

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

December 14,, 2016

3:30 p.m.

Unity Park Fieldhouse

56 First Street

Turners Falls, MA 01376

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

Meeting Being Taped

Agenda:

- 1. Meeting Called to Order: 3:37 p.m.**
- 2. Approval of November 15, 2016 Minutes:** Albert Cummings makes the motion of approving minutes; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.
- 3. Lake Pleasant Parks**
 - Rutter's Park Project Update:** On December 5, 2016, the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) held a public hearing with the Board of Selectman (BOS) regarding the proposed Rutter's Park Master Plan. GZA GeoEnvironmental presented the master plan to the BOS, who were very receptive to the proposal. Jon feels confident that we will be moving forward with the application for design funding. Jon made it very clear that this Master Plan is not the final plan; it may be adjusted. Two factors that can lead to changes are public input and the current design budget (\$535,000). The application is due end of December, once submitted it will take a few months to hear back about approval.
 - Norma's Park:** This item is still pending as Jon has not received any notification back from Eversource in regard to our request to be considered a potential purchaser of the ballfield adjacent to Norma's Park.
- 4. FY 18 Operating & Capital Budget Proposal**
 - Operating Budget Proposal:** Jon went through the format that the town is asking the departments to follow. There are two items the Jon recommends changes to: the "P/T Wages Temp" and "Facilities/Grounds Repair and Maintance. Our summer counselors are the P/T wage Temp line item, and right now the minimum wage seems holding at \$11/hour. If it were to increase, we would need to meet with the Finance Committee to discuss asking for more money from the general fund to support the increase. The department would also have to use funds from our Revolving Fund, which means we would need to increase our registration fees. The commission could also vote for exemption from the minimum wage with a formal recommendation before the Finance Committee. There was discussion about how not paying minimum wage could affect the quality of the employee. Jon recommends that line item "Playground Surface Material" be absorbed into the "Facilities Grounds Repair and Maintenance" as the two line items are similar in nature. In doing this, would give us more flexibility.

Motion: Albert Cummings makes the motion to accept the Operating budget proposal; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Vote: 3-0

●**Capital Budget Proposal:** Jon recommends two items be addressed with FY 18 budget. The first item is repainting and resealing the walkways at Unity Park. The one estimate that we have at this time is high at \$16,000. Jon is hoping to hear back from another company that was contacted. It has been 5 years since these walkways were installed so it is important to maintain the integrity of the asphalt. The second item is fencing at Highland Park and the need to have clear boundaries at the park. Because fencing is so expensive, we could use limited amounts of fencing and use instead materials like large rocks to establish perimeters. There are other areas of the park that need addressing as well; the shed, handicap accessibility, and paved walkways between the parking lot and playground. These changes can be made in phases. The commission felt strongly, because of safety and accessibility issues, these items be addressed in the FY 18 budget proposal.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion to move forward on the Capital Project schedule for the playground walkways and the Highland Park fencing; seconded by Albert Cummings.

Vote: 3-0

5. Director's Report

Jon's request for the use of vacation time on December 21 and 22 was granted.

6. Other Business

In regard to the public's interest in an outdoor swimming facility in town, the commission reviewed Montague Planning & Conservation Department's report of the Montague Swimming Committee (1/10/2000). The Commission felt that the Montague Swimming Committee's findings were very thorough and their findings of the area swimming spots unsafe still exist today.

Motion: Albert Cummings makes a motion to table the planning of a department swimming pool; seconded by Barbara Kuklewicz.

Vote: 3-0

Adjournment: 4:20 p.m.

Vote: 3-0

X _____
Albert Cummings, Secretary

Date

or

Signature

Name & Title: _____
Print

Date: _____

