

**AUBURN RECREATION & SPECIAL EVENTS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES**

March 19, 2014

6:30 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Dave Gonyea, Ravi Sharma, Dana Staples, Eric Audette, Dave Sterling, Tizz Crowley, Sue Patneau and Dan Poisson

ABSENT: Phil Savignano, and Bob Sevigny

Guests: Dan Bilodeau, Matthew Brooks and Kimberly Davis-Lemieux

Introductions

I. Minutes of February 12, 2014 meeting were reviewed.

Motion by Tizz Crowley to approve. Second – Eric Audette

II. Ingersoll Repurposing - Report was submitted in its draft form

A. Sale of Chillers

1. Dave questioned whether or not this was an advisory board issue.
2. It was believed that the chillers were not supposed to go out to bid until it was decided what to do with Ingersoll. Exploring uses of the building included the ice field. It was not eliminated.
3. Dave will ask the city manager about the sale of the chillers and get back to the board.
4. Sue Patneau asked if there is any value in meeting with Norris Ingersoll to verify that there are no restrictions on the sale of the chillers? Ravi explained that the chillers were purchased through CIP bond money.
5. With the chillers gone, the board's recommendation options are limited.
6. Ravi stated that the proceeds from the sale will stay with Ingersoll.
7. Initial thoughts about the repurposing were sought. The report had some useful information, but was not as detailed as it could have been. Dan felt that the report was a waste of money because he felt that the board should have come up with some repurposing ideas and then should have had the report done based on those ideas. Additionally, he felt that the decision to sell the chillers was made in advance of the board's assessment of the re-use of the facility. Dave stated that once it was decided to build a new arena, it was assumed that Ingersoll would be shut down and be used for something completely different. The job of the board is to make suggestions for the use of the building that would be best for the community.
8. Next step – Dana suggested that a sub-committee be created to put some time into getting some ideas outlined. It was also suggested to ask the city manager if a decision has already been made so that no more time is spent on exploring options if it is not necessary.
9. Dave stated that the board's job is to be advisory in nature, to staff, as a conduit for questions, and an outlet for resources. He feels that the group should identify the things that the group likes.
10. Norway Savings Bank Arena needs more programs so that more ice time can be sold. Figure skating competitions and other programs should be developed.

2.

The arena is under-utilized. Ingersoll is not needed as a rink anymore, and the board needs to agree upon that and move forward. Dave recommended submitting the board's views as to what the building should be used for, but not direction as to how to put those uses in place.

Motion by Dana Staples that the group agrees that Ingersoll will no longer be utilized as an ice rink. Seconded by Sue Patneau. All in favor.

11. The options for the building must be revenue-producing.

Motion by Tizz Crowley that whatever the building is used for that it be a revenue-producing option. Second by Eric Audette. All in favor.

12. Dan asked if there was money available to support the facility. Is the city committed to taking on a bond?

13. Three options for re-purposing: Courts, Turf and Tennis

14. Eric Audette felt that there are enough basketball courts in existence already and it limits the use of the building. Would turf or rubber flooring enable the most use, keeping revenue generation in mind.

15. Dave asked if it made sense to put a work group together rather than making decisions as a board. The board felt that having a one-hour time limit made in depth discussions difficult.

16. Turf vs. Rubber – This will drive the outcome of the re-purposing. The board was encouraged to speak to Ravi about what would work better. Three people volunteered to be part of a work group along with Ravi to discuss the flooring options. Dave Gonyea was asked to participate as well.

17. Eric Audette asked about putting out a blast survey. Ravi stated that he uses Teamsideline instead of Survey Monkey. Teamsideline can be customized to what we want to know.

III. Snowmobile Clubs – Funding Recommendations

A. Recommendation to advise funding for the three snowmobile clubs. Ravi solicited the three clubs for information as to what their funding requests would be, trail maintenance logs - what they are doing and when they are doing it. State of Maine trail maintenance grant information from the past was provided as well.

B. Dan Bilodeau stated that 26% of snowmobile registrations, at the state level, goes back to municipalities and is supposed to be given back to the snowmobile clubs. In Auburn, an average of \$3800.00 per year of snowmobile registrations comes back from the state to the municipalities. Out of the local 9 municipalities, 50% and as much as 140% is given back to the snowmobile clubs. The mayor would not only like to see the money given back to the clubs, but for every dollar received from the state, \$6.00 in new revenue or in-kind work be generated. Permission has been received to groom an existing trail, build a shed and groom additional trails with two spurs to enlarge the trail. This trail can be used by skiers, snowshoers, etc. He would like to have a recommendation from the board to return a portion of the snowmobile registration monies to be returned to the snowmobile clubs.

Then the city manager will have to either approve it or not. Several years ago, the reimbursement to the snowmobile clubs ceased. This item does not appear as a line item in any revenue account in the budget. This money would help to defray the costs of the three clubs. Money is raised in other ways to purchase groomers, etc. used for trail maintenance.

Motion by Eric Audette to make a recommendation to the city council to approve reimbursing 100% of the registration money returned to the city from the state to the three snowmobile clubs. Seconded by Sue Patneau. All in favor.

IV. Upcoming Special Events

- A. A spreadsheet was presented listing all of the special events that will be held in the city on an annual basis, previously identified by the board. It is now broken down by season, host and contact information.

Ravi encouraged members to volunteer for the Spring Celebration if they have the time. Flyers will be going out to the schools, will be put on the website and will be sent to the Sun-Journal.

V. Board member Goals/Objectives

- A. Everyone gave 3 items that they would like to spend their time on during their time on the board.
- B. Dave asked if there are any other sub-committees needed for any of the goals to do more research on.
- C. Dan suggested getting information on facilities/schools. Ravi stated that a report will be available next month with that information. The report will inventory what is available publically and privately, but will also hash out the facility schedules, how much is it utilized and not utilized and start looking at demographics, used from a planning perspective. How many gyms should you have for a community of our size? This can dovetail into the Ingersoll report to indicate what the building is needed for.
- D. Preliminary report, that was released a year ago should be made available and compared to the new report to see what the differences are.
- E. Fields and facilities committee was established consisting of Dana Staples and Dan Poisson. It was suggested that everyone be informed as to when the sub-committees were going to meet.
- F. A sub-committee was established to review, investigate and make recommendations regarding the current offerings and current gaps for elder residents, consisting of Sue Patneau and Tizz Crowley
- G. It was requested that a Special Events Committee be established. Mel Hamlyn, and Cathy McDonald indicated that they wanted to be on this committee for the Balloon Festival, Liberty Festival and the Dempsey Challenge.

- H. The Fields and Facilities and Senior Citizens committees were established for the time being. Others will be established next month. Invite Cathy & Mel to the meeting.

VI. Open

- A. Matthew Brooks, from Lewiston, came forward to propose an idea to the board, to host the first annual Fall Festival and Haunted House. Open up opportunities for the disabled and for people with transportation issues and families. The second largest holiday is Halloween and his goal is to bring attention to the haunted house attraction. This would be a recreation-sponsored event at a cost of \$6.00 to \$13.00 per person to participate. The event would include pumpkin carving, face painting, pie sales, and include the local farmers markets, etc. Ninety percent (90%) of households with children participate in Halloween activities. He has not approached Lewiston with program. Dave Gonyea indicated that the board would take this information under advisement and that a response would be given to Mr. Brooks through the recreation department.
- B. Ravi explained that Matt has been communicating with him through email, stating that he wanted to bring his ideas to someone for implementation. Dave wanted to know what the board felt before going any further with it. Sue suggested that when brings an issue/idea to Ravi, that they should be put on the agenda instead of having to wait through the entire meeting to get to the Open Session. Dave agreed, but suggested that instead of just meeting once a month, that Ravi email the entire group two weeks following the meeting to update everyone on things that have happened during the past couple of weeks. That way, everyone would know what has changed prior to the next meeting. He urged the board to not be bench warmers but players. In the future, Dave asked Ravi to send an email to the group when someone has contacted him about something that he is bringing to the meeting so that the board is aware of it ahead of time. Also put the item on the agenda earlier in the meeting.

VII. Adjournment