

Recreation Commission Meeting

20 Sanderson Street City Offices and Greenfield Community Youth Center

September 14, 2023 6pm

ATTENDING:

- Myrtron Jaquay, Donna DuSell, Mary Phillips, Heather Valenta, Dan Piasecki, Barb Nichols Zaccheo and Christy Moore

6:06pm MEETING COMMENCEMENT

- Review of meeting packet

6:08pm REVIEW OF MEETING MINUTES:

- August 2023 submitted by Heather meeting minutes are being reviewed by Christy. Commission will review prior to the October 2023 meeting.

6:09pm PUBLIC INPUT:

- Myrt heard Pickleball Ladder evening went well.
- Montague Soap Box Derby canceled due to low registration.

RECREATION DIRECTOR REPORT

6:10pm PROGRAM AND OFFICE UPDATES:

Greenfield After School Program (GRASP):

- Enrollment is growing at Federal Street and Four Corners schools. There are two fully enrolled days at Four Corners already. The Federal Street School enrollment is expanding this year.
- An additional Assistant Group Leader has been on boarded.
- Christy is awaiting clearance for a background check for another Assistant Group Leader and she made an offer to a Site Coordinator. The Department is slowly filling the GRASP vacancies.
- The first GRASP staff meeting occurred last night with the entire group. Special Clubs will start next week.
- Sarah and Hannah, Kelsie, Jackie and Trevor are all returning GRASP employees.

REC ROOM (grade 5-7, ages 11-14):

- This is now open! Ben has 10 students signed up so far with others scheduling tours and calling to inquire. Ben has created a newsletter and calendar for the month with activities and special projects. Tomorrow he will be attending the Greenfield Middle School lunch periods to pass out information and talk to the students. Christy shared a summary of the RecRoom that Ben prepared for the Commission.
- Mary and Danica's son is enjoying the Rec Room.

- Rec Room capacity is 30 students. Nick will assist Ben on Tuesdays through Thursday and Christy has hired a female employee to assist Ben on Mondays and Fridays.
- Greenfield Library reached out to coordinate tween activities with Greenfield Recreation.
- Ben is full time with planning, preparations, newsletter, printing Rec Room passes, etc. and students get along well with him really well.
- Mary added the Master Nam's software sent a text when kids signed out at the martial arts studio. This could be a feature to explore with Greenfield Rec software so that parents know when a Rec Room attendee has left the program to walk or bike home or elsewhere.
- Commissioners toured the Rec Room and were impressed with the amenities.

6:15pm Office Updates:

Registrations and Rentals

- Registrations keep coming and facility rentals continue to come in. The Recovery project will be holding an event soon at Beacon Field.

Phone and Computer Workstation

- Finally, Ben's workstation and phone is installed and working. If you need him, he is extension 2125.
- He will get a cell phone so parents of Rec Room attendees can text with him.

Future VSI Vermont Software Upgrades

- Sometime in the future, the City's Information Technology Department will be upgrading the software. There have been some major changes and upgrades since the last installation.

6:20pm Old Business

Parks and Programs:

- This week Christy, Shayla, and Kelly cleaned, packed and moved the supplies from the Green River Swim Area to storage at Sanderson Street.
- Playground inspections/audits need to be completed. Kelly and Christy did order a replacement part under warranty for the Greenfield Middle School playground.
- Christy ordered a handrail for Newton and DPW will install it.
- Skatepark – Mountain View repaired the water fountain this week. Christy has ordered a replacement solar panel for the charging unit and it seems to get heavy use. The punch list is almost finished so Christy can close out the project. Someone installed stickers as vandalism and also hung lights on the shelter-police will advise Christy if night skating becomes a problem.

6:31pm New Business:

Fall Programs

Soccer:

- Soccer started last weekend. There are 11 teams with 114 players with 5 spots left. 26 coaches are helping with the program. Due to the expansion of teams, there has been a second home game each week for the Junior Division.

Pickleball Ladder:

- This new program started last week. Shayla has been busy approving households and answering questions for this. This is a lot of work with weekly sign ups but Shayla and Christy wanted to let as many players in as possible. 16 each week so far.

Rec the Night:

- Dodgeball at Middle school is next and Shayla and Ben are coordinating with Rec Room attendees on these events.

Softball:

- Playoffs start next week. There are two brackets of five teams per the manager vote. Games will start on Tuesday and play through Sunday as needed. The Recreation Department has posted no pickleball for next Saturday due to the parking issues on tournament weekend.

Movies in the Park:

- Super Mario Brothers is scheduled for September 22nd with a 7:15pm start. The Department is discussing showing one more movie in October as there were two rain cancellations this summer.

Special Events:

- **Halloween** - Work is underway to call dentists for donations. The Cinema is confirmed for the movie and is holding a ghost story event, YMCA will host gym and inflatable gaga ball activities for the evening, the library will also participate along with the Greenfield Business Association and other organizations on the common. Christy is waiting to hear from the Greenfield High School marching band. The Department still needs to confirm judges and WHAI. Commissioners are asked to please save the date 10/31/2023 to assist with the Rag Shag parade.
- **Moose Lodge:** The Moose Lodge generously donated sports balls to Greenfield Recreation and Christy will share some of them with Greenfield High School.
- **Winter Carnival:** Commissioners are asked to mark their calendars for February 2-4, 2024 with the fireworks being held on Friday evening with a rain date of Saturday.
- **Independence Day:** Commissioners are asked to mark their calendars for July 6th with a rain date of the 7th.

- Myrt made a motion to solicit a fireworks proposal with an option to renew for two (2) additional one year periods upon mutual agreement with contractor and City as well as to level fund the price of \$12,000 for Independence Day and \$4,500 for Winter Carnival. Heather seconded. All voted in favor.

North Greenfield Park (Severance Street)

Greenfield Minor League Baseball (GMLB) emailed Christy with a proposal about North Severance Park:

1. GMLB would lay out a 60' base path field for the younger kids to practice / play on.
2. At the Home plate, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and pitcher's mound locations GMLB would excavate a down - foot or 15-foot radius and to a depth of 6-inches and replace the existing grass with baseball field mix.
3. The bases / home plate would consist of a base / mound anchoring system that when not in use will be protected by a rubber plug and bases would be stored in a locked shed (preferably on site). Home plate would be a permanent installation.
4. Dugouts will need to be installed for player safety, this would be a 6' tall 3 or 4 sided, with portable benches to start off with.
5. A perimeter fence / outfield fence would not be necessary due to the age groups that would be occupying the field.

- The approximate cost is between \$8-\$10K which GMLB is willing to fund. During non-season baseball use, the Greenfield Recreation Department would have access and use.
- The Commission started discussion by reviewing existing fields owned by the City: Severance has a backstop and abandoned house and is mowed by DPW, Murphy Park is used for softball, Beacon Field is used for middle school baseball and soccer, Abercrombie Field is used for older baseball players, Green River softball fields are used for adults and fall adult football.
- Donna added that the Recreation Department has not used the fields for many years. She added that some improvements could be paired with Community Preservation funds.
- Christy added community whiffle ball played up there in the past and that there's no playground in that part of town and Severance may be a good future site for this amenity. The department staff discussed that perhaps future pickleball courts may be of interest on this site someday.
- Some Commissioners are concerned that the City would not have the option to back out of a GMLB lease if there are different future needs/uses for North Severance.
- Commissioners suggested that Christy explore an option for the possibility of a 3 to 5 year lease with GMLB, request GMLB for a property layout/design, identify how many cars to park and where to park/people and schedule expected, bathrooms (old septic) for CPA funds/porta potty, dugout very close to road, and offset from the road, and discuss size of shed. Then Commission should advise Christy who then needs to talk with the Mayor and probably property abutters.

Community Preservation Projects

- Donna shared that the Northampton CPC reached out to low income neighborhoods so now Greenfield CPC will meet at Elm Terrace in the near future. Goal is to incorporate more environmental justice areas into the CPC projects.
- **Energy Park Shed** - The Garden Club is in need of additional storage space to store rakes, hand tools, watering cans, wheelbarrows, and other gardening supplies. A shed would allow them to store their equipment on site.
- **Hillside Park Improvements** - the installation of shade structures over the splash pad benches. Hillside Park also has a wonderful accessible walking path, but it is short.
- **Site Amenities** – installation of more outdoor amenities include interactive play amenities such as concrete chess, ping pong tables, foosball, and cornhole boards, solar charging picnic tables and bike racks.
- **Land Acquisition** - This proposal is to pursue the acquisition of a plot of land at 385 High Street to provide a new parking area and TrailHead to access the Rocky Mountain Trail System. This will be saved for a future Capital budget request.
- **Others?** Do we want to submit for pickleball or \$135K construction of kiosks for Highland Park? Should we encourage the public to submit for pickleball money?
- CPC ADA improvement and trail improvements- Christy will meet with DPW at GHS track and meet with Kim Boas for the highland trail project with Americorps.
- Heather made a motion to move forward with Energy Park storage shed, hillside park improvements, citywide outdoor amenities and Highland trail wayfinding as CPC projects for upcoming round and Mary seconded. All voted in favor.

Future Agenda Items

- Lunt/Abercrombie/Beacon/Dog Park field
- Abercrombie Field and parking arrangements for baseball practices and games given new ownership of former Greenfield Center School and renovation/development
- Parks tour for Commissioners
- Find Triathlon volunteers who can take over some of the more physical needs of the committee during race week as current dedicated volunteers are aging and need to train new members.
- Review the leases for various parks including Abercrombie, Lunt, and Murphy.
- Connect Mark Lombard of New England Mountain Biking (used to be on the Recreation Commission) with Kim to network with him about NEMBA grants, etc. for Highland Park trail improvements.
- Propose ideas for the Sustainable Greenfield Committee position to Christy.
- Work with Eric about the City's recent ownership of a 13 acres parcel and an easement to the surrounding six acres (there's also a house there that someone recently bought at auction) in Highland Park- check in on this in Spring 2023.

Next Meeting Date: October 19th at 6pm

Adjourn – Motion made by: Heather

Seconded by: Dan