

**Burlington Recreation Commission
Meeting August 15, 2022**

Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Steve Nelson, Vice Chair David Norden, Kevin Sullivan, Bill Gaffney, and Carl Foss.

Staff in Attendance: Parks and Recreation Director Brendan Egan, Superintendent of Park Maintenance Bill Baker, and Program Coordinator Kelly Lehman

Commissioner Nelson called the meeting to order at 6pm in the School Committee Meeting Room at the Burlington High School, 123 Cambridge Street.

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Norden moved to approve the Recreation Commission meeting minutes of July 11, 2022, as amended.

VOTE: 4-0-0

Public Participation

Diane Leva and Donna O'Brien from Church Lane returned to discuss the on-going issues of the Pickleball Court at Simonds Park. Diane Leva noted the remaining Acoustiblock panels went up, but there was no change in noise. She added that there hasn't been as many players recently, but the noise is still an issue. She played a recording from Saturday, August 13th from the bench in front of her home.

Commissioner Nelson thanked Diane Leva and Donna O'Brien for coming back to discuss the issues. He also added the Commission is looking at potential places for re-location and were hoping the Acoustiblock would help.

Diane Leva asked if there have been any updates regarding the possibility of moving the court to the street hockey court and if the potential new materials have been evaluated. Director Egan added it hasn't rained, so they were unable to test out the material. He noted as soon as there was some precipitation, he would reach out to the company to come out and evaluate the court.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if Donna O'Brien had noticed any difference since the Acoustiblock panels went up. Donna O'Brien noted she had been away and hadn't had a chance to evaluate if there was a change. Commissioner Sullivan added he would like to hear for himself to see if there is any change. Diana Leva noted that the sound is still escaping from over the panels. Since the street hockey court is higher up, the sound will still escape, but just might be above the houses.

Vote to support the Community Preservation Act (CPA)

Bill Boivin of the Conservation Commission, also a member of the CPA Committee, thanked the Commission for having him. He had previously attended a meeting and presented the CPA and all the benefits it would bring to Burlington and to request the support of the Commission to help get it on the ballot. He has returned and is requesting the official endorsement and support to help pass the Act on the November ballot.

Commissioner Sullivan noted he will abstain as he is a member of the committee. He added it is great for Recreation and with the State matching 30% of the funds, it would improve Burlington and help save taxpayers money. Bill Boivin noted out of the 190 communities currently participating, not one has opted out in 20 years.

Commissioner Norden motioned to vote that the Recreation Commission vote to support the CPA Ballot Initiative in the Fall. Commissioner Foss seconded the motion.

Commissioner Nelson added Bill Boivin did a wonderful job with his presentation and answered all the questions that the Commission had. He noted he fully supports the CPA and thinks it is a great addition to the town.

Vote: 3-0-1

Disc Golf Presentation

Nick Brozek presented on the current conditions of the disc golf course, including statistics and some improvements that could be done. With the help of Simon Lizot, a youtuber disc golfer, as well Avery Jenkins, a world known disc golfer, they came up with some suggestions for a new layout of the course, new tees, baskets, and better signage.

Director Egan added it has been a couple of years of discussions and walking the course. He noted Nick has been instrumental in bringing in a professional disc golfer to walk the course and share opinions of new opportunities. The course was installed in 2006 and there has been minor updates. He discussed the tee pads with those who helped in updating the Meadowbrook course and were able to share details on installation of tee pads.

Commissioner Nelson asked if there had been any discussion of costs for this project yet. Director Egan noted, they haven't just yet. If this is something the Commission decides to proceed with, Director Egan and Nick Brozek will work to put together some estimated costs.

Commissioner Gaffney added he does play the sport and finds that the location of the court is great for players. He agrees the condition of the current court isn't the best but has potential.

Commissioner Sullivan noted the course gets used all the time and it doesn't affect the trees at the park. The Simonds Trust likes that the trees are not being disturbed and the park is still getting used. He supports the updates. Nick Brozek noted that Avery Jenkins suggested adding even more trees to help keep discs within the park.

Commissioner Foss note he likes the idea of updating the course and hopes to learn to play.

Commissioner Norden noted he fully supports this upgrade. He noted there are always people at the course playing.

Commissioner Nelson agreed with all that has been said and supports the idea.

Director Egan noted he would work with Nick Brozek on a budget of materials and get back to the Commission in the fall with more information.

Director of Parks and Recreation Report

Parks and Recreation Director Egan presented the following report:

Regan Park

In the June, a neighbor cleaned up the end of Sedalia Road, where people had been dumping yard waste / debris. The area ended up being a section of Regan Park. After discussing the clearing of the property with the neighbor, she understood it was Town property and part of Regan Park. Director Egan has gone over the property lines with the neighbor and they understand where they are located. When the overgrowth dies out in the fall, the neighbor will spread the fill that was brought in and leave the area undisturbed going forward.

New Spreader

As part of the FY23 budget, a new spreader was added. The old tow-behind spreader was 15 years old and not very efficient. A representative from the company was able to come out and train staff on how to use the new spreader. This is another improvement to the fertilization program.

Fall Sports

The varsity field renovation has begun and is scheduled to be completed September 12th. We have been working with the high school and youth programs on practice schedules for the fall and have been able to schedule field use for everyone. High school sports, specifically field hockey, moved their practices to Brush field.

Miscellaneous

At the end of 2021, Vermont Systems announced they were going to move their development and support investments into pay track which is their credit card processing system. This would reduce efforts from third party processing systems. New card readers were purchased to aid in the transition.

Parks Superintendent Report

Superintendent Baker presented the following report:

There was a second BBSA tournament July 16 & 17 with six games over two days and maintenance staff was able to support. The double slide at Wildwood Park was replaced as well as the neck climber. The school and fall sports start soon and staff has been lining football fields for high school and Pop Warner as well as the band practice field and various soccer fields. The trim crew has been cutting and trimming areas at the schools. The new spreader is attached to the small loader and is ready for fall fertilization. Bucket truck is back and running in time to hang lights for the Diwali Festival in September. The remaining 26 Acoustiblock panels were hung at Simonds Park. Maintenance crew helped prepare for Celebrate Burlington by trimming the common, as well as surrounding areas. A water spigot was installed to provide water for the dunk tank and waterslide, no Parking signs were installed around the common and surrounding areas. Simonds field was lined for parking and a large tent and performance stage was set up on the common. Staff was available for troubleshooting and trash pick up before and after. Staff has been keeping up with ball field lining, cutting grass where necessary and trash and recycling around town.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if there was a plan for the fertilization of the fields come September due to the draught. Superintendent Baker noted the places that are irrigated can be fertilized. Commissioner Sullivan also asked if there was anything that could be done about the weeds at the playground. Superintendent Baker noted they do pull some of the weeds and staff is sent to the playgrounds once a week to weed whack. There are 17 playgrounds and there is a lot of maintenance.

Programming Report

Program Coordinator Lehman presented the following report:

Programming

For the most part, summer programming has wrapped up. They are extremely impressed with staff and are hearing positive remarks from staff, directors, and the community. Program Coordinator Lehman wanted to extend an extra 'thank you' to Therapeutic Specialist Emma Jones, Assistant Program Coordinator Jessie Hampson and Summer Program Coordinator Beth Ganley. They were out everyday checking on staff, making sure they were heard, taking comments and concerns, rewarding staff and more. There has been a big increase in staff engagement due to all their efforts. Program Coordinator Lehman shared some comments from the end of the summer survey from the staff members.

With summer programming ending, a series of camps began. Camps such as cheerleading camp, wide world safari week, flag football and more have begun. The wading pool will remain open until August 26th.

Fall programming is starting to come together. Staff is working on finalizing the brochure and aiming for registration the week of August 29th.

Therapeutic Recreation

On July 15, it was announced that Therapeutic Recreation Specialist, Emma Jones completed the National Inclusion Project Inclusive Recreation certification. Emma is one of the first Inclusive Recreation Specialists named by the National Inclusion Project. They are based out of South Carolina. Emma is a big part of the programming team, and she has been an amazing addition to our staff. A big congratulations to Emma.

The inclusion support in programs this summer has increased approximately 20% in participants receiving support. There is a staffing shortage within the TR Division. They were unable to provide one to one support for those who asked later in July. They were also unable to support the Summer Saturday program due to a lack of staff as well. They will be hiring again in the fall.

Miscellaneous

As part of summer preparations, First-Aid and CPR training was moved in-house to allow for more flexibility in the training schedule as well as save some money. Assistant Program Coordinator Jessie Hampson and Fitness Administrator Kristen Gonzalez were trained as American Heart Association Instructors. They held all the training and were able to train 39 staff members. They are looking forward to continuing to train in-house as all staff are required to be CPR/First Aid certified.

Commissioner Nelson noted some parents tried to visit the pool during the summer but were unable to due to Club Simonds. Program. Coordinator Lehman noted there used to be complaints from those who used the pool during Club Simonds noting there were too many people in the pool. In order to accommodate Club Simonds and deal with staffing issues, they did have to limit the hours.

Chairman's Report

None.

Subcommittee Report

None.

New Business

Reserved Fund Report & Requests

Director Egan noted the Revolving account as of June 30, 2022, has a balance of \$467,639.74 of which \$391,966.08 is reserved for programs, leaving \$31,682.17 unreserved.

Program Coordinator Lehman puts in a tremendous amount of time and effort for Celebrate Burlington. In the week leading up to the event, Program Coordinator Lehman spends her own money to stay in a hotel to stay local and accessible. Director Egan requests the Commission consider paying for Program Coordinator Lehman's hotel out of the Revolving Account for the five days she stayed in town working for Celebrate Burlington.

Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to transfer the sum of \$742.65 from unreserved funds in the Revolving Account to reimburse Program Coordinator Lehman for her accommodations during Celebrate Burlington. Commissioner Norden seconded the motion.

Commissioner Sullivan added Program Coordinator Lehman does live an hour away and the event would not happen without her efforts. He also noted this could potentially be added in the budget for next year. Director Egan agreed.

Commissioner Gaffney added Program Coordinator Lehman is a dedicated employee and extended a big thank you.

Vote 5-0-0

Commissioner Sullivan asked if the cricket mat was going to be purchased. Director Egan noted an updated invoice was provided and he is waiting on a check.

National Recreation Park Association National Conference

National Recreation Park Association National Conference is September 20-22nd in Phoenix. This conference includes key-note speakers, dynamic education sessions, a great networking session and more. Director Egan requested the Commission vote to approve \$6,000 from the Revolving Account to send up to two administrative staff to the 2022 conference.

Commissioner Sullivan motioned to transfer the sum of \$6,000 from the Revolving Account for Professional Development for Administrators. Commissioner Gaffney seconded the motion.

Commissioner Sullivan noted they have done this in the past and the staff members have presented at the conference which is an honor for Burlington.

Vote 5-0-0

Approval of Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation Job Description

Director Egan noted the position was approved in the FY23 budget and the Human Resource Director has approved the job description. This is similar the Director of Parks and Recreation job description. This person would be in charge in the absence of the Director and will take on the administrator responsibilities dealing with contracts with vendors, staff, ensuring staff certifications are up to date, setting up professional development opportunities for staff, helping with reports of meetings, working on capital projects and more. The job description has been approved by town administration

and human resources. The goal is to get the position posted and interview before Labor Day. If anyone is interested in sitting on the interview panel, they are welcome to join.

Commissioner Sullivan motioned to approve the job description for the Assistant Director of Parks and Recreation. Commissioner Norden seconded the motion.

Vote 5-0-0

Old Business

Simonds Park Tree House

The Treehouse Guys are targeting September 5th as a start date. Director Egan reached out to the Gillingham family as well as the Trustees of the Simonds Trust with the starting date. He will be working with staff to plan a groundbreaking event and to formally thank the Gillingham family.

Commissioner Nelson asked once complete, will the treehouse be open to the public. Director Egan noted it will be open to the public but will be closed when programming is scheduled.

Simonds Park Basketball Court renovation

An electrical engineer has finalized the electrical plans and the information will be included in the bid specs. The electrical engineer has identified room in an existing Musco Lighting panel, which will help save money. The specs are being finalized now and then will go out to bid with an estimated start of late September/early October. The lights and basketball support (baskets, backboards, etc.) have been ordered off state contracts.

Executive Session

Not Required.

Adjourn

VOTE: 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:44pm

Next meeting is September 14th

Respectfully submitted,
Emily O'Donoghue
Recording Clerk