

Moretown Recreation Committee Meeting
Draft Minutes

Meeting Date – December 12th, 2023

Meeting Time – 6:30 pm, Location – Town Office

Members Present: Chris Stephenson, Sue Werntgen, Lee-Anne Martin, Neal Mostov, Saiward Turnbaugh

Public Present:

None

Meeting called to order at: 6:39 PM

1. Public Comment

Laura Arnesen, Warren, VT Exec Director MRV Rec District
Mary Lou

2. Agenda - Special Meeting (short agenda)

- Review Mad River Valley Recreation District Case Statement

3. Mad River Valley Recreation District Case Statement

<https://www.moretownvt.org/minutes-and-agendas/recreation-committee-minutes-agendas/>

A copy of the MRV Rec District case statement can be found in the November 27th minutes following the link above; notes on our initial discussion are also recorded. As a continued discussion from the prior meeting we jumped into the agenda largely with Q&A and discussion.

The net ask is to take the historically ongoing 2021, 2022, 2023 annual \$2,250 contribution and increase that to \$3,000 in 2024. This contribution increase is tied to the facility maintenance costs and improvements for the Mad Park fields off of Airport Road. Then in 2025 the total ask expands to a \$20,000 annual funding partnership. For comparison Waitsfield, Fayston, and Warren are each currently paying \$40,000 annually. Reflecting on the case statement the committee discussed the main 2 components of the funding that provide value to Moretown residents.

(1) The first is the recreational leagues around the valley illustrated in the Case Statement. Currently Moretown residents comprise over 20% of the utilization in those programs and up to this point the full burden of these costs has rested on neighboring towns. To adjust for this inequity while realizing that many Moretown residents are closer to towns like Berlin, Northfield, Middlesex/Montpelier, and Waterbury the funding ask has been reduced to \$20,000 compared to the other towns at \$40,000. In effect Moretown would pay 14% of the overall fees while utilizing 20% of the programming. The committee generally felt this was a fair ask. While the fees don't cover all programming costs for individuals or families, it materially reduces the costs of the programming making it more accessible for residents as they sign up and register their children. Further, scholarship programs provide additional need based support to remove

barriers to participation. Programing examples can be found here: <https://www.mrvrd.org/>

(2) The 2nd primary value proposition to Moretown residents is the MRV Rec District grant program. In 2022 the MRV Rec District awarded \$49,000 to local non-profits and municipalities. These entities provide services to the greater valley residents and visitors. Hard data is not currently available on per entity utilization but it is undoubtable that Moretown residents materially use the services provided from organizations like: VAST/Mad River Ridge Runners, Skatium, Mad River Path, Mad River Riders, Couples Field, Warren Skate Park, Nordic/Bill Koch League, Little League, Lacrosse, etc. 4 years of grant detail can be found here: <https://www.mrvrd.org/projects-funded>

Moretown could take advantage of the grant program in numerous ways through organizations like the Moretown Rec Committee, Morefest Committee, and the ECO program.

A general discussion followed on the challenges moretown faces in collecting tax revenues and fees that would benefit from the economic growth related to increased recreational facilities and programming. This would be a valuable discussion for the Select Board to consider given the rec committee had more questions than answers about business income, small/home business income, Air B&B / Short-term rentals, event facilities, etc. feed funding back into the Moretown tax base.

Chris made a motion that 'we the Moretown recreation committee have reviewed the MRV Rec District Case Statement with the MRV Rec District Executive Director Laura Arnesen, and support the ask to move the Case Statement to the SelectBoard for consideration.' Susan 2nd'd. All in favor. No further discussion.

Next Regular Meeting:

Monday, January 22nd, at 5:45pm in the Town Office

Proposed Agenda:

- Approve Minutes
- Budget Updates
- Town Forest Management Plan Update
- Ecofest
- Fields / Drainage project
- Storywalk Relocation
- Trails
- By Laws status
- Succession Planning

Meeting adjourned at: 7:39 pm