

Parks Department Updates

January 2024

We have had another relatively mild winter so far. There has only been 3-4 dates where we have had to do any significant snow removal, which is a nice surprise and has allowed the perimeter path to be open all season. The mild winter has also helped justify the decision to not put up a skating rink this year. Like last year, there has been open water on the ponds though January, which means our rink would likely not have been skateable. The resources needed to put up and take down the rink are significant, and after the rink went through some vandalism two seasons ago there would be a need to invest a considerable amount to get it up again. The Parks Commission will review this annually to see if there is a desire to try to put the rink back up in the future.

Plans are underway for the spring Volleyball season. The program will once again be coordinated by Andrea Tavares, and will be an extension of the fall season that had so much success. The focus of the spring season is more on game situations and strategy, and should be an exciting activity for young volleyball enthusiasts. Soccer registrations have already started coming in and there are solid numbers early on at all levels of play.

Planning and meetings have been ongoing for the FY25 budget and Capital Planning that will culminate with decisions at Town Meeting in April. The Town Manager's office has let us know that while the fiscal situation for Ayer is favorable compared to many surrounding towns, we are also under constraints due to the anticipated rise in the ASRSD and Nashoba Tech budget requests. The Parks Department will be submitting a level funded budget, with the only increases coming in forms of COLA requests for seasonal employees and contractual step increases for full time positions.

Jeff Thomas
Ayer Parks Director