

**Amherst Leisure Services Commission Meeting Minutes
October 29, 2019**

Present Becky Demling, Youssef Fadel, Stephanie Jackson, Sarah Marshall, Victor Nunez-Ortiz and Meg Rosa (chair)

Absent ---

Staff Barb Bilz, LSSE Director

Call to Order The meeting was held at Crocker Farm Elementary School. The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m.

Minutes

- The minutes of the September 24, 2019 meeting were approved by a unanimous vote.

Public Comment None

CPAC Report Sarah Marshall was appointed to the Community Preservation Act Committee (CPAC) by a unanimous vote. She reported that an RFP has been issued for proposals to CPAC.

Director's Report

Facilities and Fields

- Construction work continues at Groff Park. Tentative opening is Spring 2020.
- A State Parkland Acquisitions and Renovation for Communities (PARC) grant in the amount of \$400,000 was awarded to construct a playground at Kendrick. Approximately 250K will be requested from Community Preservation Act Funds (CPAC) this fiscal year as a match.

Golf Course

- Revenues for the first quarter of FY20 were up 21% (or \$16,037) over the same period in FY19. This is the highest first quarter revenue total since FY15.
- A meeting was held with members of The Amherst Nordic Ski Club. We will be examining ways to better publicize the groomed ski trails at Cherry Hill this year. In addition the club hopes to provide free ski lessons for children at WinterFest this year.
- The course is scheduled to close for the season on November 7, 2019.

Sports

- The number of participants in the tryouts for Suburban Basketball was up 20% over last year. Practices start in November.
- The Preseason Player's Clinic which is conducted by the High School varsity basketball team and their coaches, was held on October 19. 40 children participated in the clinic.

- Teen Ski and Snowboarding registrations are in progress.

Aquatics

- There are 70 children enrolled in the second session of fall swim lessons. 78 children participated in the first session of lessons.
- Winter swim lessons will take place at the Amherst Regional Middle School this year due to the closing of the UMass Totman pool. Dates of sessions were adjusted to accommodate this change.
- Outdoor summer pool revenues are up slightly versus last year at this time.

Special Events

- The 50th annual Halloween Fest took place on October 27th. While the parade was rained out this year, it's estimated that over 300 children participated in the various activities held at the Bangs Community Center which included: story-telling, a haunted house, carnival, food and entertainment.
- WinterFest planning is underway. Dates for the week-long event are February 1-8, 2020.

Community Theater

- Auditions have concluded and rehearsals are underway for the production of *Matilda*. Over 80 children and adults are participating in the production as cast members, stage hands, set builders, etc.

Adult and Youth Education

- A number of new classes have been planned for the Winter season. New youth classes include: STEM classes, Red Cross Baby Sitter Certification, rock climbing and two pre-school level playgroup and art classes. New adult classes include: Mindful Eating, Naturopathic Solutions for Adult Women, Zumba and Pilates.

Program Outreach

- Fall festival activities were held on October 19th at Southpoint/The Boulders, Butternut Farms and Olympia Village. Activities included: scare crow making, pumpkin decorating, a bar-b-que, and more. In addition to a good turnout by residents, a number of Town Council members also attended.

After School Program

- Enrollment is close to capacity. There are currently 78 children enrolled in LSSE's Prime Time Afterschool Program.

FY20 Budget

- Preliminary Capital requests for the Department have been submitted to the Town Manager.
 - Repairs to Mill River Tennis Court - \$25,000
 - Signage at Recreation Areas - \$75,000

- Rough Mower for Cherry Hill - \$58,500

Strategic Planning

- The Strategic Planning Community Input Gathering Sessions are underway.
 - October 29, 6:30 pm at Crocker Farm Elementary School
 - November 21, 5:30 pm at Wildwood Elementary School
- Surveys will be distributed in December as well.

Marketing

- Winter brochure/e-Brochure is in process of development.
- Working with Town Hall on website redesign initiative.
- Increasing visibility on Facebook with paid boosts for targeted programs.
- Development/Implementation of Marketing Plan for Strategic Plan.

Community Visibility

- Five members of the LSSE staff participated in the annual *Fall Foliage & Cider 5K Run* that benefited Amherst - A Better Chance.
- Four members of the staff participated in the annual *Trivia Bee* to support the Amherst Education Foundation.
- Four members of the LSSE staff are taking part in the *Launching Women Luncheon Series* hosted by the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce.

Next Meeting

- Wednesday, December 4th, 6:30 p.m. at the Amherst Leisure Services Office

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m. so that Commission members could attend the community input gathering session conducted by the UMass Donahue Institute as part of the strategic plan for the department.