:
 - Light poles
 - Water wheel
 - Cannons/tree
 - WCP
 - Gazebo
 - Giant bike and tree in Grout park (have to get permission)
 - Reach out to the garden club to help keep an eye on lights etc for if the lights go out or need to be replaced etc.
 - Need a date to put up and take it down. (right after Thanksgiving and depending on how long the snow lasts)
- Around the World day
 - Cultural food vendors
 - Different cultural acts
- Half-way to St. Patty's Day:
 - if we only have 1 band, see if we can get an opening band?
 - Reach out to a couple of beer vendors
 - step dancers, Kilt Contest
 - Pair it with a Scavenger hunt?

Adjournment: Dawn made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:06pm

Jennifer 2nd

All approved, motion carries