

1 **PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MINUTES**

2 Thursday, January 23, 2025
3 Montague Town Hall Annex
4 One Avenue A
5 Turners Falls, MA 01376
6

7 Present: Barbara Kuklewicz, Chairperson, Albert Cummings, Vice Chairperson, Jeff Singleton, Secretary, Jon
8 Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation
9

10 **Meeting is being recorded**

11
12 **Guests:** Miryam Vesset, Jennifer Bray, Montague residents
13

14 **1. 6:00pm Meeting Called to Order**

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16 **2. 6:01pm Approval of October 31, Minutes**

17 **Motion:** Jeff Singleton makes the motion to approve minutes in lieu of Jon talking to Walter Ramsey, Town
18 Administrator regarding the skatepark surveillance cameras; seconded by Albert Cummings.

19 **Vote:** Approved 3-0

20 **Approval of December 5, 20204 Minutes**

21 **Motion:** Jeff Singleton makes the motion to approve minutes; seconded by Albert Cummings.

22 **Vote:** Approved 3-0
23

24 **3. 6:07pm Discussion to Construct a Basketball Court at Montague Center Park with Guests:**
25 **Miryam Vesset & Jennifer Bray**

26 Miryam Vesset sent a letter to Jon, included in the commission's packet, questioning if there could be a full/half
27 basketball court included in the Montague Center Park renovations. Jon begins the discussion with a few ideas
28 within the park that could possibly work but he recommends the area be surveyed. Ms. Vesset's letter proposed
29 the following areas of interest: the community garden, Blacksmith building location, and between the community
30 garden and playground. Jon said the park does have high water levels in certain areas, making it difficult to plan
31 around. As far as the Blacksmith area is concerned, Jon stated its future is still undetermined; we are currently
32 involved in phase two of an evaluation process. The DPW does use this area to keep dirt. There was further
33 discussion of the ball field and who maintains the field. The DPW does help mow the fields, but it is difficult for
34 the department to upkeep the fields. The cost of such a project is always a big issue, and donations and fundraising
35 were suggested. Jon concluded by letting the group know he will talk to the DPW and look further into the
36 possibility of a basketball court in this park.
37

38 **4. 6:45pm Sawmill River 10k Run Assessment**

39 This year we had 99 runners preregister and 106 runners finished; we had a handful of people that did not end up
40 running. Overall, Jon thought the race went well. There were some concerns about vehicular traffic; specifically,
41 the speed of some cars near runners being too fast. The course is not closed to traffic during the race. No one
42 was hurt but Jon believes it is something we need to think about in the future. Another issue for the race's future
43 is the building we currently use is not ADA compliant. The Common Hall is in the middle of a fundraising
44 campaign that will include a ramp. This year, for the first time we had a runner pushing another person in a sports
45 chair and they were unable to access the building and that can't happen again. Jon spoke with the First
46 Congregational Church, across the common and their basement is not ADA complaint. The future of the event
47 is in question, but Jon stated he will see what next year brings. He also pointed out the need for more volunteers.

1 **5. 6:50pm Montague Center Park Project Update**

2 The construction has ended for the winter. The project is about 90/95% finished. The pour in place surfacing
3 and the rain garden remains incomplete in the playground area. Mountain View, the contractors for the pollinator
4 garden has dug the area and will complete it this spring. Jon is happy to announce this project is on schedule and
5 on budget.
6

7 **6. 6:52pm Rag Shag Parade**

8 Jon and Albert Cummings attended a Board of Selectmen’s meeting in December announcing the Soldiers
9 Committee and the Park & Recreation Department will partner to run the Rag Shag Parade. Walter Ramsey,
10 Town Administrator, recommended River Culture may also want to participate in the event. Planning will start
11 late spring, early summer. One idea is to change the route of the parade to begin at the Discovery Center and end
12 at Peskeomskut Park and finish with a short movie in the park. Jon is checking with the tech person who helps
13 with the Movies In the Park to see if he will be available.
14

15 **7. 6:54pm FY26 Operating Budget Updates**

16 The FY2026 budget was submitted. Jon met with the Capital Improvement Committee regarding the capital
17 improvement project that includes the pour in place surfacing and replacement of the blue slide at Unity Park.
18 We currently are looking to combine both items for a total appropriation request of \$125,000. The Capital
19 Improvement Committee did not seem to have any issues with this request, a vote was not taken at this time.
20

21 **8. 6:57pm FY25 Current Operating Budget & Revolving Fund Balances**

22 There were no questions.
23

24 **9. 6:59pm Parks & Recreation Magazine Article – Skatepark Lighting Project**

25 The department receives several trade journals, one of them being Parks Recreation Magazine. They found out
26 about the skate park lighting project and wondered if Jon would be interested in writing an article for it. Jon
27 accepted and it is due February 7. He was uncertain when it would be published.
28

29 **10. 7:03pm Topics not anticipated in the 48-hour posting requirement**

30 There were no topics.
31

32 **11. 7:03pm Adjournment**

33 Jeff Singleton makes the motion to adjourn; seconded by Albert Cummings.

34 **Approved: 3-0**
35
36

37 X _____
38 Jeff Singleton, Secretary Date

39
40 Or
41
42 _____
43 Signature
44 Name & Title: _____
45 Print
46 Date: _____

