

Park and Recreation Commission

Minutes of the Meeting

March 9, 2022

Meeting called to order: 7:30pm.

Commissioners in Attendance: George Caye, Genevieve Coursey, James Hennessey, Michael Kelly, Kristen Kozikowski, Toby Lewis, Bill Nowak, Renee Powell, and Dan Rezende

Also in Attendance: Molly Keays, John Caldwell, Kerry Macchi, and Erica Evans

Approval of Minutes: Motion made by Renee Powell and seconded by James Hennessey to approve the February 9, 2022 minutes. Passed unanimously.

Public Input: None present

Report of Council Liaison: Councilor Evans shared that the new Park and Recreation Facility Planning and Implementation Committee meets for the first time tomorrow (March 10, 2022) and everyone is excited about getting that started. The Strategic Planning Committee will start meeting once they have enough people on board. She was hoping that someone from the Commission could come and present an overview of the Master Plan.

Report of the B of E Liaison: None due to the absence of the liaison.

OSTF: George Caye reported that they reviewed some of the properties that they wanted to include in their Master Plan so that if they come up for sale or for development, the town will be able to accept the donated open space. There were 24 properties that they looked at and will try to narrow the list down to add the properties to the Master Plan.

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

- The mask mandate has been lifted as of February 28th for town buildings and for our programs as well, including sports.
- We are anticipating Spring start dates for the work to begin on the Rye Street Pickleball/Dek hockey courts. In order to save some money and have enough for the lights, the Parks crew will be doing some of the work in-house.
- C.I.P update- it looks like for the 2022-2023 season, we will most likely be allocated \$200,000, which will go towards replacing the lights at Rye Street, which is a project outlined in the Master Plan, and also for cold storage space for the Parks Department.
- Our Spring/Summer brochure is complete and is at the post office to be mailed to all the residents in town.
- Due to the basketball season ending and COVID restrictions lessening, we are able to offer open gyms again, which will start up in April.
- We are actively accepting applications for summer positions at Camp and Veteran's Memorial Park.

Mr. Kelly asked if we know about the sports demographic in town and where that is going. Ms. Keays responded that a lot of the youth sports numbers are going down across the board, not only because of COVID but also because kids are not interested in the structure of traditional sports anymore.

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

- John wanted to commend the Parks and Public Works Departments for a recent life saving situation that they come upon, which had a great outcome due to their regular CPR and First Aid training. Without their quick action, the incident could have had a very different outcome.
- The Parks department has two new hires, and will be back up to full capacity after March 21st.
- The crew has been working on a lot of different projects, including removing the lacrosse wall at Rye Street, which will be rebuilt, some of the work at the Pickleball/Dek hockey courts, new signs at the John J. Mitchell fairgrounds, Avery Street Community Gardens, Porters Hill, and at the Farmers' Market location.

Other Business: None

SWW&WW: Cross Town Trail update: It is a very slow-moving process, as Eversource is a large company with a lot of working parts. We are currently waiting for Eversource to approve the application for the right of ways that cross over private owned property. Once that application is approved, we can apply for shovel-ready grants.

Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm – motion made by Mike Kelly and seconded by Renee Powell- passed unanimously.

Next Meeting: April 13, 2022

Respectfully Submitted – Kerry Macchi, Administrative Secretary