

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, September 13, 2018

3:30 pm

Unity Park Fieldhouse

56 First Street

Turners Falls, MA 01376

Present: Dennis Grader Chairperson (3:50), Barbara Kuklewicz, Vice Chairperson, Albert Cummings, Secretary, Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation

Absent: Jennifer Peterson

Meeting Being Taped

1. 3:38pm Meeting Called to Order

2. 3:38pm Approval of Meeting Minutes from June 18, 2018

Motion: Made by Albert Cummings to accept the minutes as written; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Approved: 2-0

3. 3:36pm Rutter's Park Improvement Project Update

This summer we were notified that Phase I was fully funded at \$371,823; of which \$353,524 is construction and \$18,300 for design. We are in the process of doing a small redesign to accommodate new access laws established by the state's Access Architectural Board. Playground design requires some kind of hard porous material be provided for access points to play units. The most commonly used material for this is pour-in-place rubberized material. Wood Chips are still allowed in the use zones. The cost of the project increased \$30,000 due to the accessibility issues that must be met. We will need to cut things out of the original plan. The Rutter's Park Project Committee met and decided to eliminate some plantings, and a walkway to the War Memorial to accommodate the unexpected expenses. Final bid ready plans and specifications are expected for November, 2018. The project is moving along; bidding for the construction will be in January/February, 2019, awarding the project to General Contractor in March, 2019 with the construction as weather permits in the spring.

4. 3:50pm Unity Park Walkway Project (ATM Article 30k 5/6/17)

This was a FY18' capital improvement project. Throughout the last calendar year, Jon had submitted work requests for different vendors throughout New England and New York but with no bids submitted. The project involves repainting the blue areas of the playground and Jon believes this is too small a project for these companies. Therefore, this project may have to be completed in house with DPW assistance. There are some cracks in the walked ways that will need repair as well. There was \$15,000 set aside for this as a capital expenditure, but Jon believes this can be done for a fraction of that cost. He will discuss the details with the accountant.

5. 3:56pm Summer 2018 Programs

Summer Camp numbers weren't as high as they have been in the past. It was a brutally hot and rainy summer. Rain is particularly challenging for us because we have to move sites inside to Hillcrest Elementary, and Turners Falls High School. We had a small group for Skateboarding lessons, and also a Sports Development Class for 3- 5 year olds; which had about 6 to 8 children registered. Our last Night Skate is this Saturday from 6-10:00 pm. This was just general run down of the summer as we don't have the profit/loss statements yet. They will be ready for our October meeting.

- 6. 4:00pm Spring 2018 Programs – Profit/Loss Statements**
- **Tee Ball** did well with 48 registrants. This program is affordable and seems to do well for us every year.
 - **EGGstravaganza** – is not a money maker, as the cost of the 5000 eggs is expensive, but we do it for the community. Having more co-sponsorship would offset the cost of the eggs.
- Senior Softball/Nippers Softball** – is always a challenge financially, as we are members of the Greenfield Softball League and there is a cost to the league. We are not a traditional member of the league, as they allow us to play into the league. It costs \$450 for Senior Softball and \$250 for the Nippers. All the teams in the league have corporate sponsors and we do not; so while it is a financial hit, girls are playing softball.
- Warrior Dash** – On June 9 at Hillcrest and Sheffield Elementary we held a Warrior Dash. It was a very successful day as there were 125 participants. We plan on doing this event again next spring. Proceeds help with our Sponsor a Child Scholarship Program. The insurance cost is significant and will require a fee increase and hopefully an increase co-sponsorships.
- Adult Softball** – took in a loss, but less of one than in the past. There were 9 teams in the league.
- 7. 4:10pm Fall Programs**
- Our Squirr Soccer is going well, and has 24 participants. Our Junior Travel Team has 10 children and the Senior Travel Team has 14 children. The Blue Fish Swim Team is finalizing the details so we can begin registration. The Blue Fish has a new website that we're excited about. We have a new coach, Colin Machat, who was an assistant coach last year. Other programs going on this fall include Youth Basketball Clinics in November, Scarecrow Stuffing on September 29, and Pumpkin Decorating at the Great Falls Festival.
- 8. 4:15pm Use of Unity Park Fieldhouse – Our Lady of Czestochowa, Sunday, October 7, 2018**
- A Rosary Procession starting at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church will go down K Street, then Avenue A and end at Unity Park. Eversource has given permission to have an altar across the road, near the water for the service. Dennis Grader is asking permission to use the Fieldhouse for this event.
- Motion:** Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion to allow Our Lady of Czestochowa to use the Fieldhouse on October 7, 2018; seconded by Albert Cummings
- Approved:** 3-0
- 9. 4:18pm Concern Regarding Operating House of Unity Park Basketball Court**
- Fred Cassidy called the office and contacted Dennis as well, concerned about the basketball court being used in the early mornings. He wondered if there could be signage stating the court hours be 7:30am – dusk. This seems to be a summer issue as it is light out at 6/6:30 a.m. The park is open dawn to dusk. Jon did let Mr. Cassidy know that there have been complaints about restricting certain areas of the park. This is a challenging issue because we have certain parts of the park operating a certain hours and other parts of the park operating at different hours. We have put up signage before, but we can try again. Jon will notify Mr. Cassidy that we will post signage of these hours.
- Motion:** Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to post signage stating the operating hours of the basketball court as 7:30am-dusk; seconded by Albert Cummings.
- Approved:** 3-0
- 10. 4:22pm Director's Business**
- **Montague Center Park Improvement Project Update:** There is nothing to report. Jon was hoping to hear from the Conway School of Design, but hasn't yet.
 - **Whale Spray Feature:** May need some maintenance. We have had some electrical issues occurring the last week of the summer. The activation button does not seem to be working properly. Jon changed the settings, but in doing so allowed for a higher water usage (1,200 gallons more). He did talk to DPW to

have an electrician come down to look at the bollard activator unit. If this is mechanical, the price tag to fix could go way up.

●**Fieldhouse Mural:** Work is being done on the project, and many people seem involved. Jon has not been given specific updates, but is very positive about the project and its completion.

●**Director’s Evaluation:** Will be discussed at October’s meeting.

●**Monthly Meeting/Event Log:** No questions.

11. 4:30pm Other Business

Fieldhouse Roof: As of right now, there is no mutual agreement between the Superintendent of DPW and Town Administrator as to what has to happen next to fix the roof. There are not enough capital funds available. Jon is planning on providing pictures for Steven Elis, Town Administrator. Jon let the commission know that this issue is a topic of discussion and hoping a consensus is coming.

Fieldhouse Garage Space: No plan is currently in place for that space. Jon has a vision for the space but doesn’t know if it accommodates building/fire codes.

Skate Park Account: The Brick House were the custodians of a fundraising account during the initial construction of the Skate Park. They turned over the remaining balance, approximately \$4,500 over to the town; increasing that account balance to around \$7,000. The Skate Park Committee met with Jon and they discussed what they would like to do with the money; first on the list is addressing the front façade and the inability to grow anything in that spot. They are hoping that by adding native grasses to this area would help. Also discussed was the idea of installing a chain link fence just long enough to discourage traffic from going up/down the bank, that will also act as a safety barrier.

12. 4:35pm Adjournment

Motion: Made by Barbara Kuklewicz, seconded by Albert Cummings.

Approved: 3-0

X _____
Albert Cummings, Secretary Date

or

Signature

Name & Title: _____

Print: _____

Date: _____