

Amherst Recreation Commission

Minutes of October 12, 2022

Present: Matthew Cain, Youssef Fadel, Carolyn Mailler, Andy MacDougall, Rey Harp (Director)

Absent: Sanjay Arwade

Others in attendance: Maria Kopecki, Rudy Perkins, Toni Cunningham for Fort River Fields presentation

The meeting, conducted remotely by Zoom, was called to order by Rey Harp at 7:03 p.m.

- Matthew Cain will take minutes for this meeting
- June minutes approved

Welcome to new commission member Andy MacDougall

Outline of CPA timeline: proposals submitted in September, being reviewed in October, discussion in November, decisions in December. This year the proposals are several times the available funds.

Presentation on Fort River Fields CPA proposal from Maria Kopecki, Rudy Perkins and Toni Cunningham to raise about \$3 million to reduce the burden on the debt exclusion override.

- Matt: Why is the sitework so much over the MSBA allocation? Lots of re-configuration and drainage improvements are needed for this very large site; all MSBA projects go over the 8% allocated
- Matt: Is CPA the primary funding source for recreation field capital projects? Joint Capital Planning Committee also spends on fields but generally has many other demands
- Andy: Would you take less? Toni, we'll take whatever we can get; if funding is not provided the field improvements are likely to be dropped if there are cost overruns elsewhere.
- Field lighting and comfort station could possibly be installed later but there would likely be an extended delay.
- Actual layout is not finalized yet but the proposal is based on 150,000 - 200,000 sq ft. of fields. Site plan is being discussed at the next School Building Committee meeting November 4th.

War Memorial Pool CPA proposal summary: New liner, leak, study new field house

Summer Programming:

- Many people came to July 4th celebration but not enough vendors were there (no hot air balloon, only two food vendors, no beer garden or kid carnival)
- War Memorial pool couldn't open on time due to a last minute problem which caused a lot of problems with Aquatic programming
- Otherwise summer programs ran well

Upcoming Projects:

- The department lost special needs programming when a staff member left during pandemic, looking for a way to re-introduce it
- Pickleball: one court has been lined on a Mill River tennis court. Nets present in summer only. Permanent location under discussion
- Halloween Spooktacula planned for Bangs Center October 30
- Winterfest planning has begun for luminaria, ice sculptures, etc. Forming a community committee to plan and make it happen.
- Hired a new Aquatics coordinator. She will also be the High School swim coach.
- Little Mermaid musical coming in January

Next meeting tentatively scheduled for 7pm Monday November 7th

Meeting adjourned by Ray Harp at 8:35pm

Submitted by Matthew Cain