

Amherst Leisure Services Commission Meeting Minutes
August 30, 2018

Present Ken Johnston, Sarah Marshall, Youssef Fadel, Becky Demling and Meg Rosa (chair)

Absent Nate Budington
Staff: Barb Bilz, Director

Call to Order Meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

Minutes

- The minutes of the June 28, 2018 meeting were approved as amended by a unanimous vote.

Presentation by John Root

Planting of Edible Fruit, Nut Trees and other Edible Perennials at Groff Park

- Mr. Root asked that the Commission consider the planting of an edible forest garden at Groff Park. The products could be harvested by the community at no charge. Approximately 1.5 acres of plantings would occur at Groff. There would also be an educational component included in the garden and all plantings would be labeled. Long term maintenance would be handled by the group's 501 c 3 members.
- Funds raised from the community would be used to purchase the trees and perennials.
- Mr. Root reported that there would not be any impact to the sports programs at Groff and no alteration to the topography would occur as a result of the plantings. In addition, no chemicals would be used.
- The Commission addressed its concern about planting nut trees because of the potential of allergic reactions by the public. They also addressed concerns about dedicating space on the fields due to the possible as field space might be limited in the future because of the reorganization of the High School and Middle School.
- The Commission asked if it would be possible to scale down the design.
- The Commission voiced its support of the project but stated they were not ready to endorse it at this time. They recommended that Mr. Root make a presentation to the Groff Park Renovation Committee.

Director's Update

Fields and Facilities

Amherst Center Recreation Working Group – Community Field Master Plan

- Draft narrative and plans are completed. Committee meeting will be scheduled to review them prior to another public meeting.

North Common

- Community Forum took place on August 28, 2018. It was very well attended with generous input from the community. Vast majority of those in attendance preferred the plan in which current parking area was eliminated.

Groff Park

- Demolition is scheduled for late October/early November, 2018. Bid documents are being finalized and bid is scheduled to go out this fall.

Mill River Recreation Area

- Application for PARC grant has been submitted for renovations to playground, pavilion, and basketball court. Shade areas and safety screening to provide barrier between general activity areas and ball field were also included.

Staff

Vacant Position

- Met with Human Resource Director to strategize about the Registrar position that is open. Strategy meeting also scheduled with Program Directors next week to discuss needs.

Programs

Day Camps

- *See Handouts*

Sports Camps

- *See Handouts*

Aquatics

- *See Handouts*
- 2018-19 Agreement with ARPS to Town Manager for signature. Indoor Pool Program at the Middle School starts Thursday, Sept. 20.

Golf Course

- Course conditions continue to be excellent but play has been down due to the weather.
- Revenues for the first two months of the Fiscal Year are down \$10,000 compared to last year for the same time period. This is mostly due to the hot and wet weather in the months of July and August. We have had 33 inches of rain as of 8/20/18.
- Cart lease is up this year. A new bid for a 3 year lease will go out in the fall.
- Men's Course Championship postponed to Sept. 15 because of rain.

Special Events

- 50th annual Halloween Fest planning and fundraising is underway.

Adult and Youth Education

- Fall classes are start in September.

Outreach

- Program Outreach efforts have started. We will be targeting Southpoint, Olympia Oaks, Butternut, Pomeroy Cooperative, Survival Center and North Village this fall.

Other

Strategic Planning

- In process of writing "scope of project" for Procurement Officer.

Capital Projects

- Painting of pool buildings will take place in the spring.

- Mill River basketball court renovation is on hold until we hear back from State regarding PARC Grant. CPAC funds allocated for the renovation of the courts are part of the match.
- Cherry Hill Club House - downstairs basement ceiling insulation and new outside gutter installation will take place this fall.

Professional Development

- Leadership Team will begin testing for their Certified Parks and Recreation Professional examination in September.

Marketing

- Fall brochure upgraded to full color with glossy cover but number of pages reduced.
- Marketing and Registration Coordinator continues to work on:
 - Improving website and registration process;
 - Increasing social media presence;
 - Conducting satisfaction surveys and needs surveys;
 - Increasing department's visibility in the community.

Community Visibility

- LSSE will have a presence and provide activities at the following community events in September:
 - 1st Day – provide program activities and information
 - UMass Community Breakfast – representation by staff

Other Commission Comments

- It was reported that enrollment in Kindergarten is up this year at the Amherst Elementary Schools.
- The High School PGO is conducting a program on vaping that is geared toward parents and adults who work with children. The program will take place at the High School on Sept. 27, 2018 at 7 p.m.

Next Meeting

- The next LSSE Commission meeting is scheduled for September 25, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. It will be held at the LSSE office. **Adjournment**

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.