

Recreation Commission Meeting
8/13/2020
Zoom Meeting

DATE: September 10, 2020
TIME: 2:17 PM

Commission Attendees: Anthony Ferrante, Cortney Eldridge, Marsha Semuels, David Kane, Mary Bradley
Town Attendees: Jon Marshall, Chris Costello, Brandon Fitts, Heidi Barberio, Wesley Chin
Guests: Tommasina Olson

Jon Marshall: Payson Park update

- Entering week 4 for Payson Park concerts; commission had approved Payson Park concerts for the summer with the caveat that the Board of Health would have a meeting to review it. Board of Health added a few additional requirements, tied to contract tracing (e.g., taking attendance/capturing names and contact info for attendees); Recreation Dept is continuing to approve permitting requests as they come in
- Wesley Chin has not able to attend any concerts personally but our former health director was able to attend, and he did not raise any concerns
- Mary Bradley has been able to attend; contact tracing was being conducted; volunteers were able to explain expectations
- Recap: if there were items requiring overtime, Payson Park would cover the cost. There has not been any overtime required (e.g., from DPW or Belmont Police Dept)
- Tomi
 - New rules/regulations: require a max of 50 people – we will limit guests to 40 people (due to volunteers and band members)
 - Last night (8/12) we achieved 40 spectators; turned away about 20 people because of caps in attendance
 - Would like to have the next two concerts; would like to have September 2nd concert as well
 - Getting positive feedback from community/attendees for bringing music back

Comments/Q&A

- It's important for us to provide recreational opportunities when/where we are allowed to, when we can do it safely/in accordance with CDC guidelines
- Observations from 8/12 are that there were listeners who could not attend the concert (not enough space) so they were listening from triangle
- Received some criticism and frustration from other community members about having an event during the pandemic
- Somebody from Rec Commission or Dept should attend the next concert to ensure "triangle" (space outside the park itself) is not causing an issue with social distancing
- Board of Health will review this again at Monday's meeting
- Brandon: other Medway, Franklin, Watertown, Southborough, Sharon, Millis, and Acton (and maybe more) are offering events like these

Motion: Payson Park Music Concerts may be extended through first week of September (with final concert on 9/2)

Unanimous approval (Anthony, Marsha, David, Mary, Cortney)

Summer Extension Program

- Brandon: tomorrow (8/14) is the last day of the Recreation Camp
- We'll start 3 weeks of half-day only programs on Monday at Town Field (weeks of 8/17; 8/24; 8/31)
- Summer programming was able to make a little money for the Recreation Dept
- We may be able to extend the half-day end-of-summer program if staffing works out – there are a lot of pieces still falling into place

Fall Update

- Jon: Indoor space will be a challenge this year; may use grass area near the pool for programming; evaluating recess programming through/with schools but a lot is still in discussion
- Opening of the ice rink and the Dolphin swim team
 - One of the biggest challenges is pool space – Waltham Boston Sports Club has been purchased by a pharmaceutical company so that is no longer an option
 - State currently has hockey as a “class 3 high risk” so games are not allowed
- Not putting out a fall brochure this year due to things changing quickly and printing costs are expensive; everything will be available online
- Select board on August 24th will be taking up 2nd wave of appointments and Jon thinks this is when Recreation will be appointed (if not then, following meeting)

Fall Field Usage/Youth Organizations

- Jon: Soccer, Baseball, Lacrosse
- Each sport will need to present a comprehensive COVID plan
- Soccer will not have a travel program this year
- Lacrosse is limited (especially for boys' lacrosse) due to contact
- Baseball will have a fall season
- Have not done any field permitting for birthday parties, etc.; recommendation is to NOT offer permitting to private parties (i.e., organizations only)

Tennis Permits/Use

- Do we want to try to move forward with permitted times?
- Do other towns charge fees? Yes.
- Do we implement a carry-in/carry-out policy?
- Let's have the Recreation Dept investigate/look into these and start having permitting discussions in an upcoming meeting

Budget

- Operational override was voted on and then rescinded; it will go back in April for a vote
- As part of the budget planning process, the Recreation Department will need to submit two budgets: one with a positive override vote and one with a negative vote; negative vote will require 10-15% budget reduction

Next month's meeting: September 9th but that conflicts for Anthony and David; will reschedule to Tuesday September 8th 5:30pm

Meeting adjourned 6:53pm.