

## Parks Department Updates

August 2023

The recent proposal for a community/senior center has been recently reviewed by the Parks Commission, and they have concluded that the project is not viable at Pirone Park based on the current plans to utilize Field 6 as part of plan. This was due to a number of reasons, including public concerns about preserving open space, abutter's concerns in general, and how the project appeared to be compromising other Parks projects that have priority. The Building Committee that had been formed by the Ayer Selectboard met for a final time and chose to dissolve, effectively ending the proposal for a combined Recreation/Community Center. The Parks Department will be moving forward with its other projects considered priorities, including completion of the Pirone playground, rehabilitation the beach house at Sandy Pond, and refurbishing the basketball courts.

While geese have been an ongoing nuisance at the beach and requires erecting a fence nightly to keep them away, they have been relatively limited at Pirone through the summer. This is in contrast to most summers where they are constantly defecating on fields and walking paths, causing uncountable man/hours to clean up after. Wasps and yellow jackets are still prevalent, and are always a concern toward the end of August and beginning of September.

We have been awaiting the final bid package to be put together by BETA inc. for the work to be done on the playground. The equipment has been ordered, which may take up to 26 months for delivery, but we are hoping for sooner. Ideally, most of the construction and landscaping will be completed by the time the equipment comes in. We were also fortunate to have an Ayer citizen, Brad Spinney, offer to do much of the millwork on the logs we plan to use in building the nature-based section of the new playground. We look forward to working with him and developing that area over the next few months.

Jeff Thomas  
Ayer Parks Director