

## Parks Department Updates

June 2019

Spring sports have come to a close, and it was a successful season for program run through the Parks Department as well as those run independently with our support. Some players will continue on with less formal summer programs while others may not be able to due to family or school commitments. For the Parks Department, we begin our camp/clinic series in June starting with Girls Basketball and Baseball. Those will be followed in July by Softball, Boys Basketball, Miniball, and Football. Most years the Parks Department sponsors a soccer camp as well, but unfortunately enrollment was too low to offer that program this time around. We hope to choose a different date for soccer next year that may attract more children. The Baseball Clinic was well received and saw a good turnout during mostly good weather. The Girls Basketball Clinic was also well attended and players and parents seemed to enjoy the new format introduced this year that was a hybrid between our camp and clinic we would put on annually. We will be doing a debriefing with coaches following the boy's camp to see if we want to stay with this format or go back to two different events.

Planning for the approved Capital Planning projects is underway. An offer to accept quotes for the Perimeter Path Phase II was formally put out and an acceptance of the winning quote will occur July 17. The offer to accept quotes for the Sandy Pond Beach irrigation system will be going out towards the end of July. The purchase and installment of the new Sandy Pond hoops will likely take place in the fall after the swim season has ended. And after a long wait, an offer to accept bids for the Pirone Park Garage will be going out in mid-July.

Sandy Pond Beach opened full time on June 14, and has been a busy place most days. The busiest have been weekends, with the exception of the early afternoon hours of Tuesday and Thursday, when we get a visit from the ACP program for a few hours. We have been hosting ACP outings for well over a decade, and are glad to be able to serve such a large group of youngsters on a regular basis. One issue at Sandy Pond Beach that has been difficult to resolve this year is the increase in the goose population and the inevitable battle to prevent feces droppings at the facility. We have tried numerous preventative measures, some with moderate success, but it is near impossible to keep them away entirely. The cleanup has been taxing, but the guards and maintenance staff have been maintaining their diligence to keep things as cleared as possible. As an open facility to the water and nature's creatures, Sandy Pond Beach has limits on what can be done practically and legally to keep the geese at bay. The effort will continue.

Jeff Thomas

Ayer Parks Director