

Parks Department Updates

July 2021

The Ayer Parks Department's annual summer series of youth sports clinics have come to a close, and it was extremely gratifying to get back to business with them after a year layoff. In all there were nearly 300 total participants between the eight that were offered. The APD takes great pride in being able to offer these at a minimal price compared to other similar programs in the area, with a price range between \$30-\$60 per clinic. We hope to keep these prices intact, but unfortunately costs continue to rise and we may have to start bumping the fee up to ensure fiscal stability. As with all Parks Department programs, the clinic series is mandated to be self-funded.

Several new programs have been proposed for the fall season. Michelle Rawlinson approached the Commission at their July meeting with a proposal for a youth yoga program for children ages 4-12. This would be run once a week over the course of two months at Pirone Park. Kevin Malantic also came to the July meeting proposing a Gagaball league to be run once a week at Sandy Pond Beach. His proposal was for him to run a four week start up program during September, and then evaluate it over the winter to see if a viable full time league could be put together through the Parks Department. Both Proposals were accepted by the Commission and will be implemented and registrations will start in August.

The youth volleyball program is being moved to the fall from its usual spring season to have it coincide with the school volleyball season. AYV was originated by Heather Houde nine years ago, and the spring season was chosen as the best fit for the volunteer base. That was continued when Andrea Tavares resumed the program three years ago, but came to an abrupt stop with the onset of COVID closures. It was decided to restart the program this fall with hopes that we can utilize some of the players and coaches from the school volleyball teams as mentors for the younger players, something that has been very successful for other youth sports run through the Parks Department.

Several projects are underway at Pirone. Three of the ball fields will be renovated through the late summer and fall, including skinning the infields and leveling them off before reseeding. We will also be repainting the lines for the parking lots at Pirone and Sandy Pond Beach, and if time allows repainting the lines at the basketball courts. We have also started repainting all of our tables and bleachers, which we hope to get some help with through volunteer efforts.

Jeff Thomas

Ayer Parks Director