

Recreation Commission Meeting

7/12/22

Via Zoom

Commission Attendees: Dave Kane, Dave Lind, Cortney Eldridge, Anne Helgen, Anthony Ferrante, Paul Cowing, Melissa Hart

Town Attendees: Brandon Fitts

Guests: Julie Choi, Mary Bradley

Call to order 5:32 pm

Minutes from last month:

In favor: Anthony, Cortney, Paul, Dave Lind

Abstain: Dave K, Anne, Melissa

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: September 13, 2022

TIME: 2:49 PM

Porchfest:

Permitting and discussion:

- Mary, Julie -- request for permit for park with electricity for six hours; use of porta-potties; Recreation Department resources
- Mary: student performers for up to six hours; Julie spearheading community-wide art project
- Would like electricity because some students are using electricity
- Ideally Winn Brook
- Last year: did you use the entire park? Thinking about soccer and other sports.
- Mary: it'd be ideally to not have to share; reached out to soccer but have not heard from them yet; last year, Town Field and Winn Brook were both empty from noon onwards
- Timing; First Saturday after Labor Day

Discussion:

- Melissa: soccer probably begins on the 10th (September); Winn Brook probably would not be used in the afternoon and Town stuff will likely not start until the 17th.
- Cortney: clarifying times -- as early as noon, will end at 6 pm? Response: last year was 40 minutes at the field (only BHS marching band)

Motion:

Approve a permit of up to six hours for Porchfest on September 10th at \$25 per hour, starting as early as noon and ending by 6 pm, at a town park (location TBD), with use of electricity.

Approved unanimously: David Kane, Anthony, Anne, David Lind, Melissa, Cortney, Paul

Mary and Brandon to discuss location and electricity.

Other Updates and Town Business:

Youth Coordinator/Rec Assistant Position:

- Approved for funding and is under Recreation; open till July 31st
- Recreation Department is growing
- Multiple applicants
- Hope to bring back parents' night out, open mike nights, middle school dances

Discussion:

- Anne: clean up language with who's appointing this position. It should likely be the Select Board or the Town Administration (not Youth Commission).
- Brandon: agree to clean up charge; once we narrow down the candidate pool, will have youth commission in on interviews.

Park ranger pilot program:

- Wes and Health Department oversee dog/off-leash permit program. Looking for support on how to enforce rules. In July, piloting park ranger program. Collect data, monitor trash, share information (e.g., need an off-leash permit; need a permit for birthday parties). Has found broken glass, dog feces, is providing good data. Will reevaluate to see if it's valuable to continue through August. Will get data from the park ranger and marry with Activitas study. Look at policies and procedures; foresee traffic jam in the spring for the parks.

Discussion:

- primary priority is "our" parks (not school property). School does not charge for the use of their fields or courts, with the exception of custodial fees or police detail. Anne is offering to work with Brandon and the School Committee (as member of Warrant Committee) to help rectify this. From town perspective, it's inconsistent and confusing (e.g., charges for some fields but not others).
- Anthony: Not charging fees is inconsistent -- the school charges for varsity sports -- why not charge for others too?
- Anne: The Town pays for Harris Field; not the school. If money is being charged, it should go back to cover the cost of this asset. Will get some facts offline and work with Brandon
- Melissa: worried about equity. Basketball is \$450 to play. (But where does it go?)

CPA project updates:

- Winn Brook: 4th tennis court shut down today (7/12/22); three courts will be available entire summer except for one week -- all courts will be resurfaced in August. 5th tennis court will be completed in August.
- Payson Park: not confirmed yet (Jay is on vacation); have not gone out to bid yet. By the time we get ready, it's likely early fall.
- Grove Street: design and engineering
- Town Field: is out to bid and will likely build in the spring.
- Chenery playground: needs to be redone; new grades are moving in in the fall of 2024. Submit for off cycle CPA request in the fall (November 2022); design and engineering in May 2023.

Discussion (mostly Chenery):

- is it just the playground? Modularity? Tennis courts? Basketball courts?
- Youth baseball and middle school football is there; also, BHS baseball is moving there
- Rink building committee is responsible for proposing what the fields west of Harris look like; will most likely lose the baseball fields from the HS
- Underwood: after Chenery

Skating rink memberships and possible vote on fees:

- As part of Recreation's fall brochure, need to add rink information. Operationally, rink is not being run as well as it could be. Numbers from last winter: (2021-2022 season) came very close

to breaking even, minus town costs (e.g., Frank Santori). Vending out lessons, ice rentals are up, can improve public skating. Belmont HS used 280ish hours, \$250/hour in-kind.

- Consider membership: rink-only
- Public skating numbers: fees \$9,200 revenue for public skating; 1857 attendees. Roughly half were unique; 150 were non-residents. \$5.00/person for everything -- public skating and stick and puck.
- Propose: do what we do at the pool -- family resident, family non-resident, etc. If we keep the numbers low enough, even with low(ish) numbers -- can make good money off rink membership for the season. Allows the rink managers to have autonomy about open ice time. Talked to Belmont Youth Hockey; they'd run promo and recommend every kid in Belmont Youth Hockey to get a membership.

Resident individual: \$80

Family (up to 6): \$120

Sr resident: \$50

Individual non-resident: \$120 (1.5x resident rate)

Family non-resident: \$180

Will have membership cards and scan in upon entry.

Motion:

Move to accept skating rink membership fee in the winter as proposed by Brandon and amended by the group to begin in the fall of 2022 and reviewed annually

Approved: Anne, Anthony, David K, David Lind, Paul, Cortney, Melissa

Public forum Thursday evening 7-9 pm for Rink design meeting

Will review fees for Higginbottom in the fall next meeting; will put a placeholder in fall brochure
Underwood and camp updates

Other news:

- Melissa: stepping down on the Commission; moving
- Anne: may also step down; will talk to Brandon about her replacement
- This is our last Zoom meeting. We can no longer meeting via Zoom; public can join us in hybrid fashion if permitted.
- The Underwood Pool closes September 5th.

Next meetings:

September 12th 5:30 pm in Town Hall or Homer Building

Adjourn 7:23 pm