

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, April 25 2017

3:30pm

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, Jennifer Peterson, Clerk/Bookkeeper

Meeting Being Taped

1. 3:34pm Meeting Called to Order

2. 3:31pm Approval of April 25, 2017 Minutes: Barbara Kuklewicz makes the motion of approving minutes with one spelling correction on page two; seconded by Albert Cummings.

3. 3:35pm FY18 Budget Update

The Finance report for Town Meeting was in the Commission's packet, and all articles were approved by the Finance Committee. There were no questions.

4. 3:37pm Unity Skate Park

Jon met with members of the Skate Park Committee and discussed summer programs. They asked permission to use the Fieldhouse to hold a meeting, independent of us, to discuss the summer plans and they were given permission to do so. Jon did meet with the Board of Selectman in regards to the Night Skate and they were very receptive to the idea. Mark Amsteen, the Landscape instructor at the Franklin County Technical School, responded back to our request for a possible collaboration with their department in regard to the Skate Park. He and the students will be coming down to the park to look at the main façade of the park, with the intent the work to begin this coming fall. Jon is concerned about the facade and what can be done without compromising the integrity of the structure. He may contact the Building Inspector to get his opinion. If there is an issue, Jon may recommend to the Skate Park Committee that they focus more on this rather than the installation of the concrete pad that had been previously planned.

5. 3:42pm Summer Programs

The brochure is not complete yet, but it should be ready for the May meeting. There were will be skateboard clinics, tennis lessons, summer day camp, and the River Valley Ice Cream Ride will be held again this summer. The Ice Cream Ride is Saturday, July 29 and typically this is the night the Boat Club holds its Christmas in July event. Jon is considering recommending to the Skate Park Committee to hold the Night Skate the same night; it would be a nice paring of events. Dennis Grader suggested we have the whale water feature stay on later that night to accommodate the people at these events, and Jon thought that was a nice idea.

●**Summer Camp** – We have hired a new camp director, Lauren Donovan, whom Jon feels will be a great fit with our department. Camp counselor interviews will begin in a week or so.

6. 3:46pm Montague Center Park

Jon is trying to coordinate a date with the Montague Center Volunteer Fireman's Association to have a public hearing in their main meeting room. The Montague Grange could be another possible facility if the Fire Station doesn't work out. A May meeting is really what Jon is hoping for; it would be a good thing to move forward on this plan.

7. 3:47pm

Concussion Policy

Jon has drafted a policy for the department that he feels is a very manageable policy for our staff and volunteers to follow. If approved by the Commission, it would begin this summer with all staff and volunteers. There was discussion on the benefits of portable defibrillators for the department and Dennis Grader recommended looking further into the cost. Jon said he would also look to see if there are grants for such an item.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to accept the Concussion Policy as written; seconded by Al Cummings.

Vote: 3-0

8. 3:57pm

Unity Park Fieldhouse Mural Project II

Karen Stinchfield, Brick House Coordinator, who helped with the first mural project, and another artist will begin the mural around June 24. This mural will be on the north facing wall only (First Street side). The project should be completed mid-July.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to accept the Fieldhouse Mural Project II; seconded by Al Cummings.

Vote: 3-0

9. 4:02pm

Directors Report

There were no questions.

10. 4:04pm

Other Business

●Highland Park Fence

Jon was contacted by an abutter of the park who was not happy about the chain link fence being installed next to his property. Jon read the letter from Kevin McCarthy to the commission where he explained that the park has been used by many people over the years without incident, so to change the park now does not make sense. Mr. McCarthy stated that he had talked with his neighbors and they feel the same way. Therefore, Jon felt that if the abutters were fine without fencing, then he would reconsider. He contacted Deb Bourbeau, Town Clerk, to confirm removing an article at Annual Town Meeting would be done on Town Meeting floor, where Jon would recommend to the town meeting members to reject the article. He will also have to contact the Town Moderator ahead of time to let them know this will be occurring. The commission appreciated knowing these were concerns, and very happy to oblige these residents.

●Jon was also approached this week by a gentleman wanting to put another basketball hoop at Highland Park. Due to these two events, Jon feel there should be a public hearing for Highland Park improvements sometime this summer.

Motion: Barbara Kuklewicz makes a motion to vote down the Highland Park fence article at Annual Town Meeting, and to hold a public hearing at some point this summer to hear the resident's concerns/ideas for Highland Park improvements; seconded by Albert Cummings

Vote: 3-0

●Unity Park Porta Potty

This summer, from Memorial Day to Labor Day, there will be a Porta Potty at Unity Park. In the past, residents have asked for bathroom facilities, and this seems to be the best option. There was discussion as to where the best location would be so that both skateboarders and children using the playground will have easy access to the porta potty; at this point location as not been decided.

Adjournment: 4:30pm

Vote: 3-0

X _____
Albert Cummings, Secretary Date

Or _____
Signature

Name & Title: _____
Print Date