

Mad River Valley Recreation District Board Meeting  
November 28th, 2023, General Wait House, Waitsfield

Attending in person: Alice Rodgers, Corey Ayotte, Molly Bagnato, Doug Bergstein, and Luke Foley.

Attending via Zoom: John Stokes, Peter Oliver, Bear Simmons

### Special Meeting

1. Welcome and review agenda.

Alice: Reviewed the process for reviewing the grants and presentations.

2. Continue grant discussions from the Nov. 14 MRVRD meeting.

**Couples Club:** Howard- Treasurer of the Club. Mad River Little League and Mad River Bocce are the main clients. The pavilion is also available for use by others. Recently replaced a backstop on one of the fields. \$3,300 grant request for mowing, maintenance, etc.

Luke: In the past, there was a concern about the bocce courts being so close to the Little League field. Have you considered moving the courts?

Howard: Replacing the backstop has helped with this.

**Mad River Path:** Mac Rood- \$6,000 grant request for signage, mostly around dog usage. Adding signs to the kiosks to facilitate a positive relationship with people and pets.

Alice: What is the role of the naturalist?

Mac: I will need to get back to you about this.

Alice: Asked about zoning.

Mac: Signs are underneath existing signs and within the footprint

Luke: We have lost some great trails because of dogs, so signs that help with this are welcome.

Molly: Are signs mostly around leashing or poop?

Mac: The primary goal is for dogs to be under control so people feel safe and not bothered by animals.

**Bill Koch League:** Brie- Lease gear to a large number of participants and additional kids not in the program. \$3,000 grant request (classic skis, skate skis, boots, and poles). Need an update on much of the equipment.

Corey: How old is much of the equipment?

Brie: Most current equipment is over 5 years old

Peter: Could any of the equipment be sold?

Brie: Most of it is not able to be resold. May be able to donate to local schools. Branching out to provide a program for Moretown kids on a different day.

**Mad River Ridge Runners:** Lisa- Groom 52 miles of winter use trails in the valley. \$7,315 grant request, \$6,500 for maintenance/repair, new lights on groomer, cones/signs.

Laura: Asked why the request has gone up so much from last year.

Lisa: The Groomer needs a new belt for track and welding. Belt on track \$1370, plus \$1,000 labor. Welding on frame \$1,000. These are repairs that have not been needed in the past.

Peter: Will these be the figures we will be seeing in the future or is this a one-time issue?

Lisa: We are saving for a new groomer, so hopefully not figures we will continue to see.

Molly: Do you ask other people besides snowmobiles to contribute towards the trails?

Brie: No, only snowmobiles at this time.

Bear: How many of the trails that MRRR maintains are in the Valley?

Brie: Majority in the Valley but includes Washington County

**Mad River Co-ed Softball:** Need clay for the fields \$3,000-5,000 grant request. Discussion around possible sharing of transportation with Little League but this doesn't seem possible.

Peter: Is there a participation fee for softball?

Cory: Each team pays \$250, with an average of 8 teams

Doug: Possible sponsorships from area businesses.

**Mad Marathon, Mad Valley Sports, Inc.:** Dori Ingalls- Launched registration for Mad Marathon already. More families than in past years attended the race this year. Add 5 & 10K, concert. Attracting people from all over to the Valley. \$6000 grant request.

Peter: Has there been a study of the economic impact of the marathon?

Dori: Yes, \$1.7 million. The biggest challenge is accommodations.

**Seniors in the Sunshine:** Onome- Community Service Project- to help people who are older spend time outdoors to enjoy the natural resources we have today. Partnered with the senior center. Beginning a gardening club- additional raised garden bed to add those at the center already. Get seniors outside and encourage local gardeners to interact with the seniors. \$482.50 grant request for materials and supplies.

Peter: What exactly will be targeted in this project, flowers, vegetables, etc.?

Onome: Currently focusing on vegetables that can be picked and used, and also can be donated to the food pantry.

**Warren Rec (Brooks Field):** Doug- Given authority to move forward to do what needs to be done. Working with Warren PTO to brainstorm ideas for Brooks Field. Starting with portapotties and a structure near the skate park. \$2,785 grant request for the structure. Labor time will be donated. Trees will need to be taken down, waiting on a quote for this.

3. Deliberation: \$58, 153 has been requested, we've budgeted for \$50, 000.

Alice: Are there any of these that we can automatically say we are going to award?

Luke: In the past, we have looked at historical grant funding versus new initiatives. Also, looking at demographics we don't typically hit.

Alice: Many of these we anticipate to receive yearly. Couples and Seniors in the Sunshine seem like automatic ones.

Luke: The amount requested is a good price for the amount of use the fields get.

**Senior in the Sunshine:** Approved \$483

**Couples Club** Approved \$3,300

**Ridge Runners:** Approved \$3,185 to be earmarked specifically for:  
Safety Equipment (\$815), purchase of new track belt (\$1,370) and frame welding (\$1,000)

Bear: Ridge Runners are grooming many trails that are not a part of MRVRD. Are other towns Waterbury, Duxbury, and Moretown contributing?

Luke: Clarified that they groom in Fayston as well. Are there other options for funding through VAST?

Doug: \$1,500 income from VAST

Alice: Suggested earmarking certain portions of the request.

Molly: Points out that there is a small number of participants compared to other groups.

Bear: Does the 65% participation include Duxbury and Moretown? Looking at the trails they are servicing and the number of Valley participants seems like a big ask.

Doug: Suggesting \$3000

Peter: Safety equipment and track (materials, no labor) would be \$3,185.

Alice: With labor cost, it would \$4,215.

This grant allocation is a close percentage of what was asked for and awarded last year.

**Coed-Softball-** Approved \$3,500

**Mad River Marathon:** Approved \$5,000

How many local people are participating?

Luke: 5k and 10k increased participation

Bear: Is it a non-profit?

Luke: It has shifted to a non-profit.

Peter: Largest economic income of all the other groups asking for grants.

Luke: Comfortable with \$5,000 and may change based on

**Bill Koch:** Approved \$3,000

In alignment with what we paid last year.

**Mad River Path:** Approved \$4,000

Signs are very expensive, could they be made in a less expensive way?

Molly: Suggests \$3000

Luke: The path is used by a large number of people, and we have lost trails due to misuse of trails. Suggest more than \$3000.

Alice: Not sure positive messaging will make a big impact on the dog problem.

Luke: Start with \$3000 for signs and \$1000 for education.

Peter: \$4000 is a good number.

Molly: Would receptacles for the poop bags help with the problem instead of signs?

Alice: Signs main job is to keep dogs on the leash. Propose \$4000 for signs and if they have an impact may provide more funding.

Mad River Riders did not request money this year. Working on other grant opportunities and other funding opportunities.

**Mad River Youth Basketball:** Approved \$5,000

Bear: Should we offer \$4000 like last year?

Luke: The program has grown tremendously and rivals other programs.

Molly: Are there ways to buy the balls in bulk to reduce the cost?

Luke: Is there a way to share resources with other programs?

**Fayston PTO:** Approved \$4,700

There is a lot of energy around fundraising. Questions about how many adults will use the court? It would be nice to support the playground since many families use the playground. Suggested we should support one hoop. Current hoops are not adjustable so not all students can access current hoops. Offer \$4,200 to get close to the amount for the hoops

**Warren Skate Park:** Approved \$5,000

Good deal, lots of people use the park all the time.

Peter: They use the money wisely and put a lot of volunteer time into so should receive a total \$5000.

**Skatium:** Approved \$4,070

The Board has been reconstituted, and needs to be open and operational to make future improvements. Need people to be using it to be excited about fundraising.

Concerns about past support which has not resulted in improvements. Alice feels that the new board is going to be involved and putting in the time.

Peter: This request is for specific materials and improvements. Also, one of the only winter recreation facilities.

Bear: Unique facility that is attempting to adapt to climate change.

**Warren Rec. Committee:** Approved \$2,785

Good investment.

Doug moves to approve our grant funding allocations to a total of \$49,023. Luke seconds. All approved.

#### 4. Other Business:

- MRVRD Budget Changes:

Luke moves to approve the amended budget.

- Moretown Case Statement

Suggested to remove the line "There are no plans for an increase at this time."

Doug moves to approve and carry forward the Moretown Case Statement with the line "There are no plans for an increase at this time." omitted. Cory seconds. All approve.