



**PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
09/11/13
6:30 P.M.**

ATTENDEES: Ravi Sharma, Recreation Supervisor, Mell Hamlyn, Great Falls Balloon Festival, Dave Gonyea, A. D. at CMCC, Dan Deshaies, A.D. at ELHS, Bill Murray, New Auburn Little League, Dan Bilodeau, Auburn Planning Board, Bob Libby, Auburn Community Concert Band, Leroy Walker, Ward 5 City Councilor, Chris Hamel, Citizen, Jeff Benson, Auburn Suburban Little League, Dan Poisson, Public Services Board, Paul Douglass, Public Services Board, Denis Berube, Twin City Titans, Clint Deschene, City Manager, Howard Kroll, Assistant City Manager, Sue Patneaude, Public Services Board, Phil Savignano, Citizen, Tizz Crowley, Ward 1 City Councilor and Andie Hannon, Boys & Girls Club

- Clint Deschene gave background information regarding operational issues and cooperation between the parks and public works departments. He and Mayor LaBonté did research and found that public services offers more cooperation overall. The parks and recreation departments have not been split but are honing in the two divisions.
- The city has adopted the Public Services model organizational chart and flow of operations
- The mayor has given the board 90 days for the public services board to review facilities and programs and present its recommendations to the council.
- The Twin Cities Committee has 17 shared committees. More staff involvement is needed.
- The city has looked at the L-A Community Forest Board and the Auburn Parks & Recreation Advisory Board, finding that the existing Parks & Recreation Advisory Board is heavy on recreation services (athletics.)
- Looked at operations of lands
- The mayor and manager have been asked to come up with recommendations that evolve from the review processes.
 1. Get more people talking about recreation rather than just city services
 2. Model presented to the council would bring together stake holders and those involved in recreation services for a few meetings regarding city and community perspectives and how to set itself up to do/improve what is done now, and to determine what else the city needs to do.

- Clarification of the advisory board is needed. It is not just citizens involved, but others in various fields of recreation or leisure services who can contribute.
- It is vital that people who have the skills needed to assist the board get involved.
- Recommendations are due back to the council by the November 11th meeting, through Ravi Sharma.
- Focus needs to be primarily on programs, with some focus on facilities. What do we need to do? What assets do we have? What is needed?

Andie from the Boys & Girls Club asked if the evaluation that was conducted last spring was going to be used to make these determinations. Clint Deschene responded that the city has a contract, and that doing an evaluation of all the recreational athletic fields was the first phase, postponing the final report. The council recommended having a meeting with the consultants. Their study was focused on outdoor athletic fields, tennis courts, etc.

- Joint land use study is about the Garfield Road fields. The National Guard wants a new agreement as the old one has expired. A decision needs to be made as to whether or not we want to keep those fields. We need to find out what the National Guard wants. The manager has spoken with Susan Collins' and Angus King's offices to get the National Guard to move forward.

Regular Agenda

- I. Overview of Proposed New Committee Charge by City Council
 - Outline new direction
 - Recommended that the advisory board be more narrowly focused on recreation programs and special events.
 - Currently has jurisdiction over parks management, maintenance and recreation programs.
 - With the consolidation of parks & recreation and public services, overlapping staff support is reduced.
 - The amount of \$20,000.00 was allocated for special events in the FY 14 budget.
 - Review performance of existing recreation programs for revenue and participation to provide recommendations to the council for usage of existing assets.

Sue Patneau asked if there was a facilitator to walk the board through asset mapping services for recreation offerings, fields, etc. for people of all ages, today, as well as five years ago.

Andie Hannon asked if Lewiston would be included. Ravi responded that only Auburn assets were being reviewed and addressed. The Manager stated that Lewiston is planning to build an indoor recreation facility for their own use.

Tizz stressed that the new committee structure for recreation should include lifestyles, special events, leisure and cultural/arts, and that facilities is a small component. The purpose was to supply more services to the residents.

- II. Review of Existing Programs and Special Events – All part of current ordinance
- Recreation brochure was distributed.
 - Outlines all programs and special events offered by the department or the city on a seasonal basis
 - Missing events included:
 - Bike Rode
 - Half Marathon
 - Pink Ribbon – offered by other organizations
 - Film Festival
 - The manager stated that the city is not looking from a perspective of the amount of revenue that was brought in, but what it is missing.
 - Board was asked if they wanted the recreation department to be the repository for all city events.
 - Financial Reports for 2013 Period 13 and 2014 Period 13 were reviewed. It was reported that there was a \$30,000.00 net profit at year end 2013.
- III. Coordination with Volunteers and Charitable Organizations and Other Government Units That Provide Recreation Opportunities for the Community.
- Meet with other organizations to work together to offer programs to the community.
 - Suggestion to invite:
 - cross-country ski clubs
 - snowmobile clubs
 - Lake Auburn Community Center – Volleyball courts
 - Bike Rodeo
 - Central Maine Adaptive Sports (Lost Valley)
 - Kayaking After Hours
 - L-A Arts
 - Teen representatives from the high school – what do they expect from the city?
 - Ravi posed the question, “What are **WE** doing?” and stated that we should bring in other organizations to find out what they offer and determine where the gaps are.
 - Andie Hannon suggested that everyone break into groups to research each “subject” and bring information back to the board.
 - Bob Libby from the Auburn Community Concert Band stated that he doesn’t feel that the band is being supported by the city. A fee of \$15.00 is paid by each band member and at the end of the year, when it is time for the year-end banquet, the

band members have to bring their own food. In the past, the money was given to the recreation department and at the end of the year, there was a BBQ at Tot Lot with all the food being supplied and prepared by department staff. He also requested that the city promote the concerts better and that the band stop passing the hat. The concerts are supposed to be free and passing the hat is like charging people to attend.

- Tizz Crowley commented that finances as well as whether or not entities are part of the city should be investigated.

IV. Developing Recommendations for More Efficient Use of Facilities and Personnel

- Suggestion to do such things as getting lights at Tribou field
- Not limited to athletics, but could include movies, trips, etc.
- Use of volunteers – find ways to recruit, thank and recognize volunteers
- Dan Deshaies stated that there is a lack of fields in the city for sports like Lacrosse, which is the one sport that is very hard on the fields. The Little League fields are vital to ELHS sports programs. The Pettengill Baseball field used to be the best in the state but now is among the worst. Basketball courts are also lacking.
- Sub-committees should be established to find out what others are doing so we can plan what to do/what is lacking. The city can't afford to invest money into something that is already being done.
- By a show of hands, the majority was on board with having a handful of meetings to work on facilities/programs that exist to determine what is lacking.
- Phil Savignano reminded the group that there are many aspects to sports and leisure. There are sports and non-sports with conflicting needs, i.e. gardening.

V. Improving Communication Regarding Recreation Needs

- Assemble needs of the community and city at large
- What are the demands – more or less athletics

VI. Investigation For Financial Assistance and Development of Recommendations of Participation

- Framework
- Analysis
- Grants – new/existing programs
- Assets – fields, courts, etc.
- Progress is the #1 focus

Sue Patneau asked if there is an existing grant writer.

Clint Deschene responded that the staff does some of their own grants with help on occasion.

Leroy Walker interjected that the school department has several grant writers

Tizz Crowley suggested searching for a volunteer

Sue Patneau asked about volunteer liability

Clint Deschene stated that there are criteria for volunteers to meet who work for the city.

Traditionally, meetings of the board are held on the second Wednesday of each month. Discussion ensued relative to having more frequent meetings in order to meet the deadline for recommendations to the council. It was decided that another meeting would be held on September 25th at 6:30 at the Hasty Community Center, and a subsequent meeting was scheduled for October 9th at 6:30, with stake holders included. Ravi Sharma will send out a list to attendees once there is commitment from those who want to participate.

Clint Deschene suggested that a template be developed and distributed to the sub-committees to use to respond to needs.

Leroy Walker suggested that a questionnaire be put together to send out to the parents of all the students in the school system, requesting that parents fill them out and send them back with their input.

- The Parks Commission will be under the Community Forest Board, according to state statute, regarding public lands, fields, parks, forests, etc.
- Will work separately from recreation.
- Advisory Board is now Public Services Board

Adjournment