

**Auburn Recreation & Special Events Advisory Board**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**January 15, 2014**  
**6:30 P.M.**

**ATTENDEES:**        **Ravi Sharma, Dana Staples, Dave Sterling, Sue Patneaude, Dan Poisson, Dave Gonyea, Phil Savignano, Tizz Crowley, and Denis D'Auteuil. Gary Dow, Guest.**

**ABSENT:**            **Bob Seigny and Eric Audette**

Ravi Sharma opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Board members introduced themselves, giving a brief background and why they decided to become a member of the board.

**Responsibilities of the Advisory Board**

- Not part of the Charter, but outlines the duties and the purpose of the board
- Some of the wording in the Charter needs to be changed
- Sue Patneaude asked who represents the advisory board to the council. Denis stated that ultimately, Ravi Sharma, Operations Manager would be the board's representative and point of contact.
- Ravi will revise some of the Charter language and get changes back to the board when it is finalized.
- Tizz suggested looking at the Charter to make the same recommendations to the council. There are presently too many board members from one ward, according to the way the charter reads. That is one of the changes that needs to be made.

**Chairman Nominations**

- Ravi asked for nominations for a chairman for the board. The Chairman facilitates the meetings and will have an active role in getting items onto the agenda and moving them along the process.
- Tizz Crowley nominated Dave Gonyea, seconded by Phil Savignano.
- Ravi asked if everyone has been to the city clerk's office to be sworn in, before the vote was taken. Tizz Crowley had not been sworn in.
- Sue Patneaude added her comments to the nomination, stating that Dave's guidance would be valuable to the board, and she feels confident about his nomination.
- Dave responded that the board must be willing to operate under Robert's Rules of Order. He is very task oriented. The board must also be willing to look for the greater good of the community. Under those circumstances, he would be willing to become the chair.
- Vote: 4 Yes. Tizz Crowley abstained because of not having been sworn in.

## Open Session

- Gary Dow was present for the open session to ask the board to reinstate Adult Open Gym. He stated that he would volunteer to monitor the gym and the behavior of the open gym participants if the board would allow the program to be reinstituted.
- Tizz asked for more history from Mr. Dow before making a decision.
- There was a question of a second committee, identified by Denis as the initial meetings held about recreation opportunities and special events available in Auburn. This group organized itself to look at all programs offered in Auburn. Dave Gonyea remembered that there would be a corresponding group for special events. (Arts & Culture L-A.) Ravi will email the recreation spreadsheet to all members, which includes the program name, genders involved, demographic data, fees, etc., to get baseline background. Phil asked for an overview of what the recreation department is doing presently, for the next meeting, so that everyone will be able to be on the same page and go forward from there.
- Dave stated that part of the board's function was to be an advocate for recreation for the community. Everything should be brought forward, i.e. budgetary issues, etc. He asked each member to write down three goals/interest levels to pursue further.
- The council has received the report which was presented by Denis D'Auteuil. Feedback was positive from the council. The council then focused on appointments to the board and getting all of the positions filled. Two large projects face the board: Athletic Facilities Assessment, Phase I, a detailed inventory of **all of the area facilities** and what is going on there, what time, who is using them, fees, etc. Draft report will be generated and available in February. Phase II will assess the condition of those facilities. Focus is on outdoor fields, indoor & outdoor basketball courts, track & field facilities and tennis courts. The other major project is the repurposing of the Ingersoll Arena. A "Just Say It" survey has been put out asking the public what they would like to see done with the Ingersoll Arena. There have been between 20 and 25 suggestions that have come in so far. Costs need to be determined and what the best use is for the facility. A firm has been hired to create a report that will help to make a determination to be sent back to the council.
- Dave Gonyea stated that he would like to keep all meetings to one hour.
- Tizz stated that some things have been left hanging, i.e. a list of parks – which is not handled by this committee anymore. The establishment of a dog park is no longer handled by this board. Denis responded that there is a conservation commission which is where these types of things will be forwarded. He will look at some of the items that are still hanging and will get those issues to the board(s) that should be handling them.
- Tizz brought up Dinny Sullivan Day to be held on March 15<sup>th</sup>. She would like to know what the conduit is to get events like this schedule. Ravi stated that the spreadsheet

outlines the timeframe when events take place. Depending on the event, the city may take on a more significant role or a less significant role.

- Dan asked if a calendar could be put on the city website for all the city-wide events, regardless whether they are being hosted by the city or not. Tizz suggested that the film festival be advertized on the city website. This would encourage organizations to hold events in Auburn so that they will receive promotion on the city website and news releases.
- Dave feels that the Chamber could use the data on the recreation and special events spreadsheet. The document could be used for economic development and quality of life that are two of the goals in the comprehensive plan. The document can show how much quality of life is here on the recreation side of things. If it does go out to the public, it must be kept up-to-date and correct.
- Dana Staples wanted to know what the purpose of the board is, i.e. deciding whether or not open gym should be reinstated. Dave responded that boards should not get involved in daily department operations. The board is in existence to “advise” rather than make decisions for the department. The board’s job is to advise Ravi what they feel about a subject, and Ravi should make the final decision, taking the board’s recommendations into consideration. Dave stated that the board is made up of people with all different areas of expertise. Anyone who has expertise in any particular area should give his/her educated opinion. Boards should not become too close to the day to day workings of the department. The board needs to make sure, however, that a decision is made as part of its customer service.
- Tizz made the point that the council found that because there was no recommendation from the advisory board when they were making a decision on approving the new arena, that something was lacking. The board should have provided a recommendation.
- Denis stated that if the board is willing to work with Ravi, the department is going to do great things.
- Dave stressed that he would like to keep the meetings to one hour. The board responded that they would agree to that as long as open session doesn’t get only the last 5 minutes.
- Next meeting will be February 12, 2014 at 6:30 p.m. at the rec department. The board was asked to look at the recreation and special events spreadsheet so that amendments can be made at the next meeting. Because the repurposing of the Ingersoll Arena is the biggest project to address, the board was asked if they would like to tour the Ingersoll Arena to see what it looks like now.
- Adjournment

Respectfully submitted,

Jan Biron