

MINUTES

Recreation Commission Meeting 2/22/16

Call to Order: Meeting called to order at 6:43 PM. Noted that the meeting record shall reflect that the member Bob Phillips is attending remotely via speakerphone for February 22, 2016, by reason of business travel under 940 CMR29.00.

Recreation Commission attendees: Paul Aries, Sheila Moylan, Dave Reilly, Ann Delaney, Joyce Cannon, Mitch Katzman, Lynn Connors, and Bob Phillips via phone.

Recreation staff attendees: Nicole Banks, Mike Griffin, Kristin Scoble

Fields Meeting/Update

1. Addressed the need for permits in due time and that the organization's insurance policy needs to be included with field use requests. High school uses are entered on the Fields calendar first and then other requests are put on the calendar.
2. Field coordinator/league president invoices to go out either monthly or at end of season July 1 based on organization's request. Letter will address use of lights, portable toilets, and any lining of the fields needed. This way the organizations can plan for invoices and the Recreation Dept. can begin planning early.
3. Introduction of the website and explanation of the workings of it. It is updated daily at 2:00 pm regarding field conditions, BUT changes that will not be updated are related to teams' scheduled by the Athletic Director. (MIAA) Mike explained sign-in procedure for field coordinator/league president.
4. DPW update: Deerfield construction is complete with the exception of installation of bases and other small items. Opening date is set for May 1st. Once the DPW signs off on the field, it becomes open for sign up. They plan to line for softball and would appreciate the continued shared grooming after use and encouraged the spokespersons to share this expectation. Request of the DPW made for improvement of the high school pitcher's mound (softball).

DPW is awaiting a funding vote at Town Meeting for replacing the artificial turf at Flahive field. If approved, field work is likely to start by July 1st and run for six weeks, weather-dependent.

Upper Thurston soccer field has been improved by the addition of some new sod.

Discussed the option of Morrison softball field use by adult teams. Town is currently researching options for chain link fence and 40' netting behind to protect spectators, cars, etc.

Middle School Babe Ruth needs: Needs crowning, add conditioning to make the top more absorbing. Mike addressed the fact that if these improvements are made it may alleviate the number of cancellations.

5. Schools update. On Saturday, May 21st all fields will be unavailable as a lacrosse fundraiser being held.

Turf fields: start time on this field is 6:30 unless it is not being used.

High school teams will not be using the middle school fields (Thurston upper and Lower), except for Ultimate Frisbee

6. Westwood Day will be Saturday September 24th. The high school fields will be closed until 6:00, the Middle school fields might be open earlier. A request for activities sponsored by the teams was made.

7. Community Events:

*Sunday, March 20th, Flahive will be unavailable 10:30am – 11:30am Women’s Club

*Friday, March 25th, 8am – 4pm Multi-purpose and Flahive being used ? Event

*Sunday, May 1st, 8am - 2pm I AM STRONG EVENT

*Wednesday, June 8th, 5th grade party

*Saturday, June 11, Softball Tournament no availability from 8am – 4pm

*June – July 9-12 use of fields WHO???

Recreation Program Survey

1. Explanation of the survey as a means to acquire feedback from the community. Last general recreation survey was conducted in 2008. Aquatics department did a survey last year therefore this survey will only include a few aquatics questions. Draft survey was shared with the Commission members. Anticipated distribution date is August and method would be to include survey in the Rec program brochure.
2. Two surveys are planned; one by outside company that would look at the Sheehan land use, and the land near the high school and facilities/community center need. This survey that is being addressed is more basic to programming needs and wants. Dave asked if surveys could be sent just post an event via email? Paul addressed the issue of what is the goal of survey? Nicole, “Aquatics did a great job using survey monkey and also with using the data for focus for improvements. Suggestion made regarding using this as a forerunner to a larger survey. Commission members are asked to review the survey and bring back any suggestions. Discussion about methods to increase the amount of surveys returned by public. Staff will look it over and bring edits to the department. Possibility raised of meeting with a consultant to help with the process to be able to get the information that we are looking for.

Consent Agenda:

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda including the minutes from January 11, 2016 meeting, made by Ann Delaney, and seconded by Joyce Cannon. Approved unanimously.

Commission Member reports:

Comprehensive Master Plan: Ann Delaney has not yet been contacted. Nicole will send that contact information so she can check on status of meetings.

Playgrounds: Sheila is working on getting designs for play structure for June Street Playground and then will look at fundraising. Met with Disability Commission members to review requirements for accessibility.

Public Comment: None.

Report of the Director:

Westwood Day Update - Inclement weather plan

Move forward on working with the school to determine the indoor space that would be available/possible Gymnasium use. The school has a floor covering available, as used during testing. Mike expressed that he would be shocked if the gym was not made available as a part of an inclement weather plan, as this is a town-wide event. Discussion of what is realistic to bring inside. Ann asked what would go in the gym if we were given permission. Nicole indicated that vendor village and sponsors would likely move inside. Mike added that College night is held at the high school gym with approx.100 tables. Bob added that we should be prepared to discuss the use of the building for flu shots and other events that are already in place.

Alternative date plan - some towns have alternate date or raindate. Dave is not in favor of the alternative date plan.

Kristin discussed the entertainment concerns as several bands requested inside space last year. Need to plan ahead for that.

Some sponsors indicated that without an inclement weather plan in place, the commitment to the event may not be there.

March Into Summer event held March 12, 10am – 2pm Volunteers needed, please email Jan or Nicole if you can volunteer for this event.

Fishing Derby - Save the date May 7 at Buckmaster Pond 7am – 11am

Animal by-law review committee meeting: There is a lot of confusion around this by-law. We do have a leash law - no dogs can be unrestrained by a chain or a leash and it is against the law to let dogs go to the bathroom on a field. We are not able to have signs that state No dogs allowed. Current use of field use SIGNS to match field policy to be in compliance with by-law can state: leash, curb, and clean-up after your dog. Also suggested that a picture of dog with a red line through it be included. Discuss with Linda about the rules about the turf field.

Next Meeting: March 28, 2016 at 7:00 pm at Carby Street.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 PM made by Joyce Cannon, seconded by Ann Delaney. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Connors