

Mad River Valley Recreation District Board Meeting

October 18, 2022 General Wait House, Waitsfield

Attending in person: Alice Rodgers, Mary Simmons, Doug Bergstein, Shevonne Travers, Laura Arnesen Attending via Zoom: Molly Bagnato, Luke Foley

Not in attendance: Derek Bennett, Peter Oliver, John Stokes

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 when Luke was able to join to make a quorum. Shevonne made a motion to approve minutes from the September 20 Board Meeting. All in favor.

VOREC Update

The Q&A session with the state last week went well. There is \$20k in grant funds for a social marketing program but no one has the time to pull this off nor has it started. VOREC agreed to the \$20k to be used as follows: \$15k into Community recreation Visioning and \$5k into overall Project Management.

Annie from the town office wanted to meet with Ross and Laura about the downtown trail. Annie is not sure they can get, or even want to get, permits for this trail. They don't want to jeopardize the whole project if they can't get permits for the downtown trail and there is an alternate connection utilizing Fiddler's Walk. Laura sent the state an email today asking about changing the downtown connector trail. Still working with the state about permitting across Route 100. This will be covered in a meeting tomorrow with VTrans.

Alice brought up VOREC timeline-we need to sign the grant agreement soon, so this is the time to make any modifications.

The Chamber is moving into the building owned by J. Morris next week, Valley Reporter is covering this. There should be a short article about the grant cycle coming up in the next issue.

The other tenant besides the Rec Hub and the Chamber is Cousin's Brewing. Local Folks is not opening back up. They are looking for someone to do the food side of things.

Mad River Park Update

On the 25th Kingsbury will fill in trenches and backfill.

Is it too late to sow grass seed? Laura says the advice that she's heard is to not sow grass now. Shevonne to follow up on this.

Fundraising update- we have a little over \$7k to raise. In December we will hear from the Foundation for Rural Services (the application was through Waitsfield Telecom) for up to \$5k.

There are six donations totaling \$350 so far on Go Fund Me.

Do we wait until December to see if the big funds come in before we ask others for money? Waitsfield PTO is still deciding. Wanted to see how the Ski and Skate Sale went and then will let us know.

There is also some money in unclaimed grants - \$1k from Skatium, \$3,500 from Warren Skate Park and Little League. If the money doesn't come in from the FRS we can ask soccer and LAX teams for their email lists in order to reach out to families with the Go Fund Me info.

VOREC Update part 2

VOREC needs bookkeeping services so that Laura can stay focused on the project management side of things- she can't do both. Laura had a meeting with a potential bookkeeper for grant tracking and bookkeeping. VOREC is a reimbursement program so there is a lot to be tracked. Every quarter we submit a progress report and an expenditure spreadsheet for reimbursement. The other need is support for the visioning project. Laura, Phil and Ross will convene on this and interview the potential independent contractor.

The Rec District will put up \$15k to pay for a bookkeeper. Other partners will either reduce their annual grant requests for two years or in the case of Friends, the 5K that had previously been earmarked for Marketing will be used for Project Management. Separately we will hire a Visioning Project Manager. At some point, that role becomes larger.

The Rec District has been given 4 hours of pro bono help for the contractual agreement between partners.

VOREC is a signature piece of our work and it serves a broad range of needs. This is as big as the purchase of Mad River Park. How do we balance our commitments to VOREC with the other pieces of our commitments?

Does Laura need more money to be the Project Manager of VOREC? No, she doesn't want to work more than 24 hours per week.

Doug mentions that Laura has brought down her comp time from an apex of 55 to 18. Helpful information in terms of how much time her current commitments are taking.

How can we help Laura?

- Start with Grant Program. Luke and Doug will write annual letter.
 - Reminder that we will all read and submit questions to potential grantees by 11/15, our next Board Meeting.
- Monthly meeting support- Alice and Bear will put together Agendas.
- Another huge help would be the contract piece with the partners of VOREC. We have 4 hours of pro bono time but after that we need help. Could be a simple MOU. Alice will support Laura with this.
- Molly and Bear can help with website updates
- Town Meeting presentation - Laura has drafted this. Laura will set up the dates and ask for help as she needs one resident from the town to accompany her.
- Shevonne will take the lead on Mad River Park next steps- finding an irrigator (running the new irrigation system). Robert may be interested (Mike's son). Sheveonne will work with John to present
- Dog Park update- Is Derek still able to be the point person from the board on this? Would be great to have his support.

Budget Review

How much do we want in the reserve fund? Question is, what is this for? What are the variables? Is this for off-cycle grants? Do we need to justify this with the towns? No, don't think so. Laura thinks we need more than \$7K. Board agrees to increase the reserve to \$10k.

Doug moves to approve the budget. All in favor.

Doug announces that we got \$1,500 from Waitsfield PTO for Mad River Park!

Reminders

- November 15th we will meet and then we need one extra day- the 16th or the 17th to review grant applications.
- Luke can submit his responses before this week as he will need to be out.

Motion to adjourn by Bear. All in favor.