

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Tuesday, June 16, 2020

5:30 p.m.

Remote Meeting

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

Meeting is recorded

1. 5:30pm Meeting Called to Order

2. 5:31pm Approval of Meeting Minutes from May 7, 2020

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to accept the minutes as written; seconded by Barb Kuklewicz

Approved: 3-0

3. 5:31pm Status of Program & Facilities Relative to COVID-19

-Re-opening of Facilities: On Wednesday, June 10 a meeting was held between Steve Ellis, Daniel Wasiuk, Tom Bergeron, Chief John Zellman, Chief Chris Williams, and Jon to develop a plan to re-open outdoor recreation facilities. The following protocols were established:

- Cleaning of Play Area Surfaces: high touch surfaces at each playground will be sprayed with a cleaner and disinfectant using a pump spray unit. A secondary unity will be used to rinse the cleaning solution off the surfacing. Currently we are using an ammonium based product to clean. We will not shut down the playground while sanitizing, but instead clean around people.
- Frequency: The Unity Park playground and outdoor fitness equipment will be cleaned every morning, seven days a week until further notice. Depending on patron load, additional cleaning may occur in the afternoon. Peskeomskut Park will also be cleaned every morning. The playgrounds at Highland Park in Millers Falls, Montague Center Park, Rutter's Park and Norma's Park in Lake Pleasant will be cleaned twice a week, with specific days at the discretion of the Parks & Recreation Director.
- Staffing: Cleaning will be performed by members of the DPW as well as our new department hire, Jay Fritz, who was trained in sanitizing all the high touch areas. Public Works will assume cleaning Unity Park and Peskeomskut Park on Mondays and Tuesdays with Jay cleaning Wednesdays through Sundays. We will reassess this schedule as patron load demands.
- Re-opening of Other Outdoor Facilities: The group recommended the re-opening of the Unity Park basketball court and sand volleyball court, with appropriate signage posted at these areas requiring patrons to observe appropriate social distancing, gathering limits, and the use of face masks, and practicing proper personal hygiene. The field house will reopen in the next phase but by appointment only. Picnic areas may reopen but we will not be providing permits for group gatherings at this time. We may allow youth sports to practice on the ballfields but the organizing agencies must provide a plan that honors state guidelines. Staying current on the state's guidelines has been challenging.

-Summer Camp has been cancelled. Jon met with the Health Director on Thursday to go through the 30+ pages of guidelines set by the state and concluded the department could not safely and successfully run the program.

-Other Programs & Events – Jon is hopeful to get one Movie in the Park in by the end of summer as well as having a Nigh Skate in September. At this point we have not heard back from the Skateboard

Clinic instructor, which is planned for mid-July. The Soapbox Derby has been cancelled. We are looking into other programs/idea such as online E-Sports and Grab & Go crafts.

4. 5:52pm

Reserve Fund Transfer

A request for transfer from the Reserve Fund (in accordance with Chapter 40, Section 6 of the Massachusetts General Laws) into our revolving recreation account was made. The amount requested was \$2,100. The amount will be used for Bluefish Swim Team coach salaries. The COVID-19 pandemic forced the department to cancel spring programs that fund these salaries therefore resulting in a significant revenue loss. We are currently in the red for \$8000, as we move towards a new fiscal year the town accountant and Finance Committee will provide us with guidance.

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to request a transfer from the Reserve Fund of \$2100 in accordance with Chapter 40, Section 6 of the Massachusetts General Laws to account 227-4-630-4342 titled Recreation Revolving to be used for Bluefish coaches salaries; Barb Kuklewicz seconds that motion.

Approved: 3-0

5. 5:57pm

Rutter's Park Parking Concerns Update

Jon has communicated with the Town Planner, Walter Ramsey about this issue and discussed different options; one of which is sectioning an area along Montague Avenue to place gravel or TRG and allowing people to use this area for parking instead of the limited spaces at the park. Walter recommends this option as does Jon. Barb asked if there would be signage at the park's parking spaces stating no overnight parking, and Jon replied that could be possible. The department will cover the cost of the gravel/TRG through the operating facilities & grounds line item.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to place a gravel parking area along Montague Avenue for residential parking; seconded by Albert Cummings.

Approved: 3-0

6. 6:00pm

Winter Programs Profit/Loss Statements

-Open Swim- Not included in this month's packet are the participation numbers, they will be provided at later meeting. Jon felt it was a strong participation season. We typically take on a financial loss and we once again, seeing a loss of \$1,450. As with Bluefish, the pool is very expensive to use.

-Youth Basketball has been trending down in participants. We did run a K-2 instructional program with 18 kids as well as a 3rd & 4th grade travel basketball team. This is the second year in a row that we have not had a 5th & 6th grade travel team.

-Sawmill 10K Run- Jon provided profit loss and profit margins to compare with past races. Our profit is on the low side compared to past races. There are a few expenses we can tighten up such as food and shirts. After discussing this the commission decided that next year they will order short sleeve to help cut expenses.

-Babysitting is a small program but a great service for the community.

-Bluefish continue to lose money but we did have over 50 swimmers. It is an expensive program to run. This season we had a very dedicated coaching staff of three people (in the past it was only 2) and Jon would not change that even though the salaries are difficult for the program.

7. 6:13pm

Parks & Recreation Director's Report

There were no items in the report.

8. 6:13pm Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirement

Our 2020 operating budget was not asked to make cuts due to the pandemic. As mentioned early, our revolving is deep into the negative, and Jon will follow up with the commission on this matter. The 2021 budget was passed.

Jon will be reviewing our proposal to the Franklin County Regional Governments in regard to being a participating agency in the Regional Pollinating Corridor Project and what that entails for our department.

Summer Meeting Schedule – Jon recommends that we be as flexible as possible if we need to meet and all commission members agreed.

9. 6:24p.m. Adjournment – Motion: Albert Cummings makes the motion for adjournment; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Approved: 3-0

X _____
Albert Cummings, Secretary Date Or _____
Signature Name & Title: _____
Print: _____
Date: _____