



# AYER PARKS DEPARTMENT

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## **Minutes of August 10th, 2023 - Ayer Parks Commission**

Location: ASRHS LGI Room, Ayer MA

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

**Also Present:** Jeff Thomas, Ayer Parks Director, Sarah Ernst, Matt Blood, Katie Petrossi, Heidi Fallon, Karen Kukta, Fred Meshna, Pauline Conley, Dennis Curran

**At 7:15 PM Mr. Mayo made a motion to open the meeting. Mr. Amenta seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)**

### **Public Input**

#### **Community Center**

All the commissioners felt that they all needed to address their concerns regarding using Field 6 for the community center.

Mr. Mayo started by saying that he personally really liked the concept of the project since the community and the park department had more to gain than lose. However, there were some issues with the project from the very beginning on the political side of things. Some of the issues were that the committee never talked to the abutters about the project, there was missed information in addressing the public by social media. Mr. Mayo felt has though, the building committee had dragged the Parks name down with this project and wants to revoke the use of Field 6 being used for this project.

Mr. Amenta is in favor of the community center just not at the park. Mr. Amenta mentioned that there will be more projects that will have a high importance to the town than to build the community center.

Mr. Malantic is also in favor of the community center; he thinks it is a great idea but not at the park. The way that everything was handled to the public was the wrong way. Mr. Malantic expressed that the town has a public relations problem in how information is communicated to the public. He also mentioned revoking the use of Field 6 for this community center.

Mrs. Gibbons and Mr. Tavares agreed with their other commissioners on this topic. Mr. Tavares also stated that he felt that the committee moved way too fast on the project.

**Mr. Mayo motioned to revoke Field 6 for the community center. Mr. Amenta seconded. ( 4-0-1) Roll Call: Mr. Tavares, Mr. Mayo, Mr. Amenta, Mrs. Gibbons all revoked, Mr. Malantic abstained.**

### **Meeting Minutes**

**Mr. Mayo motioned to approve June's meeting minutes as amended. Mrs. Gibbons seconded. (5-0-0)**

## **Projects**

### **Beach House Study**

Mr. Thomas reported that the study has been approved for \$30,000 and the study will give some options of whether to keep the current building and strip the inside down or build a brand-new building. Weston and Sampson were hired in July and there was a meeting with some of the commissioners and the water director and the company is working on different options to remediate the beach building. We are hoping to have the options by the end of the month.

### **Rehab Field 1**

Mr. Thomas shared that they plan on skinning off the outfield grass, reseeding, fence work and irrigation, similar to what they did for Field 6 previously. To complete the project there will be a few volunteers and maintenance workers working on it.

### **Playground**

Mr. Thomas reported that he had met with BETA and has ordered the equipment and the materials for the port in place. Randy was having a meeting with RDA tonight and will have an update later. Mr. Mayo reported that for certain materials they would be bidding out separately because it is a cost-effective tool. The materials that have already been bought were from O'Brien and Sons through COMMBuys and were 10% off. For the Adventure play section of the playground, we just received the specs from Randy. The only thing left to do is run it by the disability commission.

## **Beach**

Mr. Blood reported that session 2 of swimming lessons just concluded and there are a few more Mommy and Me, and infant classes left. Mr. Blood also recapped that they have had 2 trainings with the fire department, one in July and one in August with training having to do with back boarding, retrieval of submerged body, emergency missing person, CPR, first aid, heat stroke, and cardiac arrest. Mrs. Gibbons added to the conversation to mention that ACP loves their time down at the beach. Mrs. Fallon and Mrs. Kukta address their concerns with some of the lifeguards' actions, and they mentioned that they would like to see some changes in how lifeguards do their jobs. Mr. Blood had shared that they have a phone policy where lifeguards are not to have their phones while watching the water and that lifeguards swim outside of the rope on their off time to build endurance but are close enough to the beach if they need any help.

## **Camps**

Mr. Thomas reported that camps were finishing up with Miniball and Mini-Soccer, having to keep pushing sessions back because of the weather. Throughout the summer there were about 250 participants at the camps, and they all were very successful. Mr. Tomas will be meeting with coaches to debrief their camps and see if any changes are necessary.

## **Incidents**

Mr. Thomas reported that he found burnouts on the grass of Field 6, Ayer police have found the suspects that had done the damage and were working on a way for them to pay for the reseeding of the grass. One other Mr. Thomas found was a group of 6 children that had used wood pallets to get on the roof of the Parks building, Ayer police were notified.

## **Facility Requests**

Nothing to report.

## **Volleyball**

Mr. Tavares informed the commission that Andrea Tavares would be running fall volleyball for grades 5-8 for all genders. Sessions will take place in the Page Hilltop gym, and depending on how large the group is there may be two sessions.

#### **Gaga Ball**

Mr. Malantic reported that gaga ball is going very well, they have had a great turnout of players varying in all different levels of play. Moving gaga ball to the beach has been the best decision for the program as well.

#### **Soccer**

**Mr. Amenta nominates Mrs. Gibbons as chair of ASYS. Mr. Mayo seconded. (4-0-1)**

Mr. Thomas reported that AYS fall registration is out and numbers are looking good, there will be a meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> with the board.

Mr. Gibbons reported that ASYS has extended registration for one more week in hopes to increase numbers.

#### **Basketball**

Mr. Tavares reported that the board's kickoff meeting is on August 14<sup>th</sup>, which is the same board from last year. The chair is back in Ayer for this year. Mr. Thomas reported that AYB registrations form will be ready for September 1<sup>st</sup>.

#### **Next Meeting**

September 21st, 2023, at 7:00pm at the Parks Office on 35 Bligh Street.

#### **Adjourn**

**At 8:39 PM Mr. Mayo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Malantic seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (5-0-0)**

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TOWN CLERK

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