



# LEOMINSTER RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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Judith Sumner  
Director of Recreation

LEOMINSTER RECREATION COMMISSION  
Tuesday, March 15, 2022

1. **CALL TO ORDER** at 4:34 p.m.
2. **COMMISSION ATTENDANCE ROLL CALL:** Maureen Donatelli, Chairperson; Jeff O'Neill, Vice Chairman; Theresa McEwen; Doug Cormier; Judith Sumner, Recreation Director; Rob Lora, President of American Little League.
3. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MEETINGS:** Motion to accept the minutes made by T. McEwen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by J. O'Neill. All in favor.
4. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:** We may have a new Commissioner, Peggy Stephenson. The first reading to approve her, went before the City Council last night. Table again to next meeting when we have new board member and more in attendance. Motion to table the election of officers made by T. McEwen, 2<sup>nd</sup> by D. Cormier. All in favor.
5. **MAINTENANCE REPORT- written:** Tennis courts were blown off today and unchained. We will be putting up the nets on Friday, pending weather. There are a lot of cracks opening up on the courts.
6. **PROGRAM and STAFF UPDATES**
  - a) **Office Staff** – The Part-Time Seasonal Office Assistant position is now vacant, and we are working on advertising for that position. It will be open until filled. The Commission would like to look over the applications and get J. Sumner's recommendation. J. Sumner emailed Wendy Hurley, Personnel Director, about the Commission wanting to be on the interview committee to select a new Director for the Recreation Department. Wendy requested the Personnel Sub-Committee emails, which J. Sumner responded. Wendy posted the Director's position and J. Sumner posted it with MRPA for 30 days and possibly with NEPA also.
  - b) **Program updates:** L. Comeau has been working extremely hard to get all the program information together for the spring and summer. She has been contacting instructors, gathering all the details for all the programs, and setting up the contracts. We handed out the spreadsheet with all the programs at the last meeting...handed out an updated copy at this meeting. For the February vacation programs that took place at City Hall, Animal Adventures was very popular with the kids and the Magic Show with Mr. Rod also had about 100 people in attendance. Unfortunately, the Magic Lessons program had to be cancelled and we moved it to April school vacation week. Family game day, only a few families showed up for but the snow that day may have been a factor. The Winter Event at Barrett Park turned out to be a wonderful day with a fresh coating of snow and there were more people there than there ever has been in the past.
  - c) **Spring & Summer Brochure:** L. Comeau has also been putting the brochure together to go to print and put on our website. Registrations are due to open April 1<sup>st</sup> for all the spring and summer programs. There are probably around 30 programs plus our five weeks of the six All Day Summer Programs that we offer. Plus, she must create all the registration forms for each of those programs into the database registration system online. Friday L. Comeau sent them to the printer. The brochure is up online now on our website. L. Comeau has been putting in a lot of hours nights and weekends getting the brochure complete and getting registrations up online. M. Donatelli thanked L. Comeau for all her hard work getting everything completed, it is impressive.
  - d) **Fishing Derby – April 16, 2022:** 7am-11am. Doug Cormier, Tom Bissonnette and JR. LaPointe have volunteered their time and will be running it again this year.
7. **PROJECTS/GRANTS- UPDATES**
  - a) **Frankie Fortuna Skate Park & Pump Track:** There were no bids on the project. If we can change some language in the bid, we may be able to get someone to bid on it but there may not be enough time now. State gave us until the end of June to incur expenses. But if we are not able to finish it by the end of June, then we lose the grant money from the State. The original bid documents went out with a deadline of May 20<sup>th</sup>, giving us a week to finish the landscaping, to have a completion date of June 1<sup>st</sup>.

It was put into the bid that if the project was not complete by May 20<sup>th</sup>, then no money would be given to the contractor and no payment plan. J. Sumner called Wendy Wiiks today. J. Sumner tried to take some of the items out of the bid splitting up the project; taking out the fencing, silt fencing, drainage, landscaping and just tell them to build just the skatepark and pump track. Then put it back out to bid. Spohn Ranch said the project is now going to cost \$150,000.00 more to build and no one is going to bid on it. They gave J. Sumner a whole list of in-kind items that you could do to reduce the cost. So, J. Sumner was picking away at the list trying to get donations. Greg told J. Sumner that any donations must go before the City Council to be accepted. And you must list everything that is being donated when you put it out to bid. J. Sumner wanted to know if we could do a payment plan or a fine if they are late instead of the no money at all clauses. If it is not complete by the end of June, we lose \$248,000.00 grant from the state. Another concern is the supply chain, trying to get the steel. J. Sumner said maybe we can find some other funding to make up the shortage. Maybe we can get some money through the American Rescue Plan. J. Sumner has waited over a week for the design change, and they have not gotten it to us yet. Greg said you must take everything off the design that they are not going to bid on, shade structure, benches, drainage etc. Now we are behind again putting back out to bid. It must be out to bid two-three weeks before it can be awarded. We don't even know if we can get drainage pipe right now. J. Sumner is going to try to get a contractor to do the drainage. Now J. Sumner is back being the General Contractor now. DJ is working with DPW to get the gravel parking lot put in and remove the asphalt to the existing parking lot. They will help with the loom and sod for us as well. And maybe if they are available, they can help lay the pipe for drainage. We received a commitment from DeCarolus and Arabella Insurance Companies for \$5,000.00 per year for three years. No one will bid on a contract that says you will get no money if not completed by a certain date. J. Sumner wants that out of the bid language. J. O'Neill will go to Pipe Plus with the drainage drawings and see what the pipes will cost us and if they are available.

**b) Engineering and permitting for Colburn Pond Dam:** We are still waiting on the PO from Greg to complete this before the June 30<sup>th</sup> grant deadline. Wendy Wiiks said there will be Federal infrastructure money coming down the pike real soon, once we have the permits in place now, we can apply for funding to fix the dam.

**c) Barrett Park Improvements -Phase II** – J. Sumner needs to find out if the PO was issued to Andrew Leonard. The design plan needs to be completed by June 1<sup>st</sup>. The scope of work and all engineered drawings ready to go out to bid and part of the contract is Andrew Leonard overseeing the whole project.

#### 8. OLD BUSINESS

**a) Pool MOU:** The Mayor has been extremely busy, and they have not met with the state yet. J. Sumner will rewrite the MOU and send it to the Mayor for approval. The state wants a three-year MOU.

#### 9. NEW BUSINESS

**a) American Little League – Rob Lora** – President of which is now called Leominster Little League and is now combined with National and North Leominster Little League. However, they did keep the identification number of the American Little league because they are going to be 75 years old in two years. The longest little league in town, top 5 in the state. All three facilities will be used. They have signed the license agreement with the Recreation Department for American and North and the license agreement for National was signed with the school department. Steve Hjelm is the president running North Leominster Little League for this year. Rob is the overall president of all three leagues with one big board made up of all board members from all three facilities handling the league, and three small boards handling the facilities. Rob has become the Central Mass District Administrator. They are redistricting Massachusetts. We are district 3 section 1. Updating the fields at American to include 46/60 and 50/70. Now we can have travel teams etc...better competition. Merge allowed more players an added thing to little league. Our kids will be getting better. Better at middle school level and better at high school level. Insurance is cheaper for them now because insuring one league instead of three. What was merged so far is the majors, the facilities, and the bank accounts. The minors for this year will still be under each league. Next year will be a full merge. Biggest thing doing this year...last year in one game Jacob Pascall at LHS, 15 years old, got leukemia. So, for their last game last year, they made \$600 one night for him. This year in the majors all will wear orange hats, backs say 99 (Jacob's number). Representing him this year. Going to do a tournament this spring to raise money for Jacob. Going to do the normal fundraising, banners, sponsors, and fund raising to get National Little League fields back up and running. A lot of history there and the school can use it for the kids and school department. Nothing changed regarding the city license agreements and insurance, all the same. Just better for the kids to come together. Next year it will be one entity and a lot less confusing to register

etc. Thanks to Rob for all the hard work. J. Sumner and Commission invited to opening day...TBD.

- b) **FY23 Budget:** It's a level funded budget this year. Copy of updated budget given to Commission. We level funded the pool by decreasing the number of lifeguards, which we do not have, and lowered the number of the pool maximum to 100 instead of 200 people. And we had to increase our starting pay for lifeguards to compete with what the state is paying. We don't even have enough staff right now to open this year. Can't advertise \$21 & \$23 per hour without approval from the Comptroller's office because we don't have it in the budget. That's why we rearranged the budget to make it work. The money we take in at the pool pays helps pay for the top salaries there. Only line item that asked for more money in is the PT Summer. Minimum wage went up and for two teachers to run our summer programs, we need to pay them a little more than a lifeguard is getting. They are at \$26 & \$27 per hour. Right now, we do not have a lot of returning staff. Need to advertise at the local colleges. T. McEwen will look up the Education Director at Fitchburg State and send it to them to post and the Mount too.

**1) Summer Programs & Pool Salaries**

- c) **Go Kart** – J. Sumner had a request from a family who has an autistic child who enjoys go karting and has a go kart. The parent goes in the go kart with the child. They were asking if they could ride it around Barrett Park. We don't allow motorized vehicles around the pond. If it's a small battery-operated power wheels, then that would be fine because those go less than 5 miles an hour. A go kart has the potential to go fast and because this is a walking path, it could hurt someone.

**10. FACILITY REQUESTS**

- a) **Crystal Waitt – Barrett Park Birthday Party, April 16** – 9-year-old birthday party. Can't do it during the fishing derby. Approved if pick a different day and limit it to 4 hours 10:00a.m.-2:00p.m. There won't be enough parking that day for both.
- b) **Beacon of Hope – May 15 or 22** – Asked if they could play music too...for a picnic. The only place that has electricity is the pavilion near the beach as long as they do not play it loud. Also, it's rain or shine and they may want to put up a tent. J. Sumner told them that the tent would have to go on the grass past the dam because there are sprinklers in the lawn next to the pavilion. They also may want more tables moved down to the pavilion. City events always want the use of the picnic tables too, must make sure it's not on a weekend of a city event. Approved.

- 11. **OTHER – Lassie League** – T. McEwen was asked if the Lassie League is allowed to charge a few to someone that is not a part of the league to use the field. There is a travel team (4 of their teams) that uses their field and their cages. They told the Lassie League that they do not have to pay anything because the city owns the field. Because the Lassie League has the License Agreement for the use and maintenance of that facility, they can charge a maintenance fee to those others that want to use the field. But those other groups need to provide insurance naming the city as additionally insured for the use of city property. Also, T. McEwen told the president that he needs to speak with Dave Palazzi about paying more to use the fields because the league takes care of all the maintenance and opens the bathrooms for all LHS games and pays for all the bathroom supplies. And Lassie League lines the field for the high school because last year the school said they would do it and it never got done.

**12. MEETINGS and EVENTS**

- a) **Next Regular Commission meeting will be held Tuesday, April 19, at 4:30 pm.**

- 13. **ADJOURN** at 6:12 p.m. Motion to adjourn made by J. O'Neill, 2<sup>nd</sup> by T. McEwen. All in favor.