

**TOWN OF RYE – BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Rye Day Committee**  
**Friday, April 05, 2019**  
**3:00 p.m. – Rye Town Hall**

*Selectman Present: Chair Phil Winslow, Vice-Chair Keriann Roman and Selectman Bill Epperson*

*Others Present: Conservation Commission Chair Sally King, Heritage Commission Chair Bev Giblin, Finance Director/Assistant Town Administrator Becky Bergeron, Recreation Director Lee Arthur and Linda Toumpas*

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Chair Winslow called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and led the pledge of allegiance.

**II. Discussion on budget and funding options**

Vice-Chair Roman gave an update. She explained that she received information from Kingston regarding their three-day event. She stated that she has started to create a budget based on this information. She explained that Rye did not appropriate any funds in the budget for this purpose so any money that is spent on this event would have to come from donations.

Vice-Chair Roman reported that Kingston has a fund in their treasurer's report for their home day that has a balance of \$140,000. Kingston has had their celebration for many years and they start planning for each event a year in advance. They have ten subcommittees. Each of the subcommittees have five to six responsibilities and each subcommittee has five to six members.

Vice-Chair Roman recommended that if the Rye Committee starts now and meet once a month. Get the subcommittees in place, start working on fund raising and what the event is going to look like, it is going to take a year to put it together. She suggested that the date could also be more flexible, maybe in June before it gets too hot.

Heritage Commission Chair Bev Giblin stated that she thinks the idea is great. However, given the scope and size of the Kingston event, she feels that it is way more than what she thought Rye was planning. She added that Kingston's event is so complex. She said that she can see the Rye event starting very small and growing over time. It would not be the first time an event started without any money and was successful.

Selectman Epperson asked what the vision was for a small event.

Vice-Chair Roman stated that originally it started as a bar-b-que at the Goss Farm. There was a lot of enthusiasm so the talk became, "What if we have a town-wide grand event?" and it was moved to Parson's Field.

Bev Giblin stated that the Kingston event was amazing. She added that it should be a road map of what to aspire to someday.

Vice-Chair Roman pointed out that Kingston has a purchase order system. If a deposit is put down on an item or service, it is run through the town's recreation department and is reimbursed by donations. They also have a business food and vendor application. Even though Rye's is going to be smaller, these are all things that Rye has to have. Vice-Chair Roman stated that the Board of Selectmen want to be involved in the first event for Rye. However, given all the pieces that are involved, she does not feel that they will be able to take this on between now and August.

Chair Winslow suggested that the definition of success, regardless of the scope, is that as people leave the event they are saying, "This was a great time, there were no glitches, it ran smoothly." He added that he feels that they do not have the manpower to drive this. He stated that he is really concerned about moving forward so rapidly. He recommended doing something on a small scale, such as doing something to highlight the Goss Farm at the Farm.

Conservation Commission Chair Sally King suggested falling back on the chicken dinner idea. She stated that it was a fund raiser for the Goss Farm, but it was not done at the Farm.

Recreation Director Lee Arthur suggested an alternate concept. She stated that she has wanted to do a concert series at Parson's Field for a long time. One of the draw backs is that there cannot be any type of permanent structure on the field, such as a tent. She pointed out that North Hampton has been doing it for years on Wednesday nights and it has been successful. She noted that North Hampton's Concert Series is geared more towards seniors. She suggested that knowing that the Rye event was original to promote Goss Farm, maybe there could be a concert series at Goss Farm for maybe three or four weeks. There could be a band set up and maybe one interactive activity for the kids. It would build community from the prospective of "Did you hear, that on Wednesday night, there is a Concert at Goss Farm?". She stated that she could pull this off, right out of the gate for a couple of thousand dollars, with no hesitation.

Heritage Commission Chair Bev Giblin agreed; however, it depended on how big this would be and what the goal was. Would this be an annual event? If so, it would be better to wait and do it right the first time.

Vice-Chair Roman stated that they do want it to become an annual event.

Linda Toumpas stated that she feels that planning this in four months is impossible. It takes an enormous amount of people to pull this off. She suggested that if the event seems like it is focused on children's actives, then there is a potential of losing the seniors and people without children.

Everyone agreed that the event should be multi-generational.

Selectman Epperson asked if the Fourth of July Celebration could be expanded.

Recreation Director Lee Arthur stated that she has tried starting earlier on the fourth and has not gotten the attendance. She stated that she feels that people are busy at home with family get togethers on the fourth during the day. It is also hard to get volunteers to work on the fourth. She pointed out that the

budget for the fourth is \$5,200. She reported that last year she spent \$4,900. She pointed out that there is also a lot of competition from other communities with getting vendors. It is more profitable for the vendors to go to the larger events.

Vice-Chair Roman pointed out that the fourth is a big vacation week as well. She stated that she would like it to be scheduled as a whole new event day. She reminded everyone that the purpose for this meeting today was to decide whether the event would be this year or to wait a year and keep the committee meeting once a month and planning for 2020.

Selectman Epperson recommended keeping the communication piece going. He suggested having a booth at the Memorial Day event and at the Fourth of July to advertise and to create some synergy for the project.

Chair Winslow reminded the members that the genesis of the event was to highlight the Goss Farm. Previously, Jaci Grote held it at her place. He asked if they wanted to consider doing something at the Goss Farm this year?

Conservation Commission Chair Sally King stated that the previous dinners were held by the Conservation Commission with the Rye Farmers' Market group. She noted that it would be a little hard to eat in the Goss barn because of the nesting swallows. She pointed out that it could be held in a tent next to the barn. She said that it was a lot of work but a lot of fun.

Heritage Commission Bev Giblin stated that it could happen but if they are going to do it, it has to be flawless.

Mrs. King stated that a lot of people have asked when there was going to be another Goss dinner.

Ms. Toumpas commented that the Goss dinners were amazing.

Mrs. King reported that the Goss dinners raised about \$5,000 each time they were held. She also stated that she has people from the Rye Farmers' Market that said that they would join in again. Mrs. King said that the Conservation Commission could pull that off, as a side from the town-wide event. These would not be related to Rye Day.

Ms. Toumpas suggested that if they are talking a year out for the Rye Day event, it will allow for more residents to get involved. She pointed out that there could be a contest for the Rye Junior High to create the logo.

Chair Winslow summarized that moving forward with something for this year may not be a smart thing to do. They should start with a core group meeting monthly. He asked Ms. Arthur to set up a meeting in May. Separate from the Rye Day event, he recommended doing something on behalf of Goss Farm.

Ms. Toumpas suggested having just music and desserts.

Ms. Arthur said that she believed that could be done. She thought that the band could be right in the opening of the barn. There may be a need for a tent and people could bring their own chairs.

Chair Winslow stated that there should be another meeting next Friday, not to discuss what is happening for Rye Day next year, but to discuss having something at Goss Farm this year.

The members agreed.

Ms. Arthur said that she is excited because this will allow them to visit other community Old Home Days and not recreate the wheel.

### **III. Other Business - None**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Phil Winslow to adjourn 3:37 p.m. Seconded by Sally King. All in favor**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Dyana F Ledger