

RECEIVED

By Town Clerk's Office at 9:14 am, Jul 11, 2023

DEPT./BOARD: Recreation Commission
DATE: June 22, 2023
TIME: 6:00pm
PLACE: Burlington High School – School Committee Room

Present: David Norden, Chair
Steve Nelson, Vice Chair
Lindsay Carlson, Elected Member
Bill Gaffney, Planning Board Representative
Brendan Egan, Parks and Recreation Director
Kelly Lehman, Parks and Recreation Assistant Director

Remote: Jeremy Brooks, School Committee Representative

Call to Order
Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of Minutes – May 30, 2023

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Steve and seconded by Bill.
Vote: 5-0-0

Public Participation

There was no public participation outside of the agenda items.

Director of Parks & Recreation Report

Director Egan presented the following report:

Simonds Park
EV Parking Spot

Following the previous meeting, Brendan met with representatives from DPW and Eversource at Simonds Park to look at possible locations for EV charging stations. It was determined the best location for charging stations would be by the upper baseball field. Eversource will determine the best approach and feasibility of the project and will come back to the Town with a plan. They would ultimately like to have multiple spots but will start with one or two dedicated to EV parking. The cost to install will be funded through a grant program by Eversource.

Basketball Courts

As discussed at the previous meeting, there has been positive feedback and plenty of use of the basketball courts but unfortunately there has also been increased trash. The maintenance staff put another trash barrel in the area and the Department has posted reminders on social media reminding players to clean up after themselves. The problem will hopefully correct itself as the summer goes on, but if it continues, the courts may need to be shut down for a period of time. Steve suggested putting up signs about littering or asking BPD to patrol the area.

Additionally, after checking the height of the rims, the contractor came back and adjusted them to regulation height. Some of the ties holding the mesh to the fence frame had also been coming off and the contractor retied them and added extra ties as well.

Modular Classroom Space

Modular classrooms are brought in to Club Simonds every year and were delivered on Tuesday. The classroom is the clubhouse for the modified Club Simonds program and is a great resource for the Therapeutic Recreation Program. There will also be a second, smaller modular classroom for Burlington Public Schools. They utilize the space to offer education services for students. Having the classroom at Club Simonds allows students to participate in the program while still receiving education services from the schools. Emma Jones worked with the schools to develop the program a few years ago and the schools are looking to continue it this year. It was beneficial for both the schools and the participants. Brendan thanked Emma for her work setting the program up and acknowledged Kelly's assistance as well.

Athletic Fields

The spring fertilization on Town fields is complete. The Department is working to finish up Mary Cummings Park and the school fields. They will be doing one more treatment to the fields, including some seeding, fertilization, and grub control, at the end of June.

Wading Pool

The wading pool at Simonds Park opened on Saturday. Maintenance staff completed the preseason prep of the pool and was on hand for the Board of Health inspection. Program Coordinator Jessie Hampson held an orientation for pool staff last week. Brendan noted that many people have come into the office for their passes.

Maintenance

All large area mowers, John Deere tractors, and the bucket truck were inspected by the state and all passed.

Volunteer Groups

There were several volunteer groups in to assist with weeding, mulching, and cleanups prior to events this spring, including a group from Keurig and a large group from Stantec. Brendan thanked them all for their work.

Council on Aging (COA) Fitness Class

Brendan and Kelly met with representatives of the Monday/Wednesday fitness class who attended the last Commission meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss potential openings in the gym schedule during the summer where the class could continue to run. The conversation was productive and staff was able to answer many questions. Staff shared other potential times and spaces that would be available and believe they have identified a space to hold the class if the Council on Aging can find an instructor. Brendan noted that they proposed

Grandview Farm as a space and that he reached out to the Town Administrator about the timeslot to keep communication open.

Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation Report

Assistant Director Lehman presented the following report:

BambooHR

The Department has transitioned fully to the BambooHR platform. They are utilizing the platform to onboard new employees on both the maintenance and program side. They are also using the software for timekeeping to eliminate a paper payroll process for program employees. Administrative Assistant, Beth Garvey has worked with the Town's HR Department to ensure a smooth transition to the digital platform. Kelly thanked Beth for all of her efforts streamlining the process for both employees and the department.

Staff Trainings

The program team held their annual Director's Camp for this year's summer program directors on June 5-7 at Grandview Farm. Each evening focused on different facets of leadership, addressing topics such as deescalating serious situations, working with parents, and safety at programs. On the evening of June 7, Burlington Police came to speak with staff about how to keep participants safe and visited each Director at their location to create an individualized safety plan. Kelly extended thanks to BPD and Captain Hanafin specifically.

On June 13, the maintenance program hosted Eileen Coleman, Assistant Conservation Administrator for a Stormwater Management and Illicit Drainage Training. Clean, green, accessible parks and open spaces improve the quality of life in Burlington and learning about these topics is important to that effect. Kelly thanked Eileen for coming and speaking to the staff about how to report perceived misuse.

Summer Program Orientation will begin on June 26. This is a four-day orientation for all summer staff. It will be held conference style and cover a number of topics, including sessions with Burlington Police, Burlington Youth & Family Services, the Summer Camp Society and more.

Therapeutic Recreation

On May 23, Kelly and Emma attended the Northeast Inclusion Summit in Lexington. The Summit showcased concrete strategies for supporting inclusion and provided opportunities to connect with likeminded people seeking to create a culture of inclusion. It was an interesting summit where Kelly and Emma had an opportunity to meet with people from a variety of other settings, such as school and church.

Special Events

The Great American Campout

The Great American Campout was held from June 10-11. Although it rained, the staff did a great job modifying and keeping families safe. Once the sun came out, everyone had a great time. Kelly thanked Jeff DiSalvo, Assistant Program Coordinator, for being the chef that evening and cooking for all attendees.

Regional Track Meet

Kelly also thanked Jeff DiSalvo and Jessie Hampson, Program Coordinator for hosting a regional track meet with teams from surrounding towns. It was very well-attended and kids were very excited to compete in different events.

Kelly noted that the Great American Campout and the Regional Track Meet were sponsored by Northeastern University, who is a regional partner this year. Stride Fitness also sponsored the track meet.

Upcoming Events

The summer concert series will begin on June 27. There will be family concerts on Tuesday evenings and children's shows on Wednesday evenings, starting at 6:30pm each night. In addition to the concert series, the Department is partnering with the Girl Scouts of Burlington to hold a Culture Fest at Simonds Park. The event will take place on July 17 from 6:30-8:00pm. It is in partnership with two young ladies working to earn their Silver Award, one of the highest awards in Girl Scouting. Girl Scouts work in teams for at least 50 hours on a project that must educate the community on an issue that is of importance, advocate for a specific cause or group, and be sustainable. The Department is excited for the partnership and is looking forward to the Culture Fest.

Questions & Comments

Steve asked about staffing levels and Kelly noted that the staff is almost there. There are approximately four Inclusion positions still open. Steve pointed out that the BHS Boys' Track & Field Team won the Division IV State Championship, one athlete competed in Nationals, and the Girls' Softball Team won their first State Championship. He said it was great to see how successful many teams are doing and acknowledged that many of the students and coaches grew up participating in Recreation programs.

Chairman's Report

David noted that the summer season is the busiest time for Recreation and commended the program and maintenance staff for doing a great job. He thanked everyone for their hard work and wished them all a successful summer.

Subcommittee Reports

Master Plan

Steve inquired about updates on the master plan and Brendan noted that award of the contract will not be sent until July when the money is available.

Sculpture Park

Lindsay met with the Sculpture Park Committee. There is ongoing discussion between the park and administration regarding cameras to keep an eye out for vandalism and other issues. The heart sculpture has also been fixed and should be returning mid-July and they are looking to have an event to celebrate the return.

New Business

Senior Fitness Classes

This item was discussed in the Director's Report.

Community Theater Company of Burlington (Burlington Players)

As mentioned previously, the Theater Company's license expired during the pandemic. They are now operating again and Recreation wanted to make sure the agreement was all set. Town Counsel has reviewed it and there were some minor updates regarding the building at Overlook Park. It is ready for renewal. Brendan is requesting the Recreation Commission vote to approve the use of the building thereon known as the Park Playhouse at Overlook Park located at 1 Edgemere Avenue, Burlington, which is under the care, custody, management, and control of the Recreation Commission for a term of two years effective July 1, 2023. Six months prior to its expiration, the agreement can be renewed for one year for a total of three years. The fee is \$1. Brendan noted that the Theater Company has been great tenants and maintains security at the building. He meets with them during the year to perform a walkthrough of the facility and make sure everything is in order. Brendan recommends that the agreement be approved. Steve moved to approve the agreement and Bill seconded. Dave echoed Brendan's comments about the group being great tenants and expressed favor of the agreement.

Vote: 5-0-0

Brendan passed the agreement around to be signed and said he would pass it on to the Community Theater Group of Burlington to then be signed off on by Town Administration.

Public Participation – Discussion & 1st Reading

As discussed at a prior meeting, Town Counsel had issued recommendations about public comment and citizens' time at public meetings. The Commission previously shared a document to add comments, and Brendan suggested a discussion and first official reading of the document. After some discussion about formatting discrepancies, the Commission agreed to have one member proof the document and revisit at a later meeting.

Old Business

Mary Cummings Lights

Burlington Youth Soccer was gathering more information on the lights. Once Brendan receives this information, he can get in touch with someone with the City of Boston to work on the next steps. Bill brought up the possibility of solar lights to reduce noise and cost and Brendan noted that solar lights are being considered. Steve asked about the Town's relationship with the Trustees and Brendan noted that they are very responsive and easy to work with.

Metal Detecting

Following prior discussion, a line about metal detecting and digging being prohibited was proposed to be added to the rules and regulations signs. Steve made a motion for the commission to approve the amended rules and regulations which add Item #8, metal detecting, prospecting, or digging is prohibited. Lindsay seconded.

Vote: 5-0-0

Brendan will get a finalized cost and staff will work on replacing the old signs with the new ones.

Executive Session

There was no executive session.

Other Matters

Bill asked to confirm the pickleball policy. Kelly noted that during the lesson time, the Town is allowed to use all four courts. For Club 50, only three courts are used. Bill questioned who has jurisdiction of the Reservoir because some citizens had concerns about dog waste, and Brendan noted that Conservation has property around the Reservoir and DPW has jurisdiction over it.

Agenda for Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for July 10. The agenda will include the public participation second reading.

Meeting adjourned, 8:00pm.