

Merrimack Parks and Recreation Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, 06.15.22
Matthew Thornton Meeting Room Town Hall
7:00pm

Attendees: Laura Jaynes, Tracy McGraw, Matt Casparius – Director, Lon Woods – Town Council, David Shaw, Naomi Halter – School Board, Maureen Hall – Senior Citizens Club, Jonathan Barkley – MYA, Jamie Devlin,

Parks and Recreation Staff: Matt Casparius, Director

Absent: none

Excused: Phil Przybyszewski, Christine Lavoie and Michelle Creswell

Public: George Schwartz, Troop 424

Start time: 7:00pm

Open Meeting/Introduction – agreed to have Eagle Scout, George Schwartz present before the vote on Approval of Minutes from May 18, 2022

Approval of minutes from May 18th, 2022

- May 18 minutes were amended to show approval vote of 4-0-2
- Motion to Approve amended Minutes from 5/18/22 – Lon Woods; Laura Jaynes – seconded; VOTE 2-0-6

New Business:

- Eagle Scout Project Proposal – Twin Bridge Park Accessibility Project, George Schwartz, Troop 424 – creating “stairs” leading from parking lot to the field and playground, wood framed filled with stones
 - Cost - \$2900
 - Jamie Devlin moved to accept the proposal for George Schwartz to present to the Town Council, Laura Jaynes seconded. VOTE – 8-0
- Discussion regarding open spaces on the Parks & Recreation Committee
 - Tracy confirmed return/sworn in during Town Council meeting
 - Christine and Phil were not present to discuss return
 - Jamie confirmed that he will not be returning
 - Opening for a full member and 1 alternate member
 - New Student rep to begin – Ms. Gaumont
- Annual Election of Officers
 - Election was tabled until August meeting due to missing members

Old Business:

- Update from Merrimack Dog Park – Tracy McGraw
 - Dog Park Fund Balance – \$763.59
 - Looking for volunteers for fundraising events you can reach out to friendsofthemerrimackdogpark on Facebook or Matt Casparius
 - Donations for baggies for dog waste is always welcome

Director's Report: Matt Casparius

- Summer Camp Update
 - Camp starts June 27th

- Camp orientation starts next Wednesday and things are looking great. We are more or less full for the entire summer with a handful of openings in some age groups.
- Ideally we're looking for 1 more Lifeguards, a Kitchen Assistant / Prep Cook and either a Part Time or Full Time Summer maintainer. We are guaranteeing 40 hours a week with a Monday – Friday schedule so no nights or weekends required.
- Upcoming Special Events
 - Summer Movies in the Park – we will be holding 3 Movie Nights in the Park this summer. Movies will be held at Wassermann Park and will be held on Saturday nights this year and begin at dusk.
 - Saturday, June 18th at 8:30pm - Encanto
 - Saturday, July 23rd at 8:15pm – Spiderman: No Way Home
 - Saturday, September 3rd at 7:30pm - Sing 2
 - Summer Concert Series – our Annual Summer Concert Series will be kicking off for the summer on Wednesday June 22nd at 6:00 pm at Abbie Griffin Park. We will be out there every Wednesday from June 22nd – August 17th for a total of 9 concerts in the park this year.
 - June 22nd at 6pm – Ben Rudnick and Friends
 - June 29th at 6m – Watson Park Band
 - July 6th at 6pm – Cold Chocolate
 - July 13th at 6pm – The Reminisants
 - July 20th at 6pm – Bob Pratte Band
 - July 27th at 6pm – Great Bay Sailor
 - August 3rd at 6pm – Whiskey Business Band
 - August 10th at 6pm – Tim Perry Rocks
 - August 17th at 6pm – Mr. Aaron Music
 - 4th of the July Festivities – Plans are underway for this year's 4th of July Celebrations
 - Sunday, July 3rd from 6:30-8pm – Patriotic Concert in the Park (Abbie Griffin Park) featuring Merrimack Concert ASSociation
 - Monday, July 4th:
 - Sparkler 5K by Merrimack Road Runners Boosters Club
 - Pancake Breakfast sponsored by Rotary Club
 - 1pm is start of the Parade – Merrimack typically has the second largest Independence Day Parade in the State of NH with more than 1100 participants in the parade itself; expecting a bigger participation this year
 - Registration to enter a Float is now open. Parade features a wide range of bands, militia units, clowns, local businesses, community organizations and more. There is no cost to participate.
 - Rotary confirmed that they are not running the family fun day of music and activities as they typically do
 - 7-9pm - music by DJ Darren Roy at the High School
 - 9pm – Fireworks at the High School
- 2023/2024 CIP Budget

Normally Capital Improvement budgets are due in the Fall with the regular Department Budget but the Finance Director informed me this afternoon that that they are moving up the timeline on capital

improvements to July 22nd and since this Committee doesn't meet in July, I am going to briefly cover the 3 items I have for this year

- Wasserman Park Road Improvements: Last summer, the constant heavy rains washed out multiple sections of the Park road system from my office down to the tennis courts and then back up past the Function Hall and Camp Office. In addition, when the Waterfront Parking lot was put in a number of years ago, the entry road was turned into 2 way traffic. In theory, if a car was going down the hill at the same time someone was coming up the hill they would yield until the other car passed. What ends up happening is instead of yielding they drive onto the grass with further causes the edge of the roadway to deteriorate. What we are hoping to do is repave the entire loop but then also widen the 2 way section of road coming down the hill to fix that problem.

The last 2 years we've had a lot of problems with cars parking wherever they feel like despite signage and rocks in some places. Often times they are going to the playground, to watch sports or to an event in the Function Hall. With the Function Hall, we generated nearly \$10,000 in revenues this past year and we're getting more and more formal events like wedding receptions in the hall with the improvements we've made and someone trying to walk from the existing parking lot in heels and dress is a bit challenging coming across the rocky lawn. As a second part of this project, we are looking to add a small 30 car parking lot above the basketball court on the existing lawn to address both problems. Working with public works, the estimate for the roadway portion of the project is \$200,000 and then to add the 30 space parking lot is an additional \$30,000.

- Athletic Field Development: We have been talking for several years now about the potential for new fields on Pearson Road on land that was acquired by the Town. The Town Engineer has developed some maps for us showing that we can potentially get 2 athletic fields on this site – a full sized (330 x 195) multipurpose field and then possibly a Softball Field and then parking for 70 cars. There are a couple of challenges to the site including wetlands that runs thru the middle property but basically on one side of the property would be the multipurpose field and on the other side would be the parking and the possible softball field. There are a couple of challenges on the softball field. First, the orientation of the field would not be correct so you would potentially have the sun in the batters eyes and secondly, we would need to reclaim part of the wetlands to fit the field in. Our estimate right now is \$750,000 for fields without lights.
- Wasserman Park Irrigation: One of the projects that was submitted last year was for irrigation at Wasserman Park on the Football practice field. The field is often dry and dusty and

difficult to use in the fall as all the grass dies out. The project was removed by the Town Manager last year and so we will be resubmitting this project this year. The estimate on this project was \$60,000.

Organization Reports:

- Senior Citizens Club - Maureen Hall
 - Trip planned for Foster's Lobster, Newport Playhouse, and discussed additional trips planned in the upcoming months
- MYA – Jonathan Barkley
 - Finished 4- State Champs, 6 teams in the top 5
 - Baseball – have 3 teams
 - Basketball begins in August
 - Football – registered 135 already, 35 for Cheer
 - Increased registration numbers
 - Need more field space
 - merrimackyouthassociation.com
- Town Council – Lon Woods
 - Went on Retreat on 6/8/22
 - Discussed Athletic Fields: Elbit fields, Fields Farm (less fields because of wetlands), Horse Hill, Timmons Property (might be limited), Wassermann Park (Irrigation issue), punted the question of turf, and Getinge Fields
 - Discussed Skate Park – continued until forced to move
 - Upcoming Town Council Meetings: June 23rd
- School Board – Naomi Halter
 - Graduation is on 6/18/22 – normal graduation process
 - Last day of school – 6/21/22, ½ day
 - Concession Stand – selling engraved bricks for fundraiser, deadline is 6/19/22
 - Thornton's Ferry playground equipment is ordered, will be installed over the summer
- School Representative – new student rep – Ms. Gaumont

Comments from the Public: none

Comments from the Committee: none

Future Meeting Dates

- No meeting in July
- Wednesday, August 17th

Adjourn at 8:00 pm

- Jamie Devlin the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm
- Laura Jaynes - 2nd the motion
- 8.0 - motion passed

Respectfully submitted,
Tracy McGraw