

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, September 24, 2020

3:00 p.m.

Remote Meeting

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

Guest: Daniel Wasiuk, Director of Health for the Town of Montague

Meeting is recorded

1. 3:05pm Meeting Called to Order

2. 3:05 pm Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 16, 2020

Minutes were unavailable at this time.

3. 3:06pm Summer Programs Wrap-up

We held a summer morning playgroup that ran from July 13 - August 14. The program was extended 2 weeks when GMRSD delayed the start of school. The programs was held Monday through Thursday from 9:00am-11:00am and used Friday as a rain day when necessary. We employed two staff for the 5-8year old group and two staff for the 9-12vyear old group. There was a limit of 8 children per group. The program alternated weeks between Arts & Crafts and Field Games. Health codes were followed with temperature checks performed every morning with questionnaires as the children arrived in cars. The same kids/families were consistent throughout the summer. We were able to have a Soccer Clinic with 9 participants aged 8-12 year. Finally, was a Grab & Go Craft projects. There were six crafts set for throughout the summer where people could pick up kits at the fieldhouse and videos on Facebook were also made to accompany these projects.

4. 3:15pm Programs & Facilities Relative to COVID-19 (Fall & Winter)

Soccer: K-2 Soccer and our travel teams for 8-12 years old are running currently with modifications. The numbers are limited and our travel team will not be playing games as our Tri-County league will not be participating in games this season. This older group is meeting fewer days and for less time at Highland Park in Millers Falls.

Blue Fish: We do not have access to the school at this point and we do not anticipate getting access until the school goes hybrid or full time. Jon doesn't see this happening until late November. He and the coaches are working on a plan that will follow all necessary health codes. There will not be a Pioneer Valley Swim League and unlikely there will be a Mid-Regional leg to the season either. The focus of this upcoming season will be on skills and drills. The details are still being worked out.

Youth Basketball: Similar to swimming, the program will depend upon school access.

Facilities: Things are going relatively well, masks and social distancing is not always happening. The Skate Park is the busiest area of the park and socially distancing as well as possible. The playground's occupancy varies.

Sanitation of Parks: Daniel Wasiuk, Director of Health, expressed the concerns regarding the spraying and sanitation of the parks as the weather gets colder. The solution used will freeze making it unlikely to wash off, thus creating a risk of chemical exposure to individuals who may come into contact with the

equipment. Dan recommends the department set a date to stop sanitizing to avoid any risk of exposure. Jon and the Commission discussed possible dates to stop sanitation of the parks.

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to stop all park sanitation on October 12, 2020; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Approved: 3-0

5. 3:37pm FY21 Operating Budget & Revolving Fund Status

Jon wants to bring our budgets into focus during these difficult times. Right now, our Part Times wages line item - typically spent entirely on summer camp counselors wages, has a balance as this summer's program was reduced. The department will most likely spend the remaining balance of this line item on Blue Fish coaches and lifeguards for Open Swim. Jon feels this year may be a good year to do things that we have put off in the past; like the ballfields – more infield red dirt for the infield for field one. The drought this summer did damage to the fields. Currently our Revolving fund is about \$8,000 in the red. This is not surprising as our programs have been very limited.

6. 4:02pm FY21 Strategic Plan & Master Plan

Strategic Plan was included in the packet. Jon would like the commission to look through this and finalize this at our October meeting.

7. 4:04pm Parks & Recreation Director's Report -

- **Montague Center Improvement Project** is moving slowly but work is being done. Jon has been working on an in house design and the park's survey will be an article on the warrant for the Special Towns Meeting on October 13. We did receive one quote for \$3,000.

- **Rutter's Park:** The parking strip has been installed and all parties seem to be satisfied with this solution.

- **Carry-in/Carry-out Policy** is over at Unity and only lasted two weeks. It was a long shot but Jon was hoping it work as there was illegal dumping going on in the park. Our other parks will still be using the policy.

- **Unity Park**

- **Fieldhouse Improvements:** we painted the floor a few weeks ago and would like to replace the office carpeting next year. The roof looks good.

- **Well for Community Garden:** Two applications have been submitted: one grant through the town and a second grant for the state submitted by the Great Falls Apple Core both to cover the cost of the well. Jon will go before the Board of Selectmen to set up a gift account for the group as they plan to do more fundraising.

- **Unity Playground Blue Tube Slide:** the deck of the slide has worn through and cost for a replacement is \$700. The DPW will reinstall the new deck.

- **Unity Basketball Backboards:** it was discovered that both backboards had cracks in them and we don't know how this happened. The cost to replace both was \$2300, we have an insurance deductible of \$1000.

- **Second Street Gateway:** the Planning Department and River Culture spearheaded this project to colorfully paint areas of streets in the downtown area in hopes to slow traffic. Jon is really happy to have this area of the parking lot addressed in such a nice way.

- **Story walk w/ GMRSD Coordinated Family Community Engagement (CFCE):** This is an interactive family reading experience that places a children's story along a route/path and every Wednesday they will place signs on the paths that surround Unity Park.

7. 4:20pm Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirement

Unity Playground Walkways: Was a capital item three years ago were we sent out 4 rounds of quotes without a reply. Jon sent out another round of quotes hoping this time we will get an agency interested.

Jon asked for Wednesday, September 30 as a vacation day and was granted the day off.

Barb wants to recognize the passing of Bruce Hunter in some way. Jon and the commission agree; Unity and Rutter's Park would not be what they are today if not for Bruce's involvement. This will be further discussed at a future meeting.

8. 4:30pm 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: _____