

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

October 25, 2016

3:30 p.m.

Unity Park Fieldhouse

56 First Street

Turners Falls, MA 01376

Present: Dennis Grader, Chairperson, Barbara Kuklewicz, Vice Chairperson, Jon Dobosz, Director of Parks & Recreation, Jennifer Peterson, Clerk/Bookkeeper

Missing: Albert Cummings, Secretary

Meeting Being Taped

Agenda:

1. Meeting Called to Order: 3:30 p.m.

2. Approval of September 28, 2016 Meeting Minutes: Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion of approving minutes; seconded by Dennis Grader.

3. Skate Park Update

The landscaping is the only issue left to complete; there will be two additional trees installed by the town in the next week. Jon did contact the Franklin County Technical School's landscaping program to see if they can help us with the eastern facing area of the park this spring. He's hoping to hear back from them at some point soon. The cracks in and around the bowl area continue to be monitored. February 1, 2017 is the completion of the one year warranty on cracks outside the bowl. Additional trash containers will be placed in the park this coming spring as trash does continue to be an issue.

4. Rutter's Park Project Update

The final draft version of the plan was given to the commission. This version does show the changes that were requested; a chain link fence will be installed instead of a wooden guard rail fence around the playground area. The next project meeting is scheduled for next Wednesday, November 2 at the Public Safety Building. Barbara Kuklewicz asked the question if a cost estimate had been given yet; and it has not, but Jon believes we should have an estimate by the next Public Hearing. Once we get approval for construction the design phase begins. As far as cost of the project, we begin with the final draft version and go from there if items need to be added/removed. This project could be worked on in phases like the renovations to Unity Park. Jon updated the commission on the status of Norma's Park and how we originally thought the entire area was going to be sold to the MA Department of Fisheries & Wildlife, but now only the ballfield is part of the sale. The town actually owns the playground area. Patty Dion stumbled upon this information when she met a family member of Norma, and was told that years ago this plot of land came up for auction and the family purchased it and then donated it back to the town.

5. Remainder of Spring Program FY16 Profit/Loss Statements

There was some discrepancy with the bottom line of some of the programs, so we looked further into these programs; Tee Ball ended up with a profit of \$871.22, Senior Softball took on a slight loss of \$174.74, Nippers softball lost \$337.85 and Rookie Ball lost \$16.24.

6. FY16 Financial Study

The study provides a great deal of information. The department will probably never experience another 5 year period as we just did in regard to grant funding for our services and infrastructure; we received approximately \$2.38 million from these funding sources. The Revolving Fund made a slight profit this year compared to previous years. Jon seems to think this because many families paid up front for their Summer Playground reg-

istration fees so he anticipates the revenue for FY17 to be down somewhat because this revenue came in at the end of FY 16.

7. FY18 Operation & Capital Budget Planning

This is the starting point in planning FY18, relative to capital projects. Jon does not anticipate receiving information on our operating budget from the town until the end of November. A vote on this will have to wait until we have all that information. He would like to see the FY18 final operating budget and capital improvement proposals voted on in December. There was a correction to the Capital Projects Future Needs section of the packet; the Highland Park Improvement fencing is not a FY17 expense but instead a FY18. Jon recommends the fencing because there is no defining space between the ballfield and homes that abut the property. One area in particular needs a chain link fence, there was once a fence there but has since been removed. The new family owns chickens so a fence will help keep them out of the ballfields. Another area of concern is the entrance to the park as the road turns on to Lyman Street; possibly this could be more decorative. Clearly defining the park space from the neighbor's property is this project would come from the capital budget. Another FY18 expense Jon recommends is repainting the playground walkways as it will be around 5 years at that point in which construction of the playground area in phase one of the Unity Park project was complete. The integrity of the asphalt looks good but there are some cracks that will need filling and repainting. The conversion of the fieldhouse garage into program space, and fieldhouse sustainability initiatives are items still in the needs assessment phase. Jon is waiting to hear back from Eversource with their recommendations for electrical upgrades. When all this information is gathered, Jon will present it to the commission.

8. Special Event Proposal

This past summer Jon met with Gretchen Tucker for a special event idea called Victory Dolls. She has run this event in a few local facilities. This is a large scale World War II display. Jon asked the commission to look over the packet so that it can be discussed at a future meeting.

9. Directors Report

There were no questions.

10. Other Business

Jon let the commission know he began working on the Sawmill Rive 10k race. There was some discussion on the idea of medals and how cost effective this would be for us, but he liked the idea and would look further into it.

