

AYER PARKS DEPARTMENT

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Minutes of September 24, 2020 - Ayer Parks Commission 5:00 PM

Location: First Floor Meeting Room, Ayer Town Hall

Members Present: Jason Mayo, Chairman, Ms. Sarah Gibbons, and Mr. Scott Copeland (all participating remotely)

Also Present: Jeff Thomas, Ayer Parks Director

Absent: Mr. Jason Leone and Mr. Gerald Amenta

Chairman Mayo read aloud the COVID-19 Emergency Order from Governor Baker allowing for remote participation meetings.

Chairman Mayo went over the agenda.

Incidents

Mr. Jeff Thomas mentioned that he sent out the Commission members information about the incident that took place at the park on Sunday evening the day of the incident. Mr. Thomas stated that it was reported to him that a few teenage boys were having a fire behind the basketball courts where they created a small fort area by beating down some cattails. The police and the fire department were called. He spoke to the boys received their information and parents' numbers. Explained to them why what they did was wrong, the police contacted their police, and an oral order of no trespass was given to the boys. The were informed that the Parks Commission will be discussing the matter this evening.

Mr. Thomas gave the Commission a history of what the Commission does in these incidents especially when dealing with minors stating that an order of no trespass is issued and sent to the parents and states that they can come to the Commission to release to order if requested. Mr. Thomas suggested that the Commission send a certified letter with the notice of no trespass with the information about releasing the order if requested.

Chairman Mayo asked if the kids involved been in trouble with the Commission before.

Mr. Thomas informed him that this was the first time these individuals have been in trouble.

Chairman Mayo stated that the feels that the guardians have been in contact and involved in the situation.

Mr. Thomas informed the guardians about what is typically done in these instances with community service.

Chairman Mayo asked if there could be a meeting with the individual outside, socially distance to meet and discuss the issue rather than deal with the issue over a zoom meeting, may have to check with the Town Manager.

Mr. Thomas stated that it is something that can be done if the Commission wants.

The Commission discussed the idea of an informal meeting and the possibility of community service prior to the issuance of no trespass.

Chairman Mayo and Scott Copeland will try and meeting with everyone involved in the incident to discuss the possibility of community service with an amount to time to be determined later.

COVID-19 Concerns

Mr. Thomas stated that they are still following State guidelines for the use of Pirone Park and Sandy Pond Park, especially the walking paths. Ms. Sarah Gibbons has organized a Where's Waldo walking tour.

Ms. Sarah Gibbons stated the goal was to have story walks along the Pirone Park perimeter path. The cub scouts have asked to do to the first one to show what it is they have been doing and have a recruitment event at the end. The event will be this Saturday.

Mr. Thomas also high school baseball team has joined an AU league to keep this moving along and Ms. Gibbons will be going over soccer later. There have been several different items going on smoothly.

Projects

Mr. Thomas had a nice outing with the high school football team and had a volunteer session and cleaned up the kiddy junction playground and along the bleachers.

The moral at the beach has been completed. There are now two on the beach house. One of the larger projects that the wanted to due this fall was to rehab the baseball fields but may run out of time to do this year and will do next year. The bleachers are being repainted.

Soccer

Ms. Sarah Gibbons the younger in town program is starting this Saturday have 18 kids registered for the U6 and U8 did not offer the U4 program due to restrictive guidelines. Having smaller teams 3 on 3 and 4 on 4. Have reached out to the coaches to get out there for Saturday. The is no travel team this year Nashoba Valley league is not running their program. There will be a in town co-ed league 130 have been registered in grades 3 through 12. Each game has its own one-hour time slot which starts Saturday.

Chairman Mayo is the older kids with Shirley as well.

Ms. Sarah Gibbons stated that the grades 3 and up are mixed Ayer-Shirley.

Mr. Thomas asked about the net size for the U8 teams so that the appropriate nets can be on site.

Ms. Gibbons stated that it would depend on the size of the teams and can move the nets if needed on Saturday.

Ms. Gibbons stated that the parents have been great and getting all things done last minute.

Personal – Maintenance Staff

Mr. Thomas mentioned that a staff member had an injury while on a mower and hurt their wrist and in a cast. The cast is being removed tomorrow so they will find out if the staff member will still be on light duty or back to full work. Have been trying to cut back on work but there is still a lot to do. Volunteers have been cleared to come back so more work can get done.

Finance

Mr. Thomas we are starting to get information from the Town Manager to start planning for Fiscal Year 2022. The Commission will need to plan on maintenance and other items for the new building that will require a larger budget then in prior years. Some of the items include internet, fire maintenance and other items and wanted to inform the Commission on the additional items that will be needed and amount that will be needed to increase the budget for Fiscal Year 2022.

Chairman Mayo asked if there are any supply contracts the Parks Commission can use for the building.

Mr. Thomas the town has exercised contracts with National Grid and goes through the Building Manager do get a good rate for the town. The supply contracts that need to be looked at are for HVAC and other items.

Basketball

Mr. Thomas meet with two groups for the local k through 4 groups to possibly have session is we have a place to hold the sessions. Would like to approach the school to see if they will allow the basketball teams to be play maybe sometime after January 1st.

Chairman Mayo asked if basketball is even permitted indoors right now under the guidelines.

Mr. Thomas stated that it is not allowed now.

Chairman Mayo stated that it is hard to say a date to ask to allow to use the courts if we are not sure there will be a season, should wait to the next meeting to see where we are with the virus and reopening.

Mr. Thomas stated that he will speak to the athletic director to let them know that they are thinking about having a season if it will be allowed. The earliest to start a season was discussed to be January 15th or even go as late as February to start. If there is no season, try to do something for a spring session.

Next Meeting

Chairman Mayo mentioned the next meeting the week of October 19th and see what is available that week. Try not to have it at 5:00 PM and try to have it later.

Mr. Thomas will check for open meeting times during that week after 6:00PM

Adjourn

At 6:04 PM Ms. Sarah Gibbons made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Scott Copeland seconded. No discussion. Vote to approve Mr. Scott Copeland, aye; Ms. Sarah Gibbons, aye; and Chairman Mayo aye.