

MERRIMACK PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE AGENDA
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16TH
VIRTUAL MEETING
7:00 PM

Open Meeting / Introductions:

ATTENDEES: Laura Jaynes, Chair; Christine Lavoie, co-Chair; Matthew Casparius, Director P/R; Rick Grenier, MYA; Maureen Hall, Senior Citizens Club; Tracy McGraw, member; Shannon Barnes, School Board

Excused: Abbie Cote, Student Rep; Michelle Creswell, Secretary; Lon Woods – Town Council; Julie Poole - member

Approval of minutes from January 20th, 2021 – Shannon Barnes moved, Maureen Hall 2nd; 5-0-1 vote count (Christine abstained)

Old Business:

- Update from Merrimack Dog Park
 - Dog Park Fund Balance – \$1,762.59
 - Poop bags, pet safe salt, keep gates shut for safety; gate locked until spring; clean up poop
- Discussion about Athletic Field Rental Fee Rates & Field Rental Policies
 - Fees posted for field use around NH towns varies
 - Amherst – resident/non-resident: no lights \$25/hr, lights \$75/hr
 - Atkinson – no charge
 - Claremont – resident/non-resident no charge; non profit no lights \$25/hr, lights \$131/hr; for profits no lights \$50/hr, lights \$157/hr – daily prices for tournaments
 - Goffstown – resident/non-resident, no lights \$50/hr
 - Jaffrey – resident/non-resident \$150/team, 3hrs/wk x 8 weeks – no fees for town/school use
 - Keene - \$75/half day; \$150/full day; add \$1500 for leagues
 - Manchester – resident/non-resident \$25/hr no lights; with lights user pays electric bill
 - Merrimack – residents – no charge; non-resident \$30/day no lights, \$125/day lights
 - Milford – resident \$15/hr, \$20/hr on weekends; non-resident \$30/hr, \$35/hr on weekends
 - Nashua – Youth groups \$40/2 hrs no lights, \$50/2 hrs with lights; adults \$50/2 hrs no lights, \$100/2 hours with lights; different charges with leagues
 - Raymond – no charge
 - Salem – varying fees for profit and non-profit based residents, with/without lights
 - Sandown – no charge
 - Fees from field rental generates 6500/year; does not cover maintenance costs;
 - 2022 - looking at irrigation for Wassermann park football area because it's a dustbowl by September;
 - 2023/24 – 2 new fields at Fields Farm on Pearson Road;
 - 2024/25 – replace lights at Martel field;
 - comparison of fees of neighboring towns; we are the only town that charges a fee by the day; others have hourly fees; change format to collect more appropriate fees;
 - Our fields are booked from April through end of June; then mid-August till end of October; summer busy on weekends; hard to check on whether people leave timely if done hourly
 - Suggest: half-day rate (3-4 hour time block), full day rate, separate rate for lights – similar to renting of the function hall
 - Rick Grenier – suggest 3 periods on weekend (AM, PM, LIGHT/NIGHT)
 - Shannon Barnes – re: form to be filled out for rental; create online form, with credit card payment, links to calendar to self-manage

- Fees – increase fees but with discounts for residents, keep rates attractive for use by other towns, likely not increased until 2022, grandfathering in those that reserved ahead of fee increase – maybe \$50/\$75 for residents; double for non-residents;
- Field Permit Request Form – suggestions were made to reduce, make definitions online; need to have box to check that person read/accept/understood terms;

Director's Report:

- Budget & CIP Project Updates
 - Budget approved as presented; moved to the warrant for deliberative session on 3/10/21; lifeguard coverage for Wasserman starting mid-June, including park attendant coverage;
 - 3 CIP projects – docks, ADA ramps for PR office, roof for PR office – council voted to complete before camp in this same fiscal year;
- Winter Programs
 - Vacation Week Programs - School vacay next week; running program; 12-13 kids per day registered; maxed at 16 kids per day because of COVID; group sizes kept small with groups of 8 max; summer camp director will be running it; following NH child care guidelines, masks indoors, social distancing;
 - Winter Carnival - this Saturday 2/20/21; outdoor; register to attend; free ticket; show printed email or phone screen; we also have printed list, just in case; walking path on loop road, starting in front of PR office, ending by day camp office; activities on edge of road; 14 community partners/businesses offering activities; 19 different activities going on; registration open to 450 people; as of yesterday, only at 280 people; registration will remain open until Friday; then turned off, and list printed for Saturday; website is: TICKETLEAP?; event is 12-3, volunteers needed from 11:30 – 3:30pm;
- 2021 Summer Camp - updated guidelines have been approved by DHHS; approved by governor's task force; anticipating release tomorrow; one change is that there are no field trips allowed, so no camp trek trips; will revisit maybe in May/June, but might be too late for this year; once new guidelines come out, Matt required to make presentation to town council for official approval
 - Hoping for more specialized on camp activities – for older campers
 - Registration Update – as of yesterday, 280 registrations; less than last year same time, which was over 500, before COVID hit; since TREK program not running, explaining the shortage of registrations
 - Summer Hiring Update – hiring for all staff positions, junior senior counselors, activity Specialists, drama, archery, sports, lifeguards, swim instructors, kitchen, maintenance; most are 18 yo +, except junior counselor, archery, lifeguard, swim instructors – which require specialize training/certifications
 - ACA accreditation – every 3 years must have doctor/nurse review and sign off on all protocols, including COVID protocols, pursuant to state requirements; health care consultant; looking over standing orders for health center, signing off; about 2 hours worth of someone's time;
- Upcoming Special Events
 - Turn up the Heat Chili 6K Saturday, March 13th
 - 3 loops through park, 6 km race; sample 3 different types of chili; MFF will be selling bowls of chili after the fact; need volunteers
 - 29th Annual Easter Egg Hunt Saturday, March 27th
 - Plan – follow model used with food drive; drive thru easter egg pick up kits; asking parents to register in advance to have enough; come to town hall; easter bunny will hand them bag with 20 easter eggs, to take home and do hunt at home; basket making craft to do at home; Merrimack library joining with take-home craft; MFF will sell baked goods; randomly hide special prize slips for \$10 amazon gift card – takes place at Town Hall; up to 75 kids so far
 - Spring Community Cleanup Day Saturday, April 10th
 - 275 anniversary; pre-sign up; pick up bags; help get fields ready for spring;

- looking for Boston post cane recipient – oldest resident in community; must have lived in town for 25 years to qualify; go on website to nominate self of that person; then will do official kickoff ceremony with that person;
- 2.75 Mile “Not Quite a 5K Road Race Saturday, May 15th
 - Start/end Town Hall; largely flat; \$25 if you want to run in person, get medal and t-shirt; can participate virtually for \$15, and get the medal, but not the t-shirt;

Organization Reports:

- Senior Citizens Club – Maureen Hall – not gathering yet; building is being refurbished; new bathroom, floors, kitchen; in Merrimack paper, picture of some of the members that have been walking;
- Student Rep – Abby Cote – not present
- MYA – Rick Grenier – registrations open for softball, baseball and spring soccer; go to: merrimackyouthassociation.com; thank Getinge and Elbit for their fields; looking for cleaning help
- School Board – Shannon Barnes – HS parent/teacher – adopt a senior program; go to: Merrimack HS webpage and/or Facebook page; help a senior who is not having the most memorable senior year; deliberative session, 3/2/2021 for School Board; filing for offices open 2/24 and closes 3/5 – 3 positions open: 1 for 1 yr, 2 for 3 yr, 7 positions for budget committee, planning building will have a change
- Town Council – Lon Woods – not present

Comments from the Public: no public

No public in attendance via ZOOM or telephonic.

Next meeting:

Wednesday, March 17th

ADJOURN 20:01: Shannon Barnes move to adjourn, Christine Lavoie 2nd; 7-0 vote