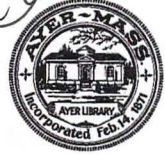


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AYER PARKS DEPARTMENT

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Minutes of March 23, 2023 - Ayer Parks Commission

Location: 35 Bligh Street, Ayer MA

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

Also Present: Jeff Thomas, Ayer Parks Director, Mike Hamel, Andy McCarthy, Dennis Curran, Sarah Ernst

Absent: Sarah Gibbons

At 7:00 PM Mr. Mayo made a motion to open the meeting. Mr. Malantic seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (4-0-0)

Projects

Recreation Center

Mr. Thomas reported a recap of what was discussed in the last meeting, going over the conditions that the Park Board put in place when going forward with looking at the study. Some abutters that live in the neighborhood around the park expressed their concerns with the project and Mr. Hamel stated that nobody in the neighborhood is in favor of the community center being at the park. Mr. McCarthy, another abutter, stated that he also doesn't want to see any green space being removed from the park as well. Mr. Mayo had mentioned to the abutters that the project is in the beginning stages and there is still a lot more that needs to be discussed on the matter and that nothing is going to be on the town warrant for this project this spring. Mr. Hamel mentioned that he would also recommend that there should be a spokesperson/representative from the neighborhood to be at meetings that discuss the community center.

Mr. Tavares nominated Mr. Malantic to be the appointed commissioner on the building committee. Mr. Amenta seconded the motion. (4-0-0)

Playground Rehab

Mr. Mayo reported a recap of what has happened with the project so far. At the beginning of March CPC was very gracious and outbid themselves with \$750,000. Capital also gave \$220,000 to the project. From phase one of the project, there was \$552,000. That gives about 1.2 million dollars to move the project forward. The \$750,000 from CPC will be on the warrant at the upcoming Spring Town Meeting. Mr. Mayo mentioned that one of the members from CPC has some concerns with the surface material that potentially would be used and would like the commission to be open to researching alternative materials. The next step of the project would be to buy playground equipment through COMMBuys after it gets approved and to start the bidding for the construction of putting the playground together after the next town meeting.

Facility Request

Mr. Thomas presented 3 requests for the use of Pirone Park.

Boston Cyclists: Already agreed to during the last meeting, signed off on it during this meeting.

Memorial Day Parade Event: On May 28th, requested from Bert Gibson. Mr. Malantic motioned yes to this request. Mr. Tavares second. With a unanimous decision to not charge the event. (4-0-0)

Wedding on June 30th: With use of Field 2 and camping area. Mr. Malantic motioned yes to this request. Mr. Tavares seconded. With a unanimous decision to not charge the event. (4-0-0)

Town Meeting

FY24 Budget

Mr. Thomas informed the group that the budget has been submitted and the only change was a \$.75 raise for employees that coincides with the minimum wage increase.

Capital Requests

Mr. Thomas noted that in addition to the requests discussed previously for the playground, there will be a request for funding a feasibility study for rehabbing the Sandy Pond Bathrooms through Capital Planning.

Attendance

Mr. Thomas reported that the attendance of board members would be very beneficial, especially in the upcoming meetings with the playground and community center being talked about in meetings.

H.S. Gym

Mr. Thomas had been informed that there would be work done to the high school window that fell out a few weeks back, potentially allowing activities to start taking place back in the gym as early as next week.

Incidents

Mr. Thomas reported that on the first spring walkthrough of the season they had found graffiti in the pickleball area and in the dugouts. There will be cleanup work done next week to remove the graffiti.

Camps

Mr. Thomas reported that he still needs to reach out to coaches to confirm that dates of the camps before posting them to the public. He suggested a moderate increase in fees of \$5 for all camps to cover cost increases.

Mr. Tavares stated he was very unhappy with how the boys' basketball camp was handled last year with the Varsity coach telling the board with a week out that he couldn't do the camp anymore. Mr. Mayo suggested to Mr. Thomas that he reach out to the Ayer Shirley Regional School District Athletic Director, Steve Kendall, about this matter and to seek advice from him about whether to ask this coach again or find a different Panther coach. One suggestion that was brought up by Mr. Tavares was to ask the middle school coach to run the camp. The Board has agreed to wait until Mr. Thomas has had a meeting with Mr. Kendall until they proceed with this matter.

Spring Programs

Mr. Thomas reported that they are trying to expand their pickleball program and have added two new members to the group.

Volleyball

Mr. Tavares reported that there are 12 people who signed up and they have a feeling that more will sign up. The program will start on March 29th, as of right now scheduled for the Page Hilltop gym. The one concern that Mr. Tavares has is if more people do sign up and they are stuck using the Page Hilltop gym they will have to break the program into 2 groups. However, since the high school gym might be fixed before the first session there is a chance that this will not be a problem.

Soccer

Mr. Malantic informed the group that Mrs. Gibbons is stepping down for the chairperson of AYS. The commission has decided that they will wait until the board is reorganized to have an election to have a new chairman, in the meantime Mr. Malantic and Mr. Amenta will split the duties of the chairman role. The Board has also agreed that the Parks Office will take on the administration tasks going forward and get these programs up and running.

Basketball

ASYB- Mr. Tavares reported that they will have their close out meeting for the season on Tuesday, March 28th. Mr. Tavares also reported that the end of year celebration went well and there were no complaints. **AYB-** Mr. Thomas reported that for the 3rd and 4th grade level, they also had a great end of the year celebration, and all the athletes and families were happy with how everything went even though the gym was not available for use. The younger PreK-4th grade levels were able to use the Page Hilltop Gym for activities and had awards following each session.

Next Meeting

April 13th, 2023, at 7:00pm at the Parks Office on 35 Bligh Street.

Adjourn

At 8:49 PM Mr. Amenta made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Mayo seconded. No discussion. Unanimous vote to approve. (4-0-0)