



City of Auburn

Recreation Department

Dawna LaBonte', Director

48 Pettengill Park Road | Auburn, Maine 04210

www.auburnmaine.gov | 207.333.6611

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

Wednesday January 10, 2024, at 4:30pm

Members Present: Jeremy Gatcomb, Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Dawna LaBonte, and Julia Bergeron-Smith

Guests Present: Sara Parker

Absent: Tim Cogle

Meeting Minutes: December's approved Julia/Haley; all in favor unanimous.

Department Update:

- **Budget** – Dawna explained to the group that the final budget has not been approved so at this time some items have been crossed out, they will be released later as they are public knowledge. She then reviewed the items that she was able to explain. Dawna did tell the group that the departments will not be presenting their own budgets to the council, they will be presenting a department overview. The budgets will be presented by finance. Misty asked if New Years Auburn or Winterfest came out of Recreation's budget. Dawna said that although we do not cover the entire cost of these events that there are times possibly for staffing etc. that Recreation's budget could be used.

New Business:

- **Winter Planning for Summer Tours** – Misty said it was tough to plan for the summer tours because some items are waiting on other items.

Work in Progress:

- **Tot Lot Update** – Misty said that she is still waiting to hear when she will be going to council with the presentation.
- **Lake Grove Park Update** – Jeremy said he spoke to Rita about setting up a meeting to discuss funding for this park. He will follow-up
- **Dog Park** – No update
- **Bonney Park** – Jeremy said that this park is not going in the CIP this year. He did say that he and Scott Holland are working with Jill Eastman on some of the money that is left over but that some of the money needs to stay for the new PAL center. Misty said that it needed something it doesn't even have swings at this point. Hayley asked if maybe there could be a rendering of what the park would look like IF there were funds allocated. Misty also said that she would love to see a splash pad. Jeremy showed the group something that Mark Gallagher drew up last year and the group has ideas. This will be the first park that is looked at next summer.

Other Business:

- Jeremy notified the group that Jenn Boenig has an app that can track participation and there were approximately 5,300 people at Festival Plaza for New Year's celebration (this does not count the outer areas or people that do not have cell phones). He also told the group that next year they are discussing possibly having a dessert truck. Misty said that she also heard that there were not a lot of options for people that chose not to drink alcohol. Maybe next year having more of an option would be better.
- PAL (the new center) went to the planning board on 1/9/24. There was some backlash, people were concerned about other programs that were done so that committee wanted to be sure that they were doing what needed to be done. The design has not changed much but there is a concern from the community about closing the street. Dawna told the group that after the building is completed

"Auburn Recreation promotes a healthy lifestyle through various recreational activities focused on enhancing the well-being of all Auburn citizens."

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there will be more staff added. There is hope that there will either be a guidance counselor or social worker. Someone to run the food program (cooking for the kids and delivering the food). They also want to keep the mentorship program in some capacity. Dawna talked about inviting Kayla (PAL mentorship program coordinator). To a meeting to discuss the program so the committee has a better idea of what the program does.

- Sara discussed Walton School with the group and how Brian Wood said that she should still plan to have summer camp there. Dawna said that she will work on getting a priority list of what needs to be repaired there. The thought is that it could be potentially used for ALL youth sports (summer camp, vacation camps etc.) as well as rental space. Misty said that they could maybe use the next advisory board meeting and could tour Walton and they could help come up with a plan as well.

Meeting was adjourned, Haley/Julia; all in favor unanimous.

Next meeting will be held Wednesday February 14, 2024 – 4:30pm at the Senior Center