

AUBURN RECREATION AND SPECIAL EVENTS ADVISORY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
MAY 14, 2014
6:30 P.M.

ATTENDEES: Dave Gonyea, Ravi Sharma, Sue Patneau, Tizz Crowley, Phil Savignano, Dana Staples, Dave Sterling.

ABSENT: Dan Poisson and Eric Audette

GUESTS: Leroy Walker, Sr. and Howard Crowell

The meeting opened at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes of the last meeting were reviewed. Tizz asked that the information about Ingersoll be moved to the top of the minutes. All in favor.

Senior Programs: Tizz reported that she and Sue Patneau have met with senior citizens groups. Tentative starting July 1, 2014. Sue Patneau has prepared a resolve that needs to be passed and a list of activities that are ready to go. Sue read the resolve.

Howard Crowell has researched recreation programs, i.e. Bucksport has a part-time seniors program person who plans trips and activities for seniors. The CDBG offers funding that could be used for the purpose of funding new or existing staff for seniors programs. He suggested not making the resolve so wordy and to pare it back. He suggested putting up a table at the voting sites and asking seniors what they would like to have for activities. There was a suggestion to redirect resources to others rather than hiring extra staff to reaffirm that the City of Auburn supports this program.

Ravi stated that he felt that the seniors programs, up until now, were quasi public programs. They received some support from the city and were also partially independent. The resolve would affirm that the program belongs to the city and is supported by the recreation department.

Dave Gonyea asked why the advisory group could not advise the direction that the program wants to go in without all the other details. Ravi should be the one to decide the finer details of what the department is going to provide for services.

The resolve was changed to read: Be it resolved that programming for senior citizens is a continuing, bonafide and supported program sponsored by the City of Auburn and offered through leisure and recreation services. Motion to accept by Phil Savignano. Second by ?. All in favor.

The budget will not be affected this year by the acceptance of the seniors as part of the recreation department. The operations manager will be responsible for scheduling staff and getting volunteers to help to operate the program. Ravi will sit down with Sue and Tizz to find out what their ideas are for the seniors and he will try to implement them in the best way possible. The seniors will vote on May 21st regarding bringing the group into compliance with city policies.

Dave Gonyea, Ravi and Dave Sterling visited several facilities to check out their flooring pros and cons. A report was presented. The first facility was an ice arena that was converted to an indoor recreation facility with a field turf surface. It is serviced twice per year at \$2,000.00 each. The facility is almost identical to Ingersoll. The rental fee is \$250.00 per hour and is rented from November to April for about 2 hours a day, or \$15,000.00 per month. No pets. No football. It is used for baseball, field hockey and lacrosse. The facility is pristine and very well maintained and is a private business. There is one employee. Netting from ceiling to floor (attached to turf surface.) Walls and ceiling were \$20,000.00 each. This facility has been in business since 2011. There are rubber pellets on the edge of the turf. This needs to be replaced occasionally. 20,000 lbs. of rubber pellets are in place and are used to hold the netting down. No food or water is allowed. The turf is on top of a concrete slab. Spectator area is on the end of the facility.

Three other facilities were visited and/or researched. All of them had turf. One of the facilities, which is privately owned, has two surfaces with drainage and is able to be cleaned regularly, up to 6 times per year, because they allow food and drinks on the surfaces. Heating costs for the entire two-surface facility is \$9,000.00 per year. Turf was installed for approximately \$3.00/sq. ft. Field can be lined for sport being played.

Some of the sports played include ultimate Frisbee, soccer, lacrosse, baseball, field hockey, etc.

One owner said that he prefers a sewn seam rather than a groove seam on the turf.

The Portland Sports Complex is rented by Maine Premier Soccer (Portland Phoenix), (15-20% of the facility's time) Frozen Ropes (10%) Indoor Football program rents 10% of the time, shows are about 10-15% of the time and the rest is miscellaneous rentals. Ceiling is much taller than what we have at Ingersoll. The turf is shorter than the turf at the Rack.

Dave Gonyea feels that the facility would be able to survive financially. Numbers are being put together for putting in a turf surface, with the first year being the toughest year. We would need to entice LAYSA or MPS to become an anchor tenant. There would be no competition in Auburn for this type of facility.

Dave asked the committee if they wanted to approve the facility with a turf surface. Discussion ensued.

Information needed:

Turf or rubber – Recommendation – Which surface is most likely to pay for itself?

Debt on Ingersoll - Specifically

Renovation Costs - Projected

Operation Costs - Projected

The Ingersoll building will be paid in full by 2017. Tizz asked if the money for the chillers has showed up in the Ingersoll accounts yet.

A comparison was made with the Norway Savings Bank Arena as far as the facility paying for itself. Have the organizations who committed to the arena, initially, followed through and is the facility paying for itself? According to the financial reports, it is paying for itself. Tizz brought up the fact that the arena did not have to pay taxes for the first year and the lease was not due the first year either.

It was determined that more research needs to be done as far as commitments from organizations.

Special events are coming up soon. Tizz suggested that a special events sub-committee be set up. Dempsey Challenge got 40% of the budget. The Balloon Festival got over 30% of the budget. The special events done by the recreation department include Santa's arrival, Spring Celebration and Fright Fest. These are all funded through donations from businesses. There is no budget.

The Mt. Apatite Committee reconvened and will be presenting a final study to the planning board and the council at the same time, on June 10th at 4:00 p.m. in the council chambers. It was noted that June 10th is Election Day. Three options as to what to do with Mt. Apatite relative to the National Guard, the Little League Fields and the land swap and how this fits into the long-term Recreation Comprehensive Plan. The National Guard changed command last August and there will be a shuffling of divisions. The facility will still be used for storage. Access to the gate will still be available at the present location. No price has been determined for the land exchange. The land swap was not considered legal in spite of the fact that it was signed by the Army Corps of Engineers. There is no longer a lease in place. There hasn't been a new lease since 1995.

Athletic Fields Needs Assessment Report

Phase one was a collection of information for all of the existing fields. Every facility that exists was included in the report, whether available to the public or not. The Phase I report cost \$17,000.00.

Proposed Phase II would make recommendations based on Phase I results.

Next step in this process: Review the issue after the June 10th meeting when it comes to the board. This will be discussed at the next advisory board meeting, as well as rubber or turf.

Adjournment

Respectfully submitted:

Jan Biron
Administrative Assistant