

Amherst Leisure Services Commission Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2017

Present Jim Brissette, Nate Budington, Sarah Marshall, and
Meg Rosa

Absent Becky Demling (excused)

Staff: Barb Bilz, Interim Director,
Town Hall: Paul Bockelman, Town Manager and
David Ziomek, Asst. Town Manager

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

Paul Bockelman and David Ziomek met with the Commission in Executive Session. After the conclusion of that session, the Commission went back to the business outlined in the agenda.

Minutes The minutes of the September 20, 2017 meeting were approved as amended by a unanimous vote.

Dave Ziomek reported on the status of multiple parks and recreation projects currently in progress.

- Downtown Amherst Recreation Area Working Group
 - Consultant/Designer was chosen - The Weston & Sampson Group;
 - The Sampson Group will create three designs/plans;
 - ADA compliance will be included;
 - They will look at orientation of the fields and other aspects related to placement and design;
 - Data collected by staff related to field and facility usage will be provided to consultants.
- Groff Park and North Common
 - We will be putting together two teams to address these projects;
 - The teams will evaluate the proposals of the design/build consultants and select the vendor;
 - The plan is to begin construction at Groff in Spring or Summer 2018;
 - The team will decide when demo/construction will start;
 - There is \$1,050,000.00 available for Groff with the possibility of another \$300,000 available from a grant from a Land and Conservation grant.
 - North Common will have a similar process;
 - North Common won't have a playground however there is a need for outdoor seating. Tree well seating as well other seating arrangement and tables might be included in the design;
 - A playground in downtown is important. A playground is included in the design proposed for Kendrick Park and there will most likely be a playground at War Memorial;

- This will be more of a passive recreation space consistent with town common amenities;
- The North Common design will need to be approved by the Select Board.

CPAC

- Nate Budington reported that the first meeting of CPAC has occurred and that it was more of an organizational meeting. RFPs have been sent out and deadline for submission is December 9, 2017. Dave Ziomek suggested that the Commission communicate to Barb Bilz a list of projects to consider.

Other Projects

- \$100,000 has been allocated from CPA for the repair of the filtration system at Mill River Pool;
- \$50,000 has been allocated from CPA for the resurfacing of the basketball court at Mill River;
- New directional signage will be installed and arrows at the entrance and exits of Plum Brook will be painted on the parking lot so it is one way.
- Work at the North Amherst Cow Field has been put on hold due to future reconfiguration of the intersection in front of the North Amherst Library. There are also issues with the North Amherst Library including ADA compliance and lack of a first floor bathroom.
- Work on the Signage Project continues. Uniform, readable, attractive standardized recreation area signs are needed. These would include directional, identifier, and educational signs. There is \$20,000 available for these signs but more funds are needed. We will be looking to JCPC for more money.

Interim Director's Report

Staff

Vacant Positions

- Interviews for Marketing and Registration Coordinator position are still in progress.
- Nikki Abelli has been transferred to the position of Youth Outreach, Camps, and Special Events Coordinator as of October 10, 2017.

Program and Facilities

General

- A firm has been selected to create a master plan for the downtown recreation areas and facilities.
- Asst. Town Manager, Dave Ziomek and I will provide and status update to the Commission on the following projects:
 - Amherst Recreation Working Group
 - Groff Park
 - North Common
 - CPAC
 - Other Projects
 - Mill River
 - Plum Brook
 - North Amherst Field

Golf Course

- Revenues for the first three months of the Fiscal Year remain over \$5,000 compared to last year for the same time period.

Aquatics

- Indoor Pool Program at the Middle School started Thursday, Sept. 21. Swim lesson enrollment is strong. There are 18 classes with 84 children enrolled and 7 who were wait listed.
- *The Commission recommended that flyers be available at the Town Meeting on Nov. 6, 2017. They also suggested that a press release and advertisement be sent/placed in the Amherst Bulletin.*

Special Events

- 49th annual Halloween Fest is scheduled for October 29th. Activities begin at noon. Window painting at local businesses in Town took place on October 14th.
- WinterFest will be expanded this year to a week-long event with activities happening throughout the Town beginning on Saturday, Feb. 3 and culminating with the main event at Cherry Hill on Saturday, Feb. 10.

Adult and Youth Education

- Fall classes in progress. Enrollments are stronger than last year at this time.

Outreach

- Sports outreach program (ASAP) at the three elementary schools began on Thursday, September 21. We have a total of 73 children enrolled in the program (WW = 25, FR = 18, Crocker = 30).

Other

Professional Development

- All members of the leadership team for the department continue participating in a study group to take their Certified Parks and Recreation Professional examination. The team has also become more active in the Pioneer Valley Recreation and Parks Association and will be hosting its next meeting.

Marketing

- Mapping of program sites is in progress for the next brochure. This information will also be included on the LSSE website.
- Winter brochure is currently in design process and will be out next month.

Community Visibility

- LSSE has had a presence and provided activities at the following community events this Fall:
 - 1st Day – provided face painting and program information.
 - UMass Community Breakfast – representation by staff
 - Apple Harvest Festival – provided arts and crafts activity and program information.
 - Embrace Race (a national program to help parents deal with sensitive issues of race) - provided childcare and program activities.
 - Amherst Block Party

- Amherst Chamber Awards Night

Commission Member Comments and Updates

- The Commission voted unanimously to appoint Jim Brissette and Becky Demling to the Groff Park Committee;
- The Commission voted unanimously to appoint Sarah Marshall and Nate Budington to the North Common Committee;
- The Commission identified several projects at Plum Brook Recreation Area that could be addressed with funding from CPA. They included: bathrooms, storage, water source for drinking, and concessions area. In addition the Commission recommended that additional fund be requested from the CPAC to complete work at the Mill River baseball fields.

Other Business

- The Commission voted unanimously to endorse the permanent appointment of Barb Bilz as Director of the Town of Amherst, Leisure Services and Supplemental Education Department.

Next Meeting

- The next LSSE Commission meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 8, at 5:30 p.m.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.