

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes of the Meeting

May 12, 2021

Meeting called to order: 7:34pm.

Commissioners in Attendance: George Caye, Mike Kelly, James Hennessey, Mike LeBlanc, Toby Lewis, Renee Powell, and Dan Rezende

Also in Attendance: Art Adduci, Molly Keays, John Caldwell, and Kerry Macchi

Approval of Minutes: Motion made by Mike Kelly and seconded by Renee Powell to approve the April 14th minutes. Passed unanimously.

Public Input: None present

Report of Council Liaison: None due to the absence of the liaison.

Report of the B of E Liaison: Art reported that the Board of Ed is currently discussing how they can add more classrooms to TE.

OSTF: George Caye Did not have anything to report, as there was no meeting this month.

Report of Parks and Rec. Director: Molly Keays, Director of Parks and Recreation provided updates on the following:

- The Wapping Parks and Rec Facility is now open to the public for rental spaces. We are slowly seeing rentals come in and groups start their meetings back up. The front office is still utilizing the walk-up window to conduct business.
- We are still working on the summer plans for aquatics, as the mandates have changed again recently. We are working on details for scheduling the swim team, camp, and swim lessons, as there are capacity limits.
- Fitness classes are resuming in person in June.
- Sports and specialty camps are mostly full, and day camps are more than half full. New guidelines have come out that there are no longer any requirements for cohorts or social distancing. We are airing on the side of caution so we can provide a healthy and safe camp atmosphere.
- Cross Town Trail update- Molly, John, Dave and some other members have a meeting next week where they will be walking the prospective trail.
- The Capital Project budget was approved for 2021-2022, so we will be moving forward on the repurposing of the Rye Street tennis courts for Pickle Ball and Dek Hockey.
- The Parks and Recreation budget was approved and adopted by the town council.
- We are officially at 101.87% of our projected goal after the summer registration.
- Our summer brochure is out which highlights all of our summer programs.

John Caldwell, Superintendent of Parks provided updates on the following:

- Tobacco Valley Fliers have not officially moved over to the John J. Mitchell Fairgrounds, but they will be soon.
- The Parks crew is busy keeping up with mowing and upkeep of the athletic fields.
- VMP pool covers are off. The main one has a few large tears in it and John does not know how many more years it will last.
- The road into the new farmers market location has been started.
- The High School turf field is closed for the time being due to it being extremely unsafe. There are many tears in it and is constantly failing.
- Both garden sites are in full swing and are close or at full capacity.
- The field at Old Orchard Hill School is being worked on to repair some of the drainage issues.
- The Showmobile is now delayed and will not be delivered until the end of June.
- John is working on the details of the memorial patio for the council. They are looking to move it to a more central location that is more accessible.

Discussion Topic: Mike Kelly asked if there was an estimated time frame for repairs to the turf at the high school. John replied that he has been in conversations with many people regarding the repairs, and the town has done everything that has been asked of them. Even if they made the repairs now, the seams will keep splitting. The turf itself is not worn and is in great shape. Jamie asked if the manufacturer was notified. John said that lawyers have been notified, but the town has to prove that there is a defect in the product, not a defect in the workmanship. We had an independent contractor come look at it, who has also agreed to be an advocate for the town if we choose to pursue this legally, and they graded the turf an F.

Molly extended an invite to the commission for the opening day of the Farmers' Market, which will be on May 22.

Other Business: Toby shared that they will be presenting the Master Plan to the town council next week. Mike suggested it may be a good idea for George to be added to the meeting due to his knowledge and length of time with the commission.

Molly shared that there was potential for the LA Fitness building to be sold, and that might be an option for a new home for the Parks and Rec department. She proposed that if they were in support of this idea, they could write a letter to the Town Manager to request to find out more information. Mike Kelly made a motion for Toby to start drafting a letter and Renee Powell seconded. Approved unanimously.

SWW&WW: No reports

Meeting adjourned at 8:10pm – motion made by Jamie Hennessey and seconded by George Caye- passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: June 9, 2021

Respectfully Submitted – Kerry Macchi, Administrative Secretary