



LEOMINSTER RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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Nick Abruzzi
Director of Recreation

LEOMINSTER RECREATION COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

40 Barrett Parkway

1. CALL TO ORDER: Maureen Donatelli called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.
2. COMMISSION ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL: Maureen Donatelli, Tom Bissonnette, Theresa McEwen, Peggy Stephenson, Doug Cormier, Nick Abruzzi, Lisa Comeau.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETINGS

Tom made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting on October 18, 2022, it was seconded by Theresa. All were in favor.

4. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

In your folders is a one-page financial breakdown of recreation accounts as well as grants and capital improvement project funds. Finally at the bottom of the page is an updated balance in the department revolving account. Some items to note since our last meeting from a spending perspective. Routine spending has taken place in our expense accounts and salaries and wages account. In the Capital Skate Park account the balance has decreased significantly due to the project being completed beyond a few items to be done in the spring. We have held retainage funding for the project to make sure the contractor comes back to complete the final work. Lastly, the revolving account continues to fluctuate due to registration funds coming in and supplies and salaries being paid out. All account balances are healthy. Our goal is to utilize revolving funds prior to the end of the fiscal year on programs and improvements on parks where we hold our programs.

5. PARK BENCH SELECTION

Park Bench Selection – In your folders are pictures of two bench options and a plaque option for our memorial bench program. As you will remember from our last meeting, we decided to look for other options to not be too close to the benches at Doyle Field. Our goal tonight is to select a bench and we will then move toward finding a plaque to go with it. The intent moving forward is to establish a consistent bench program so that all benches are the same at our parks and facilities. The uniformity of benches will keep all dedication requests the same and pricing will be consistent across the board. Theresa made a motion to go with the six-foot benches through Dumor. Doug seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

6. FACILITY REQUESTS – no requests

7. PROJECTS/GRANTS

Skate Park and Pump Track: American Ramp Company has just about completed the skate park and pump track. As you all know a soft opening was held on Friday, December 30th and the security fence was removed shortly after. The feedback has been positive, and we look forward to the spring to complete the project by finishing the parking lot and loaming and seeding the site. Funds are being held as part of the retainage of the

project to cover the final items. We are currently working on signage for the site that will be installed in the spring as well. This includes two rules' signs and a sign recognizing the state's involvement through the PARC grant program. We had a granite slab delivered a few weeks back that was donated by Powell Sand and Gravel that was installed in the ground. This will be engraved on the front with the name of the skate park and the back will be engraved to recognize donors for the park. We have received a grant that will provide us with all the plantings for the site and includes installing them in the spring at no cost to the city. Thanks to DJ Munroe and the DPW for all their efforts with installing the granite sign. A ribbon cutting ceremony will take place in the late spring when the skate park and pump track project is fully completed.

Design and Engineering for Barrett Park Dam – GZA Consulting and Engineering continues to develop plans and specs to have the dam repaired. The plan is to have a design in place this spring to meet the deadline for the grant funding. We received an update from GZA this morning and it included a timeline of how and when the design for the dam would be completed. The good news is we were concerned additional permitting would be needed which would have driven up the cost and time needed to complete, but it looks like that will not be necessary. The timeline they gave us has the design completed in May which is before the grant deadline of June. We will keep you posted on how this progresses.

Barrett Park Playground Improvements – The Project to replace the playground at Barrett Park is moving forward. The Recreation Department hosted a pre bid meeting on Thursday January 5th and 5 contractors were in attendance. The bid opening for the project will be held on Wednesday January 18th. As a reminder the new playground has already been ordered and we have a contractor hired to install the playground. This bid includes all other work at the site. In your folders is a document created for the pre bid that outlines the major items in the scope of services for the project. Once the bids are open, we will look to start construction asap weather permitting.

United Way Teen Program Grant – We have received an initial payment of the \$42,000 for the United Way Grant for youth and middle school programs. We will continue to get payments every other month until June. To this point we have used the funds for staffing for programs and field trips and for upcoming trips this winter. This grant has been a game changer for us and allowed us to bring on needed part time program assistants to help develop programs after school and on weekends.

8. RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE 2023

In your folders is a list of proposed recreation commission meetings for the coming year. These meetings are subject to change, but we ask the Commission to vote to accept this as our intended meeting schedule. Doug Cormier made a motion to accept the meeting schedule, Peggy seconded it, and it was approved.

9. SUMMER FEES

In your folders is a document that lists all our upcoming summer programs along with the fees we are proposing for this summer as well as last year's fees for comparison. The fees are being increased by \$5.00 per program which is not a lot but will help defray costs and hourly rate increases. Doug Cormier made a motion to accept the fee increase, Peggy seconded the motion, and it was approved.

10. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

The 2023 Winter Programs have already begun, and we are excited about the registration numbers for our programs. In your folders is a breakdown of what is being offered this year compared to last year at this time. Basketball is in full swing, and the feedback has been positive. We will continue to build on these offerings and look forward to even more in the spring/summer.

Spring and Summer Programs Registrations have already been scheduled. Spring registration will begin on February 28th and Summer registration will begin on April 11th.

Summer 2023 will be exciting, and we have begun planning for staffing and making changes to the format. We will be sending a press release out tomorrow announcing summer jobs. We have met with supervisors to develop a plan for summer. A few changes we are considering is eliminating the extended day option at all locations, renaming the programs for better clarity and creativity, and changing the format of the programs typically held at school locations. Currently we utilize the school for multiple ages including preschool and the facility gets extremely hectic due to the number of children in one location. We have received permission to utilize Leominster United Church for our preschool program and have hired a former teacher to run the program with assistants we provide. Extended day has been extremely difficult to sustain at any level due to the heat and long day it presents to staff and participants. In lieu of the extended day we are considering some alternatives that include extending the regular program day one extra hour making it a 9 – 4 program or keep it the same 9-3 with no extended option. We will have more information at future meetings but wanted to give the Commission an idea of what we are planning. We have been researching other communities and very few offer an extended program anymore. Maureen asked if this change would affect the pricing and Nick said this will cost us less in labor so our prices can stay the same.

The new pickup truck and tractor have been delivered and are currently being used. The remaining vehicle we are waiting on is the new watering truck which should be in over the next month.

We are planning a winter event at Barrett Park on Saturday, February 25th from noon – 2 p.m. and we hope to have organizations that include Scouts, Emergency Management, Fire, Project Apples and Trail Stewards take part in the event. We will provide a copy of the flyer once its created.

We have numerous teen program trips scheduled for the next few weeks and will be going to Launch, Indoor Rock Climbing and Tubing at Nashoba. Christina and Kiara, part time employees we have hired recently will supervise all trips with the assistance of college or high school age staff. Lisa or I will also be present until our staff is 100 percent comfortable running the trips.

Tomorrow I will be meeting with students at Lasell University about potentially interning with us for the spring and summer. This gives students real world experience and free labor to the city. We will also be meeting with other schools in the near future, as well.

The WSI class has been held at Mount Wachusett Community College and we have 4 returning employees that took it, passed it, and can now teach swim lessons. We have already begun developing the curriculum and schedule for lessons for the upcoming swim season. We are very excited to bring lessons back this year.

Recreation Commissioner John Ciccolini has submitted a letter of resignation to the department and Mayor. We thank John for all his years of involvement with the Recreation Department and programs.

11. OTHER BUSINESS

Special thanks to the staff and Commission for their support and generosity towards me and my family over the last few weeks. It has been a crazy stretch, but we are heading in a good direction.

12. MEETINGS AND EVENTS

The next regular commission meeting will be held Tuesday, February 21, 2023 at 4:30 pm.

13. ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Theresa, Tom seconded it, and all were in favor. Meeting concluded at 5:35 p.m.