

Shutesbury Recreation Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 24, 2023

4:00, Zoom

Meeting begun: 4:01

Present: Barbara Bigelow, Ann Brigham, Christine Marglin (taking minutes), Christine Robinson

Absent: Elaine Puleo, BZ Reily

Guest: Brian Giggey

Approval of minutes from Jan 6 meeting

Agenda:

1. Leveret Animal Sanctuary Field Trip (Christine M.)

2. Ice Skates Update (Christine R.)

3. Orienteering

a. There were too many roadblocks to creating an orienteering course in Shutesbury, among them getting permissions for any land that is outside of Shutesbury, and if the land is completely within Shutesbury, finding someplace with a sufficient network of trails to enable the creation of a map. One area that the committee initially thought was promising Julian’s Bower but the trail basically makes a circle and the map maker said this would not work well for orienteering.

b. However, an orienteering map has been made for Cherry Hill Golf Course, and one of the people involved with the site offered in the past to oversee an orienteering event for us.

i. Barbara proposes that she explore this, and if it looks feasible, that we plan an event in the fall.

4. Create calendar of events with proposed dates

a. Leverett Animal Sanctuary: mid-April to avoid conflict with the Invasive Plant workshop, the farm tour, and the Family Field Day

b. Invasive Plant workshop: late spring to early summer is the prime time for a workshop on the eradication of Japanese knotweed as well as the identification of other invasives by their leaves

c. Ancient Pony Farm: early summer

d. Family Field Day: We did this the second Saturday in June last year. That would put it at June 10.

5. Budget Update

Exercise classes at the Library	1500
Invasive Plant Workshop	600
Ancient Pony Farm	300
Ice Skates	250

Animal Sanctuary	250
Family Field Day	100
Total	300 0

6. Pickleball

a. Brian Giggey has expressed an interest in getting pickleball courts in Shutesbury. He's been playing for awhile and believes it would be a great fit in Shutesbury. Barbara invited him to the meeting because of his interest.

b. There are two ways to bring pickleball to Shutesbury:

i. The first is to build outdoor courts. Barbara did a cursory review of costs and found that there is quite a range but with an average of about \$45,000. This includes labor, clearing, grading, concrete installation, fencing, lighting, painting and net.

1. A location would have to be identified and grant applications made.

ii. The second is to create indoor courts. A woman in Leverett has been able to create a court in the Leverett Elementary School. She was interested in having a place to play pickleball in Leverett and went to the elementary school. With the okay from the principal and the support of the PE instructor, a pickleball court was "built" in the elementary school. They have hours on Sunday afternoons and two weekday evenings. The demand has been considerable and she is thinking about expanding the hours. They only have room for one court but she thinks there is room for two courts in the Shutesbury Elementary School gym.

1. Here is the caveat: She or her designee must be there for all of the hours pickleball is being played. She is passionate about the sport and loves the social aspect of it so enjoys the commitment. What this suggests the Rec Committee cannot take the lead on this unless there is a member who wants to be present for all of the hours.

2. Here is a possible plan: Find someone who is as passionate as the woman in Leverett.

iii. Barbara spoke for some time with the woman in Leverett and she has agreed to talk with anyone interested in replicating what she did.

Leverett sanctuary: Christine M reports on a visit to Jefferson Safe Haven in Leverett, she will go back to them and ask about visiting, what programming they could offer, and discuss dates in April, and the donation of \$250 that we can provide.

Ice skates: Christine R reports on ice skates for SES students. Ten vouchers of \$25 will be put in Mr. Cara's hands to give out to families. Vouchers are for Gateway Hardware in Springfield. Families take vouchers to Rachel at Gateway, purchase skates, and we pay Gateway. It takes two weeks to get checks cut. It is likely that ten families will use the vouchers, possibly for used or new skates, which range up to \$70 for children's skates.

Orienteering: Barbara found it too complicated to have an orienteering course in Shutesbury. In Amherst an orienteering map has been made for Cherry Hill Golf Course. The husband of someone Barbara and Ann know is involved, and is willing to help us if we go ahead with it. The maps are available free of charge.

Calendar of events: we need to schedule Ancient Pony Farm, and it's been suggested that we do so when more is growing than was the case during our last visit.

Invasive plant workshop: Japanese knotweed is Brian, the workshop leader's, area of expertise and something many people in town are very concerned about. Christine R has heard this weed may be used to treat Lyme Disease. Ann: Last year he talked about how we think of invasive plants as having only negative qualities and that this isn't necessarily true, and perhaps something he can address.

Budget: we look likely to utilize our entire budget.

Brian Giggey of Shutesbury joined the meeting at 4:37 to discuss pickle ball.

Brian had written the committee a while ago to inquire about building an outdoor court. Barbara discovered that Leverett has an indoor court at their elementary school. Brian feels pickle ball would be a great fit for Shutesbury. He plays in South Hadley. He has spoken with the SES principal about using the gym, which would cost \$10 per day and require a CORI check for anyone accessing the key to the building. \$5 per person to play. He's gotten interest from around 15 residents. He has purchased the net and balls and paddles for about \$200. Pickle ball is a smaller version of tennis, or larger version of ping pong. Sessions to demonstrate or learn? Equipment? The \$5 would offset cost of using the school, and then not certain. There would be a liability form. People, such as Brian, who are staffing the sessions could teach beginners. There might be some times specified for beginners. Once per week, Saturday, February 4, 9-12, Saturday February 18.

We would not be staffing. If our experience mirrors Leverett, we won't have problem getting interested people involved. There will not be a cost for the committee. Barbara wants to explore leaving the nets there at SES for the use of the school kids. It's a lot of fun, easy to learn enough to play quickly, and gets people moving. Flexible about timing. Pickle ball is played in doubles and is very social. People will reserve time slots. Barbara and Brian will meet and arrange further.

Meeting adjourned: 4:58

Next meeting: Tuesday, February 28, 4 pm