

Monthly Parks Department update

January/February

The recreational basketball program is wrapping up a successful season, with most levels finishing up in February. The PreK-4th grade levels all had high levels of participation and once again saw exceptional volunteerism to fill out all the coaching positions needed. In all, there were 47 adults who participated as coaches for the program, and dozens more "junior coaches" who assisted as well. Junior coaches are one of the more unique aspects of the AYB program, and we are very thankful to them for being role models for our players and helping coaches run their practices and games. This year we had to say goodbye to Molly Cadigan, who has been a junior coach with our program for over five years but will be heading off to college this fall. Molly worked with hundreds of girls during her time with us and will be greatly missed. Fortunately, we have numerous other junior coaches who will be able to take on her role, but no one can replace what she meant to our program. We hope she will continue to be available for our summer camps and clinics.

The 5th-8th Ayer/Shirley Youth Basketball program (ASYB) also completed its season, with the exception of several advanced travel teams that will continue to compete into March. The merger with the TAP program was a success, and the ASYB Board will be evaluating the season at their wrap up meeting next month. AYB Chairman Kevin Williams will take on the ASYB chairmanship for the 2018-19 season following the March meeting. Kevin did a remarkable job in his first year with the program, taking on numerous inherent challenges with both the AYB and ASYB organizations.

The Perimeter Path project is currently in the planning and development stages, and is on track to have the project put out to bid in the early spring. LandTech has put together a proposal that has been accepted by the Parks Commission and is currently under review by the Conservation Commission. They recently had a site visit to go over the proposed plan and will meet again with the Parks Commission on March 8 to review their concerns. Sections of the path lie within the buffer zone of Grove Pond and surrounding wetland areas, so some modifications may need to be made to the plans to conform with federal, state and local regulations. The construction of the path is budgeted at \$75K, and any changes to the design may impact the APD's ability to fund it without finding additional revenue sources.

The new storage/office facility at Pirone Park is still in its design phase, and an updated design that was approved by the Parks Commission is now being drawn up by Sloan Associates. It was agreed that Charlie Shultz will be working with the architect to represent the Park Commission during the design and construction phases. DPW Director Mark Wetzel and Town Engineer Dan VanSchalkwyk will also play integral roles in keeping this project moving forward. Current projections have construction starting in mid/late summer.

Jeff Thomas
Ayer Parks Director