

## Monthly Parks Department Update October/November

With the cold weather coming in, we have been busy transitioning Pirone Park and Sandy Pond Beach for the long winter months. Bathrooms have been winterized and will be closed until early April, unless we have similar late arctic blast like last year. Leaf pickup has been an ongoing challenge, but between the Parks staff and volunteer crews it is mostly complete. With the leaves gone and less activities going on, we were able to remove several dead tree and limbs through the park, thanks in part to Kevin Filz, who volunteered to do much of the work. We will need to cover many of our pieces of equipment before the snow flies due to the lack of a storage building since the sale of the old firehouse, but we hope to have one in place by next fall. We are currently erecting the skating rink at the beach and hope to have ice on it before New Year's Day.

The plan for a storage building is just one of several capital projects the Parks Commission have agreed to pursue over the next five years. Many of these are also parts of the Open Space and Recreation Plan and 10 year Comprehensive Plan that the town has been working to put together. Jason Mayo and Dan Graham are the Parks Commission representatives on each, and report good progress on the development of these integral plans for the town's future. As for the items that the Commission plans to present to the Capital Planning Committee for approval, they include:

- Maintenance Building at Pirone (FY 2017)
- Survey for a perimeter path at Pirone (FY 2018)
- Dock System for Sandy Pond Beach (FY 2018)
- Community Garden (FY 2019)
- Irrigation for Sandy Pond Beach (FY 2019)
- Replacement Pickup Truck (FY 2020)
- Paving of access road to boat launch at Grove Pond (FY 2021)
- Renovation of Kiddie Junction Playground (FY 2020, 2021)

We had the great fortune to benefit from another Eagle Scout project at Pirone Park recently. Tyler Landry has been working on the construction of a picnic area behind Kiddie Junction and between the two youth baseball diamonds. His vision was to create an area in the shade during hot days where families could congregate during games or events. He and his volunteers did an excellent job with it, and with the newly cleared waterfront it offers an excellent view of Grove Pond. Thanks for all your hard work, Tyler!

The basketball program is getting up to full swing, and almost all the levels will be playing by the start of December. These include levels from Preschool through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as the Unlimited Program for those looking for something less structured. There are currently over 300 players who will be playing basketball with us this year! The Bremer family will once again be heading up the Unlimited Program, which has been successful not only because it offers a basketball program to those who might not otherwise play, but also includes a lot of community involvement that benefits everyone. We are looking forward to another great year!

Happy Thanksgiving!

Jeff Thomas  
Ayer Parks Department