

LACONIA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, January 17, 2023
Laconia Community Center
6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Mitch Hamel called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

RECORDING SECRETARY: Secretary Liza Kelleher recorded this meeting.

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

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

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

1. Regular meeting minutes of November 21, 2022

Commissioner Guyer moved to adopt the minutes from the November 21, 2022, meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.

I. FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM:

- A. Laconia Youth Soccer- Robbie Mills, Leavitt Park, Opechee Park (fields A, B, C, D and Soccer fields)- August 1 through October 21, 2023, Monday through Friday from 5:30pm to 8:00pm and Saturdays from 7:30am to 4:00pm for Laconia Youth Soccer League. Commissioner Ringer motioned to table the request. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- B. Laconia Little League- Colby & Opechee Field A, B, C April 10, 2023, to June 18, 2023, Monday through Friday from 5:00pm to 8:30pm and Saturday from 9:00am to 1:00pm for the LLL Regular season. Commissioner Ringer motioned to accept the request pending upon the payment of no-residents fee, concession stand, storage fee, key deposit if needed and the submission of certificate of insurance. Cooking is waived due to no cooking rules in all Laconia Parks and approval for use of amplified sound. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- C. Laconia Little League- Colby & Opechee Field A, B, C and D- June 14 to 18, 2023, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 5:00pm to 8:30pm, Saturday and Sunday 8:00am to 6:00pm for the LLL tournament. Commissioner Ringer motioned to accept the request pending upon the payment of tournament fee, concession stand, storage fee, key deposit if needed and the submission of certificate of insurance. Cooking is waived due to no cooking rules in all Laconia Parks and approval for use of amplified sound. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.

- D. Laconia Little League- Colby & Opechee Field A, B, C- June 23 to July 15, 2023, Monday through Friday from 5:00pm to 8:30pm and Saturday from 9:00am to 5:00pm for Laconia Little League districts. Commissioner Ringer motioned to accept the request pending upon the payment of no-residents fee, concession stand, storage fee, key deposit if needed and the submission of certificate of insurance. Cooking is waived due to no cooking rules in all Laconia Parks and approval for use of amplified sound. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- E. Lakes Region Girls Softball-Opechee Field D- April 1st to August 31, 2023, Monday through Friday 5:00pm to 8:00pm, Saturday & Sunday from 7:00am to 8:00pm for Girls Softball Season. Commissioner Guyer motioned to table due to no representation. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.
- F. Lakes Region Sled Dog Club- City of Laconia Pump House-February 17th ~19, 2023 from 8:30am to 4:00pm for the 94th Annual World Championship Sled Dog Derby. Commissioner Guyer motioned to accept the request to use the Laconia pump house as a parking area with the understanding that they will barricade the designated parking space. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.
- G. The Belknap Mill-Rotary Park and Gazebo- May 26, June 2, 16 & 30th, July 14, 28, August 11, 25, and September 8th, 2023, for Arts in the Park summer concert series. Commissioner Guyer motioned to table due to no representation. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.
- H. The Belknap Mill-Rotary Park & Gazebo- July 3rd through July 28th, Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9am to 12pm for Kids in the Park 2023. Commissioner Guyer motioned to table due to no representation. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.
- I. Laconia Historical & Museum Soc.-Rotary Park, Gazebo and CH parking lot- Saturday, July 15, 2023 from 9am to 4pm for Laconia History Day. Commissioner Ringer motioned to table due to no representation. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.

II. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Assoc.-Robbie Mills Baseball field- June 6 & 7, 2023 from 3:00pm to 10:00pm for NHIAA baseball Tournament. Commissioner Guyer motioned to approve the request pending upon the payment of key deposit of \$25.00 per key, tournament and light fee and the submission of the certificate of insurance. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.

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

- A. Courtney Parsons- Rotary Park Gazebo- Saturday, May 6, 2023, from 3:00pm to 5:00pm for the wedding ceremony.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Discussion regarding athletic field lighting. This is regarding the in-demand bill from Eversource to our park field. Director Lovisek will meet with City Manager Kirk and will

talk to Eversource if they can explain better about what is the best way to solve the one time in demand fee issue. Director Lovisek will update the Commissioners in the next Commission meeting.

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- November 2022 and January 2023 Minutes of the meeting.

B. Weirs Community Park Association- No report

C. Tardif Park Association- No report

XI. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

A. Director's Report submitted by Amy Lovisek

Winter is officially here, but not according to the weather! We have had such a mild, snowless winter that it is affecting the winter recreation of our fine City. We have been unable to make ice, the snow isn't coming and staying for the sledding hill and snowshoeing. This is making the fun of winter impossible here. We haven't given up hope for the winter recreation, but things are bleak now.

The department is pleased to announce that Dane Anderson has been promoted to Foreman! We couldn't be more impressed with his work ethic and the pride he takes in his job. We were so impressed with him that we nominated him, and he received the City's Employee of the Year Award!! We are so very proud.

As a department, winter is a chance to catch up on many things we let slide during our busy 3 seasons. The maintenance crew, under the guidance of the Foreman, have been working on clearing walkways and setting up the ice rink as well as some interior jobs. They are fixing stair treads, hanging murals, etc. The most important project they are working on is re-organizing the workshop behind the Community Center. At the end, everything will have a place, and all will know where that place is when looking for an item. We have such a small space to begin with, we need to be as organized as possible. Well done Crew!

The Bond Beach Project has run into a snag. The engineer has done a cost estimate and we are significantly under funded for this project. With the cost of materials going up so much we are at a standstill. I will be speaking with the City Manager on how best to proceed.

The Memorial Park House Doors are finally all in. This project was more in depth than expected, but again finally complete!

I attended the Homeless Forum held at the Belknap Mill. This was insightful but didn't really get us any closer to fixing the problem.

The City Manager asked each department head to give him any concerns we had about the proposed project at the State School Property. I met with Matt and Dane to discuss what our concerns are as a department, the biggest being if they plan to give all the recreation areas they build to the city. We could not handle that at this time and would need to grow significantly if that were to happen.

Christmas Village happened this year for the first time in 2 years! It went well. Almost 1000 kids saw Santa Claus! As a first year back, they had some hurtles to jump over and they are still working those hurtles out. We look forward to working with them in the future.

The Leavitt Park Volunteer Group are working to build a gazebo off the field side of their building, as you know. There has been quite a delay with the engineering firm as this is a pro bono job it is understandable. We have them back on track and hope to have that gazebo up for the 100th anniversary of Leavitt Park and the carnival in August!!

The City Manager and I attended a preliminary meeting with the organizers of the Pumpkin Fest. The date is firmed up and will be October 27 and 28. They will have the event each year the weekend before Halloween. This department plans to have a community wide pumpkin carving night at the Community Center the Thursday before to get more pumpkins at the event! We also plan to do something at the festival. We are looking to gear it towards adults or families as there is a lot to do for just the kids, but less for adults who attend. Our initial thoughts are a scavenger hunt or something like that. We will keep you posted and may ask for some help during the event.

Matt and I attended the Norther New England Recreation & Parks Conference last week in Whitefield NH. The event was well done, and we both got some information from each session we attended.

This report seemed to have quite a few mentions of problems we had with the weather or one project or another. Please don't be worried about any of them, I was just informing you of some issues we are having. Next months report will be more positive!

Happy Winter!

B. Assistant Director's Report submitted by Matt Mansur

Summer Prep

We are about to begin advertising for our summer positions. I am anticipating an almost entire turnover at Opechee Day Camp and our beaches. For the most part, people who are familiar with the Weirs are

hesitant to work at the Weirs. I am hoping we can turn some minds around. Furthermore, I am anticipating having to put more focus on the Opechee Day Camp this year because of the new faces in the staff positions – this will require some pull away from the Weirs or some impressive juggling.

I will need to update my Red Cross LGI certification this year if we would like me to continue training our Lifeguards.

Christmas Village

Christmas Village was a success this year because it happened. There were a few hiccups along the way both amongst our interactions with the Christmas Village non-profit organization and seemingly within their own organization as well. As to be suspected when they have the turnover in leadership and were off for the last two years.

We have met with their leadership with the hopes to clean up some of the hiccups and they will have had their end of '22 and start of '23 meeting here at the Community Center on Sunday the 15th. We look forward to hearing from them.

Community Center Programs

It was a pretty clean transition from Christmas Village back to Community Center programs. Pickleball is the biggest program and the people *just keep coming!* We continue to welcome new folks and our welcome speech has become far more efficient. I have found it helpful telling our pickleballers that it is the “wild west” out there and that we “just provide the courts”. We have been told it’s a great system by other Parks & Rec professionals that come to us to play pickleball.

Basketball and Line Dancing have both been a little inconsistent but strong. Lunchtime Basketball has been flooded with two generations of players who come and seemingly avoid each other – it has thrown off the rhythm of lunchtime basketball.

Line Dancing has been very instructor dependent. When Jeanne is here, it gets busy and when Donna steps in, it’s still not bad. Carolyn has started stepping in also and the numbers have dropped a little when she is running it. I will continue to keep an eye out to see if we are able to offer any support.

Operations and Administration

I can’t remember what happened first, either Dane was promoted to Foreman, or he was named the City of Laconia Employee of the Year, but either way, it was a very good December for him. The department is very proud. He has hit the ground running as the Foreman and is having the team attack the garage: cleaning up and updating work areas and storage spaces.

NNERPC Conference

I was very lucky to go to the NNERPC this year. I think Amy would agree with me that it was..... alright. The few cities we were able to talk to about the light surcharge either seem to eagerly eat that bill with taxpayer money or were unaware that they were eating that bill with taxpayer money – either way Amy and I were surprised. Furthermore, we were taken aback by how much a town in Massachusetts subsidizes their summer camp program with taxpayer money. I do hope they choose a hotel next year that is set up for conferences and is a little more affordable. The aquatics workshop was terrifying – I continue to be concerned about the relationship between our liability as a city and our inability to enforce our rules at Weirs Beach.

XII. **PRESENTATIONS**

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Guyer motioned to adjourn at 7:12pm. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer.
All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza Kelleher
Secretary

Mitch Hamel
Chair Commissioner