

Parks & Recreation Commission

May 23, 2022

7:30 pm Meeting called to order by O'Shea

Attendance; Bob O'Shea, Mark Morin, Keith Bilafer, Marisa Steele, Staci Donahue, Sam Levine

Preamble and Sound check performed by O'Shea

Motion to approved minutes of May 9th by Bilafer, 2nd – Morin, Approved 3 – 0

P & R Structure

- working on cleaning up jurisdiction on field responsibility, town common given to Select board. Also working on MOU for roles of responsibility to address maintenance w/ DPW.
- Google drive folder is accessible on the web to record notes and detailed info generated by P&R.
- Worked with school to hire and share duties with new community ed person, then school later decided to cancel said contract.
- O'Shea would like to propose that P 7
- & R meet less often except during the busy sport and beach season and to create a board that only creates policies and programs for the community. Also suggested that P&R has a fulltime director position. Some towns have a P&R director that is also the beach director.
- Steele had a concern that with the other groups in town doing their own programs that there wouldn't be enough hours to fill the P&R position and that the town would not support this as well.
- O'Shea said there is plenty of work to keep this position busy for 40+ hours per week and that the position would start out with team sports programming.
- O'Shea suggested that the next budget for FY23 has money for a beach director and with monies from the beach revolving fund we could prefund the new position to get the beach ready for spring 2023.
- Staci Donahue from the Planning Board discussed an application submitted from someone looking to setup a badminton facility across from Dunkin Donuts.

BEACH OPERATIONS

- O'Shea has planned with the director in Devens, Marcus Lewis, to handle the swim lessons for Harvard.
- Beach is open this season as "Swim at your own risk"
- All lifeguard applications have been forwarded to the beach director in Devens
- Sticker checkers will still be available to control crowds at the beach.
- Marcus Lewis will be working out the details for a boating program in Harvard, details to follow.
- Before Kevin left, he worked out the details with Ali Luck, past beach director, to have a Red Cross training class for the lifeguards June 5, 6, and 11th.
- Steele is concerned that the boating program will be using Harvard's boat without any compensation.
- O'Shea looks at this year as a rebuild year for the beach.
- Levine asked how the lifeguards were paid in the past. O'Shea explained that up until 15 years ago they were paid as town employees. TA decided then that all lifeguards should be paid out of the P&R beach fund.

FIELDS

- O'Shea explains the problems over the past 20 years working with DPW on the fields. P&R made a decision to give total responsibility on DPW's shoulders for all the maintenance thus the creation of the **Memorandum Of Understanding, MOU**, was born consisting of 10 pages of text, some photos, tables, and diagrams of painted fields, etc.
- Bilafer made arrangements to have deep tine aeration done at Harvard Park. The earth was to compact to get the full depth. Aeration company suggests that it be done a 2nd time in a couple of weeks. Bilafer is looking into scheduling.
- O'Shea brought up concerns from young parents in town complaining of the lack of softball fields. When the new school was built the building committee never consulted with the school committee about the loss of two softball fields and decided to continue with even considering the impact it would have on the sports within the town.
- O'Shea asked the school committee to make a decision as to the policy of only focusing on the schools needs over what the town needs when it comes to sports fields.
- Possible suggestion is that the schools own their own fields and P&R owns their own fields separately.
- Morin is concerned that the MOU may not be followed and that someone would have to enforce the language as written. Since this is a new concept of explaining responsibility within the town, we will have to see how it goes.

TRACKS AND TRAILS

- YEAH!!! Mulch is in place at the playground, and it looks great. Steele to meet with Liz Allard to discuss details about drainage at the playground. Also talked with the resurfacing company about putting a perimeter path around the playground to help the handicap access the ADA swing and picnic area. She is looking into multiple surface ideas.

NEW BUSINESS

- Beach house cleanout complete. Floor still needs to be painted. O'Shea looking into options for this. Also have some volunteers to do painting outside and some structural repairs as well

Next meeting scheduled for June 6, 2022

Motion to adjourn by Bilafer, 2nd – Steele, approved 4 – 0

Submitted by,

Mark Morin, commissioner