

# AYER PARKS DEPARTMENT

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## Minutes of February 15, 2023- Ayer Parks Commission

Location: 35 Bligh Street, Parks Office

**Members Present:** Jason Mayo, Chairman, Chris Tavares, Kevin Malantic, Gerry Amenta

**Also Present:** Jeff Thomas, Ayer Parks Director

**Absent:** Sarah Gibbons

**At 7:15 PM Mr. Tavares made a motion to open the meeting. Mr. Malantic seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (4-0-0)**

### Projects

#### **Playground**

Mr. Thomas gave an update on the project, stating that the remediation part of the project was almost complete. BETA Inc. had contacted MassDEP to inform them that removal of contaminants from the site had been adequately done within the standards the state requires. There was still some leveling that had to be performed before the site could have the fence removed and be open to the public and future work on a new playground. Mr. Mayo updated the progress on funding for the rebuilding of the playground. He noted that there was \$552 estimated to be remaining from the original budget and that \$220 was being requested from Capital Planning and \$750 was being requested from the CPC Committee. Both groups had voted to support those requests at Town Meeting.

#### **Recreation Center**

Mr. Thomas updated the board about ongoing discussion with the Senior Center Site Selection Committee and their proposal to use a section of Field 6 and the maintenance building for a combined Community/Senior Center. That committee would like to go forward with that selection and begin the next steps of the project's planning, but needed approval from the Parks Commission and Counsel on Aging to do so. After some discussion, the following actions were taken:

**Mr. Tavares: Motion to have the Parks Commission endorse the Community/Senior Center project to move forward with Pirone Park Field 6 as its proposed location under the following conditions:**

1. The facility would include a full-sized gym that would be accessible for the Community and Parks Department programs.
2. The project would include creating replacement storage space for any that is removed to make space for the new building.
3. The timeline would not interrupt the efforts to rehab/rebuild the bathhouse at Sandy Pond Beach to make them handicap accessible.

**Mr. Amenta seconded.**  
**No further discussion.**  
**Unanimous vote to approve (4-0-0)**

### **Administrative Position**

Mr. Thomas reported that Sarah Ernst had been hired as for the recently created Parks Administrative Assistant position. Sarah Ernst was selected over several other highly qualified applicants due to her degree in recreation management, experience in municipal finance and knowledge of recreational programs in town. She has been through her orientation and has already proved to be an asset to the department.

### **Incidents**

Mr. Thomas reported that the scoreboard on Field 2 fell down after the recent storm due to high winds and a weakened support beam. Work was done that day to remove the scoreboard from the area, clean up the site and have an electrician come in to make sure the wiring was unexposed to the public. Mr. Mayo suggested that the scoreboard should be tested before deciding on repairing it. Mr. Malantic said that AYBS would not require it to be replaced at this particular time.

### **Spring Programs**

Mr. Thomas outlined upcoming spring activities including plans to expand the pickleball program. Mr. Tavares discussed the upcoming volleyball program starting at the end of March. Mr. Malantic gave an update on the gaga ball league with plans to open registration in May/June.

### **Soccer**

**ASYS-** Mr. Thomas updated the board that registration has been ongoing for the U10-U18 levels through Shirley Recreation and that most levels had been filled and were now closed. Preseason workouts and evaluations would be scheduled through late February and March.

**AYS-** Mr. Thomas updated the board that registrations are open for the U4-U8 levels through the Ayer Parks Department and would remain open likely through March. The board discussed ways to enhance the AYS program by shifting more of the administrative duties to the newly hired administrative assistant. As Mrs. Gibbons is the Chairman for AYS and was not available for the meeting, Mr. Amenta said he would discuss ideas with Mrs. Gibbons prior to the next meeting.

### **Basketball**

**ASYB-** Mr. Tavares gave the board an update on the ASYB season, which had finished its games and would be having an end of year event on Saturday. He stated that the current ASYB Board works very well together and considers this season a success.

**AYB-** Mr. Thomas gave the board an update on the AYB season, which was concluding on February 18. He said that the programs at each level were very successful and that we were once again fortunate to have a strong set of coaches and junior coaches at every level. There will be an end of year event on Saturday that will include food and drink items for the first time since the end of the 2020 season.

### **Facilities Request**

Mr. Thomas presented a facilities request from Boston Cyclists, who wanted to reserve a space at Pirone Park on Saturday 5/28. The matter will be reviewed and voted on at the next meeting.

**July 4 event**

Mr. Thomas updated plans put forth by the July 4 Committee and activities planned for June 23-25 at Pirone Park.

**Next Meeting**

March 23, 2023 at 7:00 at the Parks Office on 35 Bligh Street

**Adjourn**

**At 8:10 PM Mr. Tavares made a motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**Mr. Amenta seconded.**

**Unanimous vote to approve. (4-0-0)**