

## Recreation Commission Meeting

9/11/2023

Zoom

Commission Attendees: Paul Cowing (chair), Dave Lind (Vice Chair), Cortney Eldridge (Secretary), Theresa O'Connor, Steve Warner, Josh Gould, Mike Capitani

Anthony Ferrante,

Town Attendees: Brandon Fitts

Call to order 5:31pm

### **Review and Approve July 31<sup>st</sup> Meeting Minutes**

Approved: Cortney Eldridge, Josh Gould, Dave Lind, Paul Cowing

Abstain: Steve Warner, Mike Capitani, Theresa O'Connor

### **Church Picnic Permit (Possible Vote)**

withdrawn

### **Brief Update on Dog Conversation: Brandon Fitts**

Internal meeting in the Town/employees to determine what to do next. Chose to create a working group, comprised of Brandon, Paul Cowing, Mike Capitani, members from health department and board of health, and citizens/town residents. Working through final members and ideal size of the group. Goal is to create a response for the off leash dog program and determine next steps. Ultimately, create a proposal to the select board, collaboratively with the residents, Board of Health, and Rec Commission.

### Discussion (Rec Commission)

- Theresa would like to also join – a Rec Commission member with a dog
- Rules that govern it will most likely come from Rec Commission and Rec Department
- When we go to Select Board, it will be for them to act as Parks Commissioners
- Goal for timeline: unestablished; ideal goal will be to have it up and running prior to spring sports
- A lot of folks do not have awareness of the program
- Adding signage is not enough (e.g., at Beaver Brook, there are signs that indicate fines but there is no implementation)
- Rule enforcement (and what the rules are) are part of the remit of this new subcommittee
- There is a disconnect between the licensing and communication/awareness of the program
- Most dog owners are respectful; it is a few dog owners who wreck the experience for others

### Discussion (Public)

- Austin Sanders – if there were meeting minutes from the past, can they be shared?
  - No full discussion on the program in the past; please call the Rec Dept so Brandon can walk through

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DATE: September 13, 2023

TIME: 2:48 PM

- Kim Haley-Jackson – expressing support for off-leash program; there is a lack of transparency and awareness among residents

#### **Higginbottom Pool Fees (Possible Vote): Brandon Fitts**

- BMHS is up and running and are working on a plan for Higginbottom Pool; prioritizing school and new students
- Residents were frustrated with the number of cancelations (due to holidays, pool closures, staffing issues, etc.) in last year's schedule/open swim time
- Propose maintaining the same rates as last year
- Last year we had a daily drop in fee and we have some technology issues we need to rectify this year
- We must staff of 3 lifeguards and overtime custodian fees – should be about \$50k (high estimate); pool memberships (last year just under \$24k) do not cover the fees; programming offsets some of this loss
- Last year/summary/recap
  - Fees: \$150/family; \$90/individual; \$50/senior (and we had a pool/rink combo that we cannot offer this year – no rink)
  - Sold: 110 family; 35 individuals; 30 seniors (and 23 combo passes)

#### Discussion (Rec Commission)

- Timing? September to March/April
- BAT team, a private organization, also uses the pool for programming and impacts the public swim hours; we are given the hours/availability from the School Dept and then work within those to offer programming
- Can we have cash? No; we try to not have cash on site, HS kids collecting cash, no Rec employees/lockbox, etc.
- Is there any opportunity to have daytime programming (e.g., water aerobics, public swim)
  - Not at this time
- Parking (lack of) may be an issue/impediment for use (keep it in consideration)

#### Discussion (Public)

Barry Gaiman – has lived in Belmont for 30+ years and was expecting he would receive a free pool pass at Higginbottom. Brandon clarified that Higginbottom is owned/operated by the School (not Rec Commission) and cannot accommodate that. Daytime pool time is currently not available, but under consideration for future.

#### Motion:

Approve the pool fees at Higginbottom for the 2023-24 season as follows: Family pass \$150 per family; Individual pass \$90 per person; Senior pass \$50 per person from September through May.

Approved: Cortney Eldridge, Josh Gould, Mike Capitani, Dave Lind, Steve Warner, Theresea O'Connor, Paul Lind

### **CPC Project Update: Brandon Fitts**

- Town Field: Nearly complete in its entirety; it should be complete (Parkour Course) by the end of this week
- PQ Basketball Court: We came in a little overbudget; supported overage with revolving account so we can move forward
- Grove St: Fencing is going up; Cataldo (who did Town Field) will also do Grove St; should be usable in June 2024; possibly delayed till June 2025; creating an accessible parking spot and accessible access to walking path; no plan (at this time) for the multiuse field
- Payson Park: Coming along nicely; Activias is doing regular check-ins
- Future: there is a push for a turf soccer field in town; also Chenery needs to be redone. Brandon is planning to ask for a study to be commissioned to see where it would be best in town to determine where a turf field would be and what the design should be for Chenery, and whether we may be able to fit a skate park in town (and where). In addition, replacement items at Underwood pool (e.g., chlorine filters and some mechanical items that have passed their useful life). Using emergency; off-cycle funding for these (Underwood) repairs. They fall under the umbrella of acceptable use of CPC funds.

### **Signage in Parks Plan: Brandon Fitts**

- We need to update all signage in parks: Dave, Mike, Cortney will support Brandon for walkthroughs and sign observations; bring back to the Commission; Anthony and Ken also offered last month; Brandon to send emails with dates/parks and invite 1 to 2 members to join him
- When fields are closed (e.g., due to rain, maintenance, etc.), how do we handle it? (Email the entire list? Station staff? TBD)

### **Date for Next Meeting**

- October 16<sup>th</sup>: 5:30pm on Zoom
- November 20<sup>th</sup>: 5:30pm on Zoom

Meeting Adjourned 6:53pm