

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

July 26, 2016

3:30 p.m.

Unity Park Fieldhouse

56 First Street

Turners Falls, MA 01376

Present: Dennis Grader, Chairperson, Barbara Kuklewicz, Vice Chairperson, Albert Cummings, Secretary, Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation

Meeting Being Taped

Agenda:

1. Meeting Called to Order: 3:30 p.m.

2. Skate Park Update

The grand opening of the Skate Park was June 18, and was a success. State Representative Stephen Kulic was in attendance, members of the Board of Selectmen, and members of the Skate Park Committee. There were also family members of three deceased individuals who were very involved in making this park a reality. The crowd of a few hundred people seemed to enjoy the music and activities. It was a nice way to celebrate all the years of hard work of so many people. There is still landscaping issues at the front of the park that need addressing; the hydro-seeding in that area never took. We are looking in to the possibility of placing a nice fence and junipers in this area to make it more attractive. There are three trees that need transplanting. We will continue to monitor the wear of the tile coping around the bowls. No further damage seems to have occurred. It was recommended that we purchase a package of these tiles to have in case the wear continues and they need replacing. This may happen once/twice a year. Jon is letting the Skate Park Committee dictate when this needs to happen, as they have members that use the park and therefore more inclined to see issues. The Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs (PARC grant administrators) came here June 21 and was happy with the park and we received the grant reimbursement a few weeks later. Administratively the grant is now complete.

3. Unity Community Garden

We started the planting season with two new coordinators for the Unity Community Garden. People seem to be using the space on a daily basis and Jon is very pleased with how they are managing the garden area.

4. Summer Programs Update

Our Playground Program is up and running. We are in our 5th week already! Our participation rate is up slightly from last summer; averaging 80% participation - approximately 67-70 children enrolled weekly out of 82 total spots. Counselors are working hard keeping kids happy and busy during this very hot summer. Every Tuesday this month Jon has been running a new family activity called Tuesdays in the Park. This is in recognition of July as National Parks & Recreation Association month. Summer Blue fish finished up their season this past weekend with their championship held at Smith College. There were 30 swimmers this summer. Currently Jon is working on our fall brochure.

5. Finalize FY17 Strategic Plan

Jon asked the Commission if there were any recommendations as to rewording or if any project mentioned in the plan should be moved up or back in the schedule. There was one addition that was not mentioned in the FY16 Strategic Plan that will be done FY17 and that is repaint, reseal the playground area, and the walk ways. This should be done every 5 years and this coming spring will be 5 years since Unity Park Phase 1 has been completed. Barbara asked about the garage space conversion to programming space project and who would be involved in this project. First we need to clean out the space; the Highway Department does have some equipment stored in this area as well. We would try to get the jail to help us out as much as possible with

painting. Most likely we will need a secondary exit/entry way to stay up to code; we could possibly get the Franklin Technical High School to help us with that. Lighting also needs work. Jon can contact Eversource to see what they can do as well. The floor will need painting and texturing; putting in a new floor surface would too expensive. It will be a nice area for much needed additional programming space.

Norma's Park will be taken out of the FY17 Strategic Plan and master plan for the improvements at Lake Pleasant. This park, up until a few years ago, has been leased by the town from Eversource. Jon did talk to the company that had taken over the title of this property, Rocky River Reality Company, but they have since gone out of business. This property is now once again under Eversource control, and in limbo. We can not get funding for land that is not under town control, therefore it must be removed from the planning. A second public hearing will take place on this matter next Wednesday at 6 p.m. at the Public Safety Building.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to approve the FY17 Strategic Plan; seconded by Albert Cummings.

Vote: 3-0

6. Directors Report

There were no questions.

7. Other Business

Jon would like to request vacation from August 21-29, 2016. This may have to be modified if our Adult League Softball tournament has to be rescheduled due to rain.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion to begin signing and dating our meeting minutes by the chairperson or secretary, seconded by Albert Cummings.

Vote: 3-0.

8. Adjournment 4:30 p.m.

X _____
Albert Cummings, Secretary

Date

or

Signature

Name & Title: _____
Print

Date: _____