



Town of Montague
Department, Board, Committee, Commission
BUDGET NARRATIVE

FY 23

Complete this form electronically! Be clear and concise!

Department: **Parks & Recreation** Submitted by: Jon Dobosz, Director

1. Please describe and provide the rationale for any substantial changes in your FY23 line-item budget submission.

The Parks & Recreation Department is in need of a *dedicated* Parks Groundskeeper for the summer months. While grounds-keeping duties have traditionally fallen under the auspices of the Department of Public Works, we have noticed significantly less DPW presence due to other duties and requests they have received in the last couple of years. Unity Park is almost a daily obligation, and with additional refurbishment of other parks we need a groundskeeper specifically dedicated to the Parks & Recreation Department to address needs more consistently. There are some duties which would still need to be covered by DPW (mowing for example), but many other items would be performed by the P&R Groundskeeper. The budget request reflects a position that would span mid-June to mid/late August, five days/week, 37.5 - 40 hours at \$14.25-15.00/hr., and would increase the PT/Wages Temp line-item an additional \$5,600 above our annual minimum-wage increase.

2. To this point in FY22, has your department experienced any notable successes, such as improving or providing new programs or services, or implementing new technologies? If so, please describe.

It would seem that, for the most part, P&R programs have recovered from the pandemic. Spring and Summer Programs were practically in full vigor, and we even experienced a sizeable increase in Summer Camp enrollment. Without question, our most notable success this year was the return of the Montague Soap Box Races. Over thirty racers and a few hundred spectators were on-hand for this event that has not been offered since 2013. While operating under the umbrella of Montague Parks & Recreation, this truly was a community-driven event. Essential partnerships were developed between the department, Northeast Soap Box Racing, Nova Motorcycles, and other local businesses.

MPRD also made progress with the Montague Center Improvement Project. While the pandemic created the obvious delays for a few months we have been able to recover, and under the guidance of a four-member planning committee, we are currently in the throes of developing an in-house schematic “design”. Through volunteer-driven efforts a successful fundraising campaign allowed us to refurbish the park’s infield area of the ballfield this past fall, and plans are to complete improvements to the ballfield area in 2022. While it may seem unconventional to make physical improvements during a “design phase”, by not having guaranteed or reliable sources of funding we need to take advantage of opportunities as they present themselves. Developing a plan will most likely reflect this approach, as opposed to a more systematic method that defines timelines for specific areas. In any event, we hope to make improvements that include the development a formal parking area, create appropriate access to and throughout the park, refurbish the playground area as well as other areas of the facility in the next few years.

3. Are there presently challenges to your department's ability to meet its goals and objectives that are due to its FY22 operating budget? If so, offer your recommendation(s) for improving the situation.

Currently, there are no challenges in our ability to meet the goals and objectives in relation to the department's FY22 budget.

4. Did you receive funding for any special articles in FY22? What is the status of those expenditures/investments? Does your department have any older special article appropriations that remain unspent?

The FY21 special article request for the resurfacing of the Unity Park Basketball Court & Playground Walkways remains unspent at this time. The Town submitted an RFQ in early spring of 2021. Unfortunately, the project failed to garner interest from contractors and there were no quotes submitted. It is perceived that this was rather late in the planning season, and companies had committed to other projects. We plan on reopening the RFQ process early this winter to ensure widespread appeal and anticipate that the project will be completed by the summer of 2022.