



City of Auburn, Maine

Recreation Department

Jeremy Gatcomb Interim Director

48 Pettengill Park Road | Auburn, Maine 04210

www.auburnmaine.gov | 207.333.6601

Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 12th at 6:30pm Zoom Meeting

Members Present: Scott Holland, Rick Martel, Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Suzanne Roy, Timothy Cogle, Paula Curtis Everett, Jeremy Gatcomb, Liz Allen

Meeting Minutes: November – Misty mentioned her name was spelled wrong. Scott will correct. Rick made a motion and Haley seconded; all were in favor.

Department Update –

- a) **Recap of New Year's:** Jeremy said New Year's went well and it was huge success. Mayor figured there was 4000 people, and we estimate 2500 to 3000. Misty thinks we should have the kids have a contest on what we are going to drop next year. Jeremy will pass this off to Jennifer Boenig the New Events Coordinator.
- b) **Winter Festival:** Jeremy said it is in the planning stages. It will be very similar to last year. We will not be running specific events this year. Liz has created a story map where everything will be listed. Community partners will be able to list their stuff there that has to do with all things Winterfest. It's the Friday the 28th through Sunday the 30th. There is some stuff already posted. Misty asked Jeremy if he thought it would stay this way for the future. Jeremy said things like the ice bar probably won't happen again. If the weather cooperates there would be ice skating rinks and possibly a snow playground. Scott mentioned that his crew started the ice rink at the Futsal Court, and they were asked to do one at Anniversary Park. With the cold weather coming this weekend we should be able to make good progress on the ice.
- c) **Spring:** Hopefully looking at a normal spring. 95% of our programs are outside. We saw a little decline on indoor programs this year. We will have Lacrosse from Kindergarten through 6th grade. We plan on having adult softball. It will be a very busy summer with travel and adult softball.

New Business/Open Session for Public- No public attended. Misty asked if we should have anything else under this section.

Work in Progress:



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- **Tot Lot workgroup** – Haley said it’s been quiet on this group. There are two different subgroups working. One group is working on the cost of establishing the trail system and the cost to put in the parking lot. The other group is working on stuff specifically for the food forest. Paula had sent Haley an email asking what the cost would be to do a soil sample to see what would grow there. Haley said she knows nothing about planting, but she has been doing some research on landscaping firms who do that kind of work. Paula said to get ahold of Cooperative Extension as they are the experts on that stuff, and it doesn’t cost that much. Haley said she is looking to schedule the next zoom meeting in early February. Haley asked who she would go through to get that set up. Liz Allen the Communications Director for the city will be the person to reach out to. Jeremy gave a heads up that the Engineer from the City got ahold of him to say that there will be a culvert replacement happening this summer on the road to the Tot Lot. It will take a week to replace, and you will not be able to get in. Jeremy will send out the date once it is finalized. Haley said her goal is to have an update by the end of March to take to the City Manager and the City Council. Misty said she has been in touch with Francis from Bates College who has been teaching the ecology class. Unfortunately, he’s not teaching it but has put her in touch with the woman who is. They have already picked the project for the class, but they still might be able help like they did for the Outdoor education part. If they can, its free and a good way for us to get a good portion of the work/soil sampling done. Misty also said that USM got back to her. She said they have a food forest at one of their locations and would love to work with us. Rick asked what location because he works in Gorham which is close to one of the locations.
- **Lake Grove Park workgroup** – Suzanne: Misty said she had sent an email to the Asst City Manager but hasn’t heard anything back. Suzanne said their group hasn’t met because there hasn’t been anything to meet for. The only Information she had is what Scott said at the last meeting about the money being approved. Misty hopes to hear back from the City Managers office to see what was approved. Suzanne said with only 5 months before swimming weather hopefully everything that needs to happen will be set up and ready to go.
- **Festival Plaza workgroup** – Tim mentioned there hasn’t been any meetings or updates on this at this point.
- **Mt. Apatite** – Rick said not a lot happening here where its wintertime. The park is always busy with people. The snowshoe hike for winter fest has been set up and the

information has been sent for the story map. Misty asked about the spring clean-up and wondered how the word got out on that. Rick said Will and Josh get it out to people they know, and the Androscoggin Land Trust passes it along. Rick says the schools also help. Jeremy mentioned this might be a good way for the juniors and seniors to get their community service hours before graduation. Tim said it would be worth reaching out to St. Dom's as they have similar criteria before graduation. Misty said it's too bad we can set-up some of these seniors to help seniors shovel their driveways etc.

- **LWCF-** Scott said he and Jeremy had a meeting with John Blais from Planning and Permitting. He said that we are in the good graces with all the work we have been doing and are eligible for Land and Conservation funds and we are able to put in for grants. The list is still a work in progress. The boundary lines for the Gully were finished everything else is still being worked on. Jeremy spoke up and said most of the issues are boundary lines it seems. Scott and Jeremy are going to set up a meeting with Doug Beck who is the State person we are working with on the list. Misty asked if there were other grants that we are not eligible for. Jeremy said he was not aware of any. Misty asked about the tennis courts behind the East Auburn School and, is this one we still must work on? This is still on the list and would make a great pickle ball court. Jeremy said we would have to work with the school department where it's their land.
- **PAL** –Jeremy said they made it through the holiday season. Shawn had sent him a break down of volunteers and donations. He will send it out to everyone. He helped lots of people at Christmas time whether it was the grab and go program or helping people in need. Shawn, Kayla, and Jim had everything wrapped and done by Christmas Eve. It looked like Sanat's workshop for sure. Paula mentioned that the Staton Bird Club goes there once a month to teach kids nature programs. Next month it will be snow shoeing. Jeremy said Shawn is getting back into the swing of things with other programs although covid is making it tough. Jeremy said that Shawn has not had any college volunteers for a long time and is hoping that will change soon. We only had to shut down for 1 week but without the volunteers it's been hard to run programs.
- **Playground Projects** – Scott had reached out to Dan Goyette who is the Director of Capital Infrastructure, he has been the person in contact with New England Recreation Group. He sent me the plans to make sure it's the ones the group decided on and to make sure nothing is missing. Liz shared the screen and showed the 3D version of the playgrounds. All the ADA things mentioned from the last meeting are included. Jeremy asked Scott if he knew exactly where it was going at Lake Grove Park. Scott assumes it's in the area of the old Playground that is there now. Misty asked about the spinney thing that is there and do we have to get rid of it. Suzanne also asked about the swings being saved. Scott will question that when it comes time. Scott mentioned that there is a



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tentative date of February 22nd for an update to council on the playgrounds. Rick asked how high the border was around the playground. It looked high to him. Scott will find out as it doesn't seem to be marked on the plans. Suzanne asked about the safety of the way the components are built such as fences with the spacing on the uprights where a child could get their heads stuck. Misty spoke up and said where we have used playground professionals design it, it should be done considering all those factors. Scott will ask to be sure. Misty is hoping we can re-purpose some of the old equipment for Lake Street. Scott mentioned that we would have to have a professional look at all the old stuff and see if it can be used. Once something has been incased in concrete and then trying to put it back in the ground could be a liability and it would need to be vetted before that could happen. Everyone thought the plans look like what was decided on.

- **Subdivision Projects-** Scott has not had a chance to look into this. Will have more information next meeting. Suzanne asked if there was somebody in City Hall who can work on green spaces with these subdivision projects going on. Scott said he believes John Blais will be that person. Jeremy said that John use to work with Doug Beck when he worked for the state, and we are lucky to have him here for the City. He is well versed in stuff like this. Suzanne asked Scott if he found out who owned the land on the corner of Hampshire and Union. He has not heard and will ask again.
- **Conservation Commission** – Misty explained she thought that Paula was on the conservation commission when in fact, she is not. Misty has a meeting with Sam this Friday and will have an update next meeting.
- **On the Horizon- Dog Park** Its still on the agenda but it's the middle of Winter. The ball fields still need to be moved and we are not ready for that yet. Hopefully soon. Misty asked about Ingersol being part of the LWCF list and when it became the turf facility. Knowing we have to find something else and maybe the Dog park can be it. Scott brought up the map that Misty wanted and had Liz share it. He wasn't sure it was going to work plus it needed to be updated. Misty asked if they had access to that then maybe we wouldn't have to have it printed. Scott will check on it. Jeremy mentioned the feasibility study on the Sports complex. Its still early in the stages but it is being tossed around.

Meeting was adjourned 7:28pm Rick made the motion, Haley Seconded, all were in favor

Next meeting will be held Wednesday February 9th at 6:30pm at Senior Center