

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, October 29, 2020

3:00 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 being recorded

1. 3:00 pm Meeting Called to Order

2. 3:00 pm Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 16, 2020 and September 24, 2020

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to accept the June 16, 2020 minutes; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Approved: 3-0

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to accept the September 24, 2020 minutes; seconded by Albert Cummings.

Approved: 3-0

3. 3:02pm Programs & Facilities Relative to COVID-19

•Conclusion of the Disinfecting of Playgrounds

In consultation with Daniel Wasiuk, Director of Health, we have suspended the disinfecting of playgrounds as of October 26, 2020. Jon wants to thank Jay Fritz for his dedication to this job and department.

•Winter Programs-

-Sawmill 10k Run – Modifying Format to Virtual - Jon has been researching virtual races as we are not having our in person race this year due to COVID-19. According to RunReg.com, our on-line race registration service, there are very few races being held. It is doubtful the Montague Common Hall will even be open and available to us. Holding the race virtually will give runners the opportunity to run during a four day established period. There will be no winners and all racers will receive a medal. We will be reducing the registration fee to \$15.

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to have the Sawmill River Race held virtually this year and to give out medal to the participants.

Approved: 3-0

-Youth Basketball Plan – The Gill Montague School District asked us to provide a proposal entailing our plans for aquatics and basketball.. The proposal will also be forwarded to Daniel Wasiuk, Director of Health, for his approval. The programs will not be traveling and will be entirely in house. Jon also worries if he will have any coaches come forward for the basketball program. There was discussion about the air exchange systems in the school and if we will be testing our coaches for COVID-19. Jon can contact other towns to see what they are planning for their coaches..

-Aquatics Plan - both the Open Swim and the Blue Fish programs have to be planned differently than our other winter programs and Jon is currently working on this. There is a possibility that the Blue Fish may begin practicing by our next meeting. He also has to contact his coaching staff as well as lifeguards to see where they stand on what Jon has in place for protocols. The school’s maintenance department will not be cleaning the pool area after we use the facility, therefore our coaches/lifeguards would clean/disinfect

after practices and open swim. Jon really wants to make sure his staff is comfortable with these conditions. The Commission is comfortable following Jon's proposal.

-Other ideas – Jon is hoping to run the Babysitting Course usually held in February but pushing this back to March. He is also thinking about having a virtual Montague Challenge in which people sign up to participate in a walking program. They will given the winter to walk the equivalent distance of all streets in Montague, which is around 110/120 miles and this would be done on the honor system.

4. 3:39 pm FY21 Current Operating Budget & Revolving Fund Balances

The Rec. Facilities & Grounds Maintenance line item has almost been entirely spent for FY 21. We have had some unexpected expenses like replacing both basketball backboards and the repairs to the blue slide. Our Part Times Wages in our operating budget was underspent this summer so this is a good time to take care of facility needs. We did have to pay \$1300 for grass seed for the ball fields last week but the heavy rain, no sun and a frost this week may have ruined the seed we planted. Jon is expecting to have to redo this planting next spring and again pay another \$1300. Currently our revolving is in the red \$9203. Jon is hoping to help our revolving with our aquatics and winter programs.

5. 3:45pm FY21 Strategic Plan Discussion

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to accept the 2021 Strategic Plan as written; seconded by Albert Cummings.

Approved: 3-0

6. 3:46 pm FY22 Operating & Capital Budgets; Preliminary Discussion

Jon did not have any recommendations for next year nor did the Commission.

7. 3:48pm Unity Playground Walkway – Painting Options

Jon sent out another quote request last month for the painting of the Unity Park walkways. This is a capital project of FY17'. He has not had any quotes so he's thinking the walkways are too small of a project for these companies so he is recommending that we include the basketball courts to this project. Unfortunately there are no companies in western or central MA that does this kind of work so attracting a company to travel is important. We will have to go before the Town Meeting to change the original town meeting article to include the basketball court

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to include the repainting of the basketball courts to the Unity Park walkways capital improvement project; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz

Approved: 3-0

8. 3:52 pm Ideas to Recognize Bruce Hunter

Jon recommends planting a tree in honor of Bruce Hunter. There is a spot as you enter from Second Street for a tree and plaque. Jon believes it is so important to honor Bruce at Unity Park for his work there. There was also discussion to honor Bruce at Rutter's Park as well. He played such an invaluable roll in developing both parks. When we contact his family for approval we may ask if Bruce had a favorite tree.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to honor Bruce Hunter at Unity Park and Rutter's Park with a tree and plaque; seconded by Alber7 Cummings.

Approved: 3-0

9. 3:57pm Departmental Website

Jon would like to see a dedicated and dynamic website for our department. This could be a one stop shop for the community's access to our programs. There will be a set up fee of \$150 and \$250 annual fee.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to set up a Montague Park and Recreation website to be used for all programing; seconded by Albert Cummings.

Approved: 3-0

10. 4:00pm Parks & Recreation Director Vacation Carry-Over Request

Jon is requesting carrying over 37.5 vacation hours to the current year

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to allow Jon to carry over 37.5 vacation hours to this current year; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Approved: 3-0

11. 4:01pm Parks & Recreation Director's Report –

•**Montague Center Improvement Project** – At the special town meeting a few weeks ago we got approval to do the surveying work this fall or next spring. The design is currently being done in house. We don't think we need a design firm as this moment but when we design walkways we may need to seek out this help. The Montague Center Committee agrees with this approach.

•**Community Garden Well** – The Great Falls Apple Core submitted a grant request to the state for a well but Jon has not heard anything back on that yet. Jon has also spoken with the Turners Falls Water Department and the Health Department in regard to a well.

•**Unity Playground Blue Tube Slide** - the deck was delivered this week but we are waiting for good weather to install.

•**CARES Act Initiatives for Main Office and Fieldhouse** – through this act we are getting one Wi-Fi unit for the fieldhouse and two units for the outside. We will be receiving an all in-one computer for the office; making it easier to attend Zoom meetings.

•**Staff Holiday Time-Off Schedules** – Jon will be taking the weeks of Thanksgiving and Christmas off. Jen will be taking the week after off.

•**Acknowledging the Passing of Dr. Allen Ross** – Dr. Ross was the founder the Sawmill 10k Race and the Montague Mug Race. He was always a great supporter of our department and Jon wants to recognize his contributions to the community. Dennis suggested putting something up at the Unity Park in remembrance for both Bruce and Dr. Ross. Jon said we could put something up short term in our outside bulletin board then maybe do something more long term inside the fieldhouse.

Barbara spoke of a recent trip to Hyannis where outside of restaurants on the sidewalks they had games for the kids to play and was really colorful and she was wondering if we could do something like this at Unity. Jon liked the idea and thought as we move forward with our walkway project. The group that painted our gateway maybe could be approached to do something for us in these areas.

There was also conversation about putting something up at the skate park where people could do murals.

2. 4: 20pm Topics not anticipated in the 48 hour posting requirement

There were no topics.

8. 4:31pm Adjournment

Motion: Albert Cummings makes the motion to adjourn; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Approved: 3-0

X _____

Albert Cummings, Secretary Date Or _____

Signature Name & Title: _____

Print: _____

Date: _____