

**ARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**

**Thursday, September 28, 2017**

**3:30pm**

**Unity Park Fieldhouse**

**56 First Street**

**Turners Falls, MA 01376**

**Present:** Dennis Grader, Chairperson, Albert Cummings, Secretary, Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation, Barbara Kuklewicz, Vice Chairperson, Jennifer Peterson, Clerk/Bookkeeper.

**Meeting Being Taped**

**1. 3:36pm Meeting Called to Order**

**2. 3:36pm Approval of June 19, 2017:** Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion of approving minutes, seconded by Albert Cummings.

**Approval of August 14, 2017:** Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion of approving minutes, seconded by Albert Cummings.

**3. 3:40pm Rutter's Park Project - Design Phase Update**

The draft project schedule was in the packet the Commission received. The RFP's have not been sent out at this point, Bruce Hunter, Franklin County Housing Authority, told Jon the Commonwealth of Massachusetts still needs to sign off on the RFP's. The notification went to the central registry September 26, with the ads going in October 4. The site briefing is October 11 at 10:00 a.m. The RFP is due to the Town Hall October 19 at 3:00 p.m. The awarding of the contract will be November by the Board of Selectmen. The start up meeting will be in November. We are looking for one more resident to fill the vacant spot on the project committee.

**4. 3:43pm Special Town Meeting Article – Unity Park Portable Toilet**

At the October 5, 2017 Special Town Meeting the department will submit an article for a seasonal portable toilet at Unity Park. This article will increase the FY18' Parks and Recreation budget by \$1935. The goal of this article is to pay for a handicap accessible bathroom at Unity Park. This summer was the first year that there was a portable toilet at the park, and it seemed to work out well. Having a handicap accessible portable toilet would better accommodate visitors to the park. This would be a seasonal rental; mid-spring to mid-fall.

**5. 3:45pm Spring 2017 Programs – Profit/Loss Statements**

- Tee Ball- This season we took in a profit of \$1,351.24; with 48 children participating.
- Senior League Softball "Diamond Dusters" – The program suffered a loss of \$104.54. This team requires multiple coaches for the season to run smoothly and our department gives the coaches a break on registration fees, with all of our coaches (4) having daughters playing effects the bottom line.
- Nipper League Softball "Purple Panthers" – For the past two seasons this team has run with very low numbers. Jon really doesn't want lose this team, as it is the feeder system for the senior team. As with the senior league, multiple parents coach.
- EGGstravaganza – This program typically runs on a loss, as we do this for our community. We were able to acquire Letourneau Pluming as a co-sponsor. We were very grateful for their \$250 donation; as we only had \$55.35 loss. In the past, it was not unusual to suffer \$200-\$300 dollar loss.

**Motion:** Albert Cummings makes the motion to accept the Spring 2017 Profit/Loss Statements; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

**Vote:** 3-0

**6. 3:50pm Montague Center Park Project – Creation of Project Committee**

Jon contacted Conway School of Design and the University of Massachusetts, Landscape Architecture Program in regard to this project. The Conway School has responded back; it looks like this would be a spring project for them as this kind of project works well with their spring class curriculum. The cost of the project is still negotiable but a \$7000 estimate was given. There could possibly be some Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program income money available for programming or we would have to go to Special Town Meeting to get these funds. The school will need a deposit of 50% at the start of the project with the remainder to follow half way through the project. Many details need to be worked out and a committee will be determined today. Eight Montague residents expressed interest in serving on the committee, and three (with one back up) will be drawn from a hat to join Albert Cummings, Park and Recreation Commission member. John Bray, Eileen Mariani, Jennifer Bray, and Jeri Moran was drawn, so Jon will contact them about availability. John and Jennifer are husband and wife so they will need to decide which one of them will serve. Enthusiasm within the community is strong as we move forward.

**7. 4:00 pm Directors Report**

There were no questions.

**8. 4:00pm Other Business**

- Fall Programs – Youth Soccer has begun; K – 2, 3 & 4<sup>th</sup> grade Travel Team, and 5 & 6<sup>th</sup> grade Travel Team. This Saturday will be the annual Scarecrow Stuffing Party at Unity Park. We are in the process of getting the Blue Fish season together; a parent pre-season meeting is October 2. We will be running the pumpkin decorating booth at the Great Falls Festival on October 21, 2017.

- Jon requested a day off – Friday, October 6; granted.

- Barb Kuklewicz wanted to address concerns that were brought up about the Summer Camp during the Greenfield Savings Bank afternoon reading program as well as adding Greenfield Savings to Camp announcements on Thursdays. There were complaints that the campers were not paying attention and there was an incident of a child punching another child that was not addressed satisfactorily enough by staff. Also, another concern was that our camp was more expensive compared to Erving's summer camp. Jon responded to these concerns by saying that we had a high counselor turn over from the summer before, so many of our counselors were new, requiring additional support for disciplinary problems. Our counselors are young adults, they are not teachers trained to deal with difficult issues. There did seem to be more discipline issues with the children this summer and we did our best to work with the staff to resolve these issues. The Unity Park site, in particular, is a 5 year to 8 year group and there were a few 5 year olds here this summer that have not started school yet; and this was their first structured program. We cannot remove every child that misbehaves; but we do have a plan in place that we apply when we have behavioral issues. Counselors deal with the issues as they occur, the Camp Director and Jon are both then available to take over if needed and incident reports are written and given to the parents. We do our best to provide a safe, organized environment for our campers – and there will always be people who believe differently. We have a very high retention rate with our campers from year to year. This spring, when we begin summer camp registration, will be a good indicator of how satisfied our families were with the program. In regard to concern about our program being expensive, Jon looks at area summer programs to make sure we are competitive; we are always one of the least expensive summer camps. When comparing us with Erving, Jon doesn't know how they include other expenses, like field trips into the fees, or how often they go on trips. Jon is always willing to listen to new ideas and will continue to look into what other camps are doing/costing.

**Adjournment: 4:23pm**

**Vote: 3 - 0**

X \_\_\_\_\_

Albert Cummings, Secretary Date

or

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Name & Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Print

Date: \_\_\_\_\_