

Amherst Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes
Zoom Public Meeting
March 24, 2021

Present Becky Demling, Youssef Fadel, Carolyn Mailler, Sarah Marshall,
Victor Nunez-Ortiz and Meg Rosa (Chair)

Absent Stephanie Jackson

Staff Barb Bilz, Recreation Director
Marion Jordan, Marketing and Registration Coordinator

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Public Comment:

- Joyce Hatch of Amherst spoke to the Commission about striping additional lining to the Mill River tennis courts to accommodate Pickleball. She gave a brief overview of the sport and discussed its current popularity. She noted that several towns in the Pioneer Valley now have Pickleball courts that either are dedicated as such or are lined on their existing tennis courts.
- Barb Bilz reported that she received positive feedback about her presentation to the Joint Capital Planning Committee regarding a proposal to resurface and reline the tennis courts at Mill River in FY22. She suggested that perhaps the Pickleball lines could be included in this project.
- The Commission and Barb Bilz also suggested that there might be an opportunity to develop dedicated Pickleball courts at either the Mill River parking area north of the existing tennis courts or on the War Memorial basketball court area. CPA funds could be used for this purpose.
- The Commission agreed to put the request for striping Pickleball lines to the tennis courts at Mill River on their April agenda. They would vote to make a recommendation at that time.

Minutes

- The minutes of the Commission meetings from February 24, 2021 were approved by a unanimous vote.

Logo Selection

- Marion Jordan presented the revised logo to the Commission.
- Marion Jordan reported that the logo will be rolled out in the summer edition of the Amherst Recreation Program Guide. It is already up on the website.

CPAC Appointment and Update

- The Commission voted to reappoint Sarah Marshall as their representative to the CPAC. Meg Rosa made the motion and it was seconded by Victor Nunez-Ortiz. The vote was unanimous.
- Sarah Marshall reported that the CPA Mill River Pool resurfacing project and the lower Groff Park pavilion replacement project were both approved by Town Council.

Child Care/Remote Learning Assistance Program and Afterschool Programs

- Barb Bilz reported that the Amherst Recreation Childcare and Remote Learning Assistance Program will end on April 1st as children will be returning to in-school learning on April 5th.
- She also reported that the School District informed her that they cannot allow afterschool care this spring at any of the elementary schools due to Covid restrictions. There has been concern from parents regarding this and a meeting is being scheduled next week to discuss the issue.

Director's Report

Sports

- The Basketball Skills Development Program at Pelham Elementary School has ended. 84 children were enrolled in the program.
- Summer sports program planning is underway. We anticipate a full venue of sports programs for children this summer.
- We will be running a Lacrosse Skills Development Program this spring. It will be staffed by volunteer coaches.

Day Camps

- Planning and staff recruitment for summer day camps has started. We will be running both Early Adventures and Adventure Playground Day Camps but limiting the number of children who can enroll.

Outreach

- Nikki Abelli is working on several Outreach Programs this spring. They will take place at various housing areas in Town.

Aquatics

- Because of maintenance issues at the Middle School Pool we have cancelled our indoor aquatics program.
- Mill River Pool will open on June 19 instead of June 26 in order to provide aquatics programming for the community earlier in the season. I would also like to keep the Mill River Pool open until Sept. 6 (Labor Day). I have communicated with DPW regarding the proposed summer schedule.

Golf Course

- Projected opening date for Cherry Hill is April 9, 2021 (weather permitting).
- I have recruited two volunteers to coordinate the Women's League this year.

Primetime Remote Learning Assistance and Child Care Program

- We reopened the program in early February 23rd after the UMass self-sequester order was rescinded. We have 38 children enrolled and are at full capacity.
- The program will end on April 1 as children return to in-class learning on April 5.

Adult and Youth Education

- We are in the process of recruiting spring adult and youth education instructors and reviewing potential class offerings.

Website Upgrade

- IT and my staff continue to work on the upgrades to the website. Website address is www.amherstmarec.org
- IT and my staff are working on the launch of Rectrac 3.1 which will greatly improve the registration process for the community. Staff training on this new system is also underway.

Current Recreation Department Staff Duties

Donna-

- Assistance with department budgeting
- Deposits
- Invoice processing
- Payroll
- Rectrac training- going live with a completely new interface Feb. 1-3
- 10 – 15 hours per week – Working with Finance Department on Cares & FEMA grants; working with Cheri, Anthony and Sean on Credit Cards, PCI Compliance, closing unneeded accounts, and looking at CC throughout the Town.
- Responsible for all adult and youth education programs. Oversees current programs and planning of programs for spring/summer.
- Attending NRPA/MRPA webinars related to reopening process, best practices and summer programming

Marion-

- 30+ hours a week working with the Health Department, assisting public via phone calls, emails and registration for vaccine. (hours due to increase).
- Working with Briana on updating new CivicPlus website
- Responds to all emails and phone calls coming into Amherst Recreation from the public.
- Working on all marketing for winter programming and setting up marketing plan for spring/summer.
- Working on rollout of name change and new logo.
- Assists Donna with adult and youth education programs as well and planning for spring/summer.
- Created and is overseeing Mill River and Groff Park winter engagement program for families.
- Working on Rectrac training for staff and rollout of the software.
- Webtrac layout and training go live date Feb 1-3.

Nick-

- Working at Primetime Childcare/Assisted Remote Learning Program M-F 7:15 am – 1:15 pm
- Supervising Basketball Skills Program at Pelham Elementary School four nights a week.

- Preparing for Cherry Hill opening.
- Overseeing Recess Van program
- Recruiting Instructors and planning sports programs for spring and summer 2021.
- Rectrac Training

Nikki-

- Working at Primetime Childcare/Assisted Remote Learning Program M-F 1:00 – 5:45 pm
- Will begin supervising new 4-6th grade section of the childcare program in February.
- Planning outreach programming for the spring.
- Assisting with WinterFest
- Recruiting staff and program planning for Summer Day Camps

Grace-

- 30 hours as supervisor for Primetime Childcare/Assisted Remote Learning Program.
- Assists with all EEC documentation requirements.
- Rectrac training

Next Meeting

- The next scheduled meeting of Amherst Recreation Commission will be on Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at 6:00. This will be a Zoom public meeting.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 p.m.