

**LACONIA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING**  
**February 16, 2021**  
**Zoom Platform**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Commissioner Rodney Roy called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Secretary Liza Kelleher recorded this meeting.

**ROLL CALL:** Commissioner Rodney Roy called the roll with the following Commissioners in attendance: Arthur Kirk and Deanna Guyer. Absent: Mitch Hamel

**PARKS AND RECREATION STAFF PRESENT:** Director of Recreation and Facilities Amy Lovisek, Asst. Director of Recreation and Facilities Matthew Mansur and Secretary Liza Kelleher.

**ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:**

1. Regular meeting minutes of November 16, 2020

Commissioner Deanna Guyer moved to adopt the minutes from November 16, 2020. Seconded by Commissioner Arthur Kirk. All were in favor.

**I. FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM:**

- A. Laconia High School Junior/Senior Prom- Rotary Park- Saturday, May 8, 2021 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm for LHS Junior/Senior Prom Walk. Commissioner Kirk motioned to accept the request pending upon submission of the certificate of insurance for LHS Junior/Senior Prom Walk. User fee has been waived and they require electrical and amplified sound. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- B. Holy Trinity Catholic School- Opechee track and Smith Field- Tuesday, June 8, 2021 (Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup> rain date) from 8:00am to 3:00pm for School Field Day. Commissioner Kirk motioned to table the request due to no representation. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- C. Belknap Mill Society- Rotary Park- Arts in the Park May 21<sup>st</sup> to September 10<sup>th</sup> every other Friday from 6pm to 8pm, Kids in the Park July 2<sup>nd</sup> to July 30<sup>th</sup> MWF from 10am to 12pm for 2021 Events. Commissioner Guyer motioned to accept the request pending upon the submission of the certificate of insurance and loudspeaker permit for the event. Users fee has been waived and special event permit needed for vending and loudspeaker purposes. Seconded by Commissioner Kirk. All were in favor.
- D. Hye on Maple/Mark Dadian- Hillside Cemetery- February 21 through April 7, 2021 for tapping maple trees. Commissioner Kirk motioned to accept the request pending upon the submission of the certificate of insurance. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.

II. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. Lakes Region Girls Softball Fall into Chaos- Memorial Field- October 8 through October 10<sup>th</sup>- Friday from 4:00pm to 9:00pm, Saturday & Sunday from 8:00am to 8:00pm for fall into chaos softball tournament. Commissioner Kirk motioned to table the request due to no representation. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- B. Administrative Approvals with regards to Coronavirus – no update.
- C. Coronavirus updates – no update.
- D. Laconia Rotary Club Invoice for Rotary Park Landscaping. Laconia Rotary Club asking Parks & Recreation Department contribution for the flowers at Rotary Park. Warren Clement gave the Commission a brief history of the park and asked for assistance with the bill for the beautiful plantings at the park. Parks and Recreation is the one maintaining the Rotary Park since 1997. Commissioner Guyer motioned to approve the request of \$1000.00 from Parks & Recreation User fees account to be use for beautification of Rotary Park. Seconded by Commissioner Kirk. All were in favor.

III. **ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS-ROTARY PARK, BEACHES, WEIRS  
AMPHITHEATER & PAVILION**

1. Kaley Patterson & Josh Gagne Wedding-Rotary Park Gazebo- August 7, 2021, Saturday from 1:30pm until 5:30pm for a wedding ceremony.
2. Laconia Lacrosse Club- Community Center- Sundays, January 17<sup>th</sup> through March 14, 2021 for Lacrosse Clinic from 4:00pm to 8:00pm.
3. Cheryl Hobbs & Chris Farias wedding-Leavitt Park ground- Saturday, June 26, 2021 from 3:00pm for a wedding ceremony.
4. Katelyn Boudreau & Marshall Nye III- Rotary Park- Saturday, September 18, 2021 from 1:30-5:30pm for a wedding ceremony.
5. Bennett Family Crafts- Community Center Gym- Saturday and Sunday, March 28 & 29<sup>th</sup> 2021 from 8:00am to 2:00pm for Family Easter craft event. (Denied)

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Weirs Beach capacity- Assistant Director Mansur is to start the staffing process for at least a minimum of 1000 person capacity. This topic will remain on the agenda to verify current status. The Commission will decide closer to the start of the season.
2. Presentation of summer staffing- Assistant Director Mansur presented on potential staffing issues regarding Weirs Beach. His concern is that if we cannot enforce our rules currently and then we bring on lifeguards who are required to enforce the rules in the water, how can we expect them to be able to do this. We need a good plan of attack with the LPD (and we believe we have one) and a year under our belt to be sure this will work and work well. Then we can determine what is best for lifeguard coverage. We will need more guards at Weirs Beach than ever before to be within the area of best practices. If we cannot do it perfectly, we shouldn't do it at all. This topic will remain on the agenda for next months meeting for further discussion.

3. Allowing Camps at Weirs Beach-New Hampshire state parks have decided not to host camps at their facilities this summer. We could expect an influx of camps this year asking to come to Weirs Beach. Commissioners decided not to accept any reservation for Weirs Beach due to the capacity level. They suggested that we allow and will recommend the use of other beaches that we have in town. In particular Opechee Point.
4. Laconia Little League-lights at Colby- Kris Fernandes of Laconia Little League has asked permission to install lighting for Colby Field. Director Lovisek explained that if we put any infrastructure in the ground it becomes City's property. This would then make the infrastructure the city's responsibility. The Director recommends a written agreement with LLL that lays out what is expected of the City and LLL. Commissioner Roy questioned the impact on the neighboring area and suggested to ask the neighbor especially the one who lives around the edge of the water if the light is going to bother them and how late are the lights going to be on. Commissioner Roy suggested having a forum and invite the neighbors for feedback before making any real decisions. Commissioner Guyer asked if there will be tournaments coming in to use our facility? Commissioner Guyer also mentioned that we have the High School field and Robbie Mills field with lights why do we have to add another field?

V. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

VI. **NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS:**

VII. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

VIII. **COMMUNICATIONS:**

IX. **OTHER REQUESTS REQUIRING COMMISSION ACTION:**

X. **PARK ASSOCIATION REPORTS:**

- A. Leavitt Park Association- December income and expense report
- B. Weirs Community Park Association- December minutes of the meeting
- C. Tardif Park Association- December income and expense report

XI. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

A. **Director's Report submitted by Amy Lovisek**

**January 19, 2021 Report**

I truly hope you enjoyed your holidays with as many of your family members as you could. I know this was a tough holiday to have get together and I hope yours was pleasant.

The City is moving ahead nicely with the ADA self-assessment. Our department has completed all parks and facilities. I am currently waiting for the Library and Police Departments to send theirs back to me. Fire Department completed theirs. The next step will be to have a meeting with members of the public who represent the ADA community so that we can keep them in the loop and they know what we

are doing to improve the City. In the DPW budget is the request for funds to create the Transition Plan, which is a requirement through the Department of Justice for compliance. The plan will tell us priorities and prices to complete all of the tasks. It will then be each departments responsibility to see that these changes take place in a reasonable timeframe.

The Community Center is being used quite a bit by individuals just wanting some exercise and communicate with people. Communication seems to be the key.

The Weirs Community Park Association has come to the Department to ask if they can be a part of the City, like Leavitt and Tardif. We have moved forward with this request and the City Council has started the proceedings for this to happen. They will be rescinding their 501(c)(6) status with the state as soon as they have been approved through the City. They will also be gifting their money to the City with the understanding that this money will be solely used for their purposes to maintain and operate the park house and the park itself.

An engineer from Rist-Frost-Shumway along with the City Manager and myself met with the Conservation Committee regarding the possible plans for the Perley Pond area. We have received a permit through NHDES to remove the woody plants so that people passing by may see the lovely pond. The Con Com will be proposing possible planting that could go around the pond to replace the woody plants as well as a maintenance plan for our department as we mow the area. This project has not been granted funding at this time however.

Unfortunately, I am currently in quarantine for a 14-day period per the City. A family member has tested positive for COVID. All is well with the family, but this definitely makes things more difficult to manage my team. I wish I could be there with them, but I would rather keep them all safe.

We don't have any construction going on right now as it is winter, but you may have noticed the fence that was put up along the roadside of the skate park. This was done mostly as a precaution for the users to keep their skateboards in the park and not out in the road. Also, we did have one situation with someone lose balance and stumbled all the way into the road. This will not happen now. Lakes Region Fence did this job for us at cost to them. We did use the User Fees account for the fence.

## **B. Assistant Director's Report submitted by Matt Mansur**

### **January 19, 2021 Report**

#### **Community Center Programs**

We have continued to run our daily programs throughout the winter. Pickleball, Line Dancing, Northeast Passage, and gym rentals. Our screening has gone well. Our Registration Forms/Release of Liability has been implemented with few oppositions. We have had one Line Dancer who did not come for three weeks because she had tested positive for COVID. We have also had at least one other regular who was inexplicably absent for two weeks, but recently returned to Pickleball. We will also begin our first program that is happening outside of business hours on Sunday with the Lacrosse program.

#### **Summer Preparations**

### *Opechee Day Camp*

We will begin to reach out to Opechee Day Camp staff to gauge interest in returning for the summer. We are still planning to move forward with Opechee Day Camp this summer, unless of course something changes.

### *Beaches*

Hiring for our beach season needs to begin soon, but unfortunately, we still don't know what we will need to be hiring for – Lifeguards, Beach Caretakers, Both, Neither? After last year, I am concerned about the adherence to our rules and what liability falls on the City and/or Lifeguards if an accident happens as a result of someone not following our rules. I have asked Bob Barry of Primex to help me with that question.

We will also need to closely monitor the school districts in NH and MA as the summer approaches. Last year the beaches were already filling up in May because so many people were out of work/school. However, we didn't have staff out there until the end of June which led to a lot of behaviors/habits already forming at the beach that should not have. If possible, I am hoping to be *ahead* of the wave of patrons this year.

Finally, I have been in contact with Watermark and another company about revamping our ropes and buoys at Weirs Beach this summer. Last year our lines snapped and floated into the channel numerous times throughout the summer. Mostly due to patrons swimming out to the lines and hanging on them. Watermark and Knotical Marine Lines of Gilford will set us up with stainless steel cables to hold up the big orange buoys that we once had over there.

### **Winter Programming**

I just wanted to point out that for my second winter here, our sledding hill and ice rinks have been hobbled by warm weather. I have recently measured the Opechee Cove and was surprised to see the ice is already 7 inches thick. I believe it is because the water is so stagnant. We will need to consider if it is worth moving the Opechee ice rink onto the cove vs using the one on the beach.

### **Website Redesign**

Finally, some exciting news. I have been on the City's website redesign team and we will be getting a new look soon. Additionally, the Parks & Rec section of the site is likely to see an upgrade by getting its own DHP. You can look at the Library, the Fire Department, and the Police Department to see examples of Departments with their own DHP. Our goal will be to ease some of the navigation of the website and to make it mobile friendly. I am hoping that we will be able to easily guide our tourists to our website for rules and information.

## **February 16, 2021 Report**

### **Summer Preparations**

#### *Opechee Day Camp*

Our first ad was out in the Laconia Daily Sun this past week and we have already had some people calling in to ask about it. Registration will begin April 1<sup>st</sup>. We are not yet sure what our max capacity will be yet.

Day Camp Guidelines from the Governor's Task Force have been sent to the Governor for approval. The updated guidelines call for "Cohorts" to be raised from 10 to 20 – as they are with the states childcare guidelines. This will be helpful for us because we could run a 20 camper summer program and be able to both provide the camp experience AND maintain the state's guidelines.

The only limiting factor to having 40 campers (as we have in the past), would be that we would have two cohorts and thus require not only more staff, but a second rainy day location, which we simply do not have.

On a positive note, our four staff that had been lined up for last summer have all expressed interest in returning to Opechee Day Camp this summer.

### *Beaches*

Our biggest issue is that we do not know WHAT the plan is this summer and therefore WHO we need to be hiring. We have had some staff who are interested in returning – which is great – but without knowing what positions we will be hiring for it is difficult to begin making that push.

We first need to decide if we are going to have a capacity at Weirs - or at least if we are going to be prepared to staff the beach if there is a capacity. In other words, do we need to hire the same amount of Beach Caretakers as we did last year.

Second, we are looking into clearly identifying what a successful summer looks like with lifeguards, but this has been more difficult than you would think. Weirs Beach is unique in that it operates almost like a state beach, but its run by a municipality. So we are finding it difficult to figure out what "best practices" apply to us.

Additionally, part of lifeguard success will directly depend on the city's ability to enforce the beach rules at our beaches. We have met with Chief Canfield about the Weirs' history of rule-breaking going unenforced and clearly defined the protocol of enforcing those rules. By assigning lifeguards to the swim area, the city assumes a good portion of liability of swimmers within that swim area with part of that responsibility being enforcing the rules that are put in place to keep everyone safe. If we are unable to enforce beach rules, then we will not be putting our lifeguards in a position to be successful.

Finally, the Knotical Marine Lines quote has come back and it is a little too high for us to pay them to put our buoys out. We are brainstorming a way that we can put these out ourselves using the stainless steel cable and the large orange buoys.

### **Website Redesign**

Laconia's website redesign team has approved the "mood board" phase with some alterations and we will begin seeing mock-ups of the homepage. Once the homepage has been solidified and agreed upon, we will begin developing our department's own DHP. This should provide for more flexibility on the website for us and more use from tourists on their mobile phones.

### **C. Foreman's Report submitted by Tim Ford**

#### **2021 January Maintenance Activities**

Stake parking lots for winter  
Pick up trash in parks (empty barrels)  
Continue fall leaf cleanup

Pick up and install holiday tree at Gazebo. Install white lights  
Assemble nice rink at Opechee Cove  
Chain up gates to courts  
Remove tennis nets and posts for winter season  
Check sand and salt buckets at Park Houses  
Shovel snow as needed  
Plow snow from parking lots as needed  
Install sneeze guards at City Hall  
Park House oil checks as needed  
Repair snow fence at Endicott Rock Park  
Daily checks of walks for snow and / or ice  
Sidewalk plow training at DPW  
Remove basketball hoops at Wyatt  
Repair rink liner at Opechee (5 times so far)  
Flood rinks at Opechee and Memorial  
Lower / raise flags as needed  
Repair toilet at City Hall  
Deliver janitorial supplies to Tardif and City Hall as needed  
Clean up xmas supplies in community center basement  
Build wall at City Hall by finance  
Install lights on trees at gateway  
Remove trash from City Hall to transfer station  
Hang painting at Library  
Cut and remove perennials from Gateway bed  
Clean up downed branches in parks  
Haul snow from parking lots  
Clean vents and lights at LPD  
Remove graffiti from Library walks  
Clean up from Skate Park construction  
Check / repair emergency lights at City Hall  
Install wreath at Centennial Bed  
Repair people counter at Library  
Repair lights at Library  
Repair tables at Library  
Cover Vet Sq fountain for winter  
Replace smoke detector batteries at Rectory  
Check sledding hill for jumps and trash  
Start replacing broken playground pieces  
Purchase and replace sump pump at Holy Trinity School  
Install door stoppers at Opechee Camp bathrooms  
Repair faucet women's bathroom at LCC  
Install grab bar in employee's women's bathroom at City Hall  
Repair lights in LCC office and boutique  
Remove outdoor signs from City Hall

### **2021 February Maintenance Activities**

Daily walkway check – remove snow and ice as needed  
Daily parking lot check – remove snow as needed  
City Hall – mud, tape, paint wall in Finance  
Weekly park trash removal  
Leavitt- remove broken basketball backboards and rims  
Daily flood rinks at Memorial and Opechee (2)  
LCC – clean up puddles in basement  
Remove trash  
City Hall – light repair  
Rotary – remove holiday tree and lights  
Stewart – remove lights from poles  
City Hall – deliver janitorial supplies  
Vet Sq – repair rope on flagpole  
Rectory – repair door handle  
Opechee – repair holes in walls  
City Hall – repair door frame in server room  
Library – repair door lock  
Playground equipment repairs  
Irrigation IQ system upgrades  
Interviews  
Budget prep

XII. **PRESENTATIONS**

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Guyer motioned to adjourn at 8:35pm. Seconded by Commissioner Kirk. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza Kelleher  
Secretary

Mitch Hamel  
Commissioner Chair