

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, October 27, 2022

3:30 p.m.

Montague Town Hall Annex

One Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA 01376

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

Meeting is being recorded

1. 3:30pm Meeting Called to Order

2. 3:31pm Assuming Management of Great Falls Fest

The department had discussions as to what it could do to fill the sizable gap for the town with the Great Falls Fest ending. This past June our department along with Nova Motors, Pioneer Valley Brewing Company, River Culture and others all partnered successfully to hold the Unity Park Festival & Makers Market. These groups have considered partnering again for a fall fest, but on a much smaller scale than the Great Falls Fest. The event could be more centralized, perhaps Unity Park, with music, arts & crafts, and food vendors. A big concern with such an event is always securing and maintaining a volunteer base.

Motion: Albert Cummings makes the motion to pursue management of the Great Falls Festival with partners; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz

Approved: 2-0

3. 3:41pm Summer Programs Profit/Loss Statements

Summer Camp- Jon went through the participation statistics for summer of 2022. Total participation for both sites was 82% (345/421 campers). This resembles our pre-pandemic numbers. Next summer we will be changing the age groups into three sites; 5 & 6-year-old site, a 7 & 8-year-old site and a 9 –12-year-old site. The emotional and physical differences between a 5-year-old and an 8-year-old are big so we will be dividing these groups to better serve our campers. Jon discussed the need for a small increase in fees next summer to keep up with competitive wage rates.

Soap Box Races – The races made a profit of \$4,313. The number of racers were down from last year, but overall, a great day for the event.

4. 3:55pm Capital Projects

•Skate Park – Permanent Lighting

Jon is researching solar options for the skate park.

The Skate Park should be sealed every two to three years; it has not been done since the park was built. This is a priority project for the department.

•Montague Center Park Projects

Ballfield backstop and fencing, playground/picnic area, and park accessibility is also high on the department's priority list. We intend to begin the application process this coming spring for the PARC grant. These items will be included on that grant. We are currently working with GZA Geo-Environmental to provide a pricing list for the project.

As for the Old Blacksmith Shop building evaluation, MPRD and the Montague Center Park Planning committee are considering a recommendation to deconstruct at least a portion of the current shop. This would allow us to create a defined parking lot with curb cuts within that available space. A formal building evaluation needs to be performed via RFP. Montague Historical Commission may have long-term interest in the original, smaller portion of the building. Any type of partial demolition will require Annual Town Meeting vote for funding and approval.

•Community Garden –Well

A manual, hand pump is being considered for the garden. Also, the possibility of tying the garden into the Skate Park lighting system is being considered.

•Unity Park Parking Lot Improvements – Crack sealing/Line-painting/Parking Stops

An estimate is currently being secured for crack-filling and line painting.

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to accept all capital projects as proposed, that includes: Unity Skate Park lighting, sealing, parking lot improvements, community garden well, Montague Center Park improvements, including ballfield backstop and other improvements to be funded by the states PARC Grant, in addition to, an evaluation of the Blacksmith Shop building.

Approved: 2-0

5. 4:21pm FY23 Current Operating Budget & Revolving fund Balances

A monthly update on the current operating and revolving budgets were discussed.

6. 4:23pm Topics not anticipated in the 48-hour posting requirement

There were no topics discussed.

7. 4:25pm Adjournment

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

Approved: 2-0

X _____ **Date:** _____
Albert Cummings Secretary Or _____
Signature Nam& Title: _____

Print: _____