

Monthly Parks Department update

March 2018

We are starting to gear up for the upcoming spring activities at Pirone Park and Sandy Pond Beach. The Ayer Youth Soccer program, coordinated by Sarah Gibbons, has been getting in registrations and is setting up their season with a start date in late April. The older players who participate in travel levels are doing indoor practice sessions and will be forming teams later in March. The Baseball/Softball programs overseen by AYBS have been having indoor workout sessions as well, and all the spring sports programs are anxious to get outside. Unfortunately we appear to be in for a bit of a wait while the snow recedes from the fields and it may take some time before conditions allow outdoor sessions to occur. We will have our hands full trying to get fields ready for both the recreational and school teams by their first game dates in early April.

The Conservation Commission has agreed on an Order of Condition for the perimeter path project to proceed. The next step will be putting the project out to bid and seeking vendors who can perform the work within the specs required. We expect the bidding process will be complete in time for construction to begin by late summer.

The Dog Park project, spearheaded by Mark Wetzel of the DPW, is moving along well and should be complete by summer. We are in discussions regarding the best way to oversee the park, which will require multiple town departments and entities, including Parks, DPW, Police (specifically Animal Control), and hopefully an active citizen's committee. Volunteers are often in high demand and short supply, but there have been numerous individuals who have said they would like to be part of such an organization. Based on Mark's research, the most successful parks have benefited from having an active citizens committee to offer some oversight of the day to day activities.

We are currently reviewing our 2017 beach and maintenance staff and determining our needs for staffing for the 2018 season. The Parks Department has been very fortunate to have regularly employed a community friendly, well trained and hard working staff, and expect most of our seasonal employees to return again this year. We will be placing ads for any employment opportunities around mid-April.

Jeff Thomas
Ayer Parks Director