

# City of Auburn, Maine

## Recreation Department

Sabrina Best, Director

48 Pettengill Park Road | Auburn, Maine 04210

[www.auburnmaine.gov](http://www.auburnmaine.gov) | 207.333.6601

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### **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, November 13, 2019 at 6:30pm

Rec Room, Hasty Community Center

**Members Present:** Sabrina Best, Dana Staples, Belinda Gerry, Tim Cogle, Rick Martel, Misty Edgecomb, Mike Thurston, Tim Cogle Paula-Curtis Everett, and Suzanne Roy

**Public Present:** Jan Biron, Leroy Walker, Megan Norwood, Jimmy Corbin, Tizz Crowley, Joe Gray

1. Approval of October Minutes: **Motion to accept Rick Martel/Mike Thurston, Unanimous.**

### **2. Work Completed since last meeting**

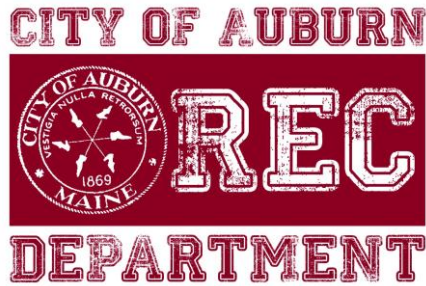
- a) Parks and Recreation Ordinance: **Sabrina Best will send out the final version** which has been passed along to City Administration.

### **3. New Business**

- a) *Proposed North River Road Boat Launch & Trail:* Megan, City of Auburn's City Planner, did a quick recap of the ordinance on developing when it comes to open spaces and recreation. The proposed 36 unit falls under this umbrella and are proposing 1.5 acres of green space, possibly a trail along the river (extend the already existing trail), and a public boat launch to satisfy the ordinance requirements. There will be 3 buildings, each holding 12 units with 53 parking spots. The existing boat launch at North River road is in need of repair and is in close proximity to the damn. If the boat launch was approved it would move, exact location is not determined at this point. Jimmy felt it would be hard to add a trail but would be discussing with the developer this idea. Tim mentioned that the goal would be to have these 'items' be available for recreational use and maintain access to the waterfront. Megan mentioned going from here, the planning board needs a recommendation from this board. The planning board will be meeting in December and January and will need a recommendation from the board by the final January meeting. There were some questions of who would maintain the trail, liability, etc. ALT or LA Trails were both mentioned as potential caretakers. **Add to Agenda at December meeting.**

### **4. Work in Progress Item C. First Auburn Letter was moved to the top of the list**

- a) *First Auburn Seniors Letter on Resident vs. Non-Resident fees:* Sabrina provided a recap on the letter sent by the group about non-resident fees. Jan Biron reported on behalf of the First Auburn Seniors that the group is not looking to negatively affect the budget. Rather they feel since they pay dues to the City and are under the Recreation umbrella, as long as the program would be self-sufficient everyone pay the same amount. So if that meant the price of the class needed to be increased a \$1 or \$2 to cover everything, then Residents and Non-Residents



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would pay the same price. Jan did point out that most seniors are living on fixed income. Leroy, President of First Auburn Seniors and Age Friendly Committee Chair, mentioned that some of these members have lived in Auburn for years and just recently moved out of town but still are a part of the group. They are upset at being treated different now because they are no longer residents. It was clarified that the First Auburn Senior group pays a \$5 membership fee to the City of Auburn (Recreation Dept). It was clarified that the board is the 'advising' body that guides these fees the recreation department charges. Tizz Crowley, concerned resident, talked about the Auburn Senior Community Center being available to Seniors just as much as the Community. Tizz recalled a time when City administration attempted to have the Recreation dept raise all the funds to cover all the fees including overhead and staff, this was turned down by council at the time. Tizz feels that all residents should not be charged the same amount as non-residents because they are the tax payers which are the 'supplementing' funding that covers staff, facilities, overhead etc. Tizz felt that all programs should be treated the same across the board, from youth sports, adult leagues, to seniors. Tizz strongly disagrees with eliminating non-resident fees for seniors. She would also like to see open session placed on the agendas in the future. Tim recapped last meetings discussion on possibly creating a 'Senior Center membership fee' that covers a list of benefits and there could be a resident and non-resident price for this membership. Sabrina clarified that the First Auburn Seniors has its own special revenue account under the recreation department, as does all the different programs under the recreation dept. The membership fees are deposited into this account and expenses directly related to the program are coded to this account (part time staff specific to the program, coffee, creamer, other food items). Items such as full-time staff hours, facility overhead costs, insurance etc. are covered by the City's Budget. Belinda talked about the center being created as a space for anyone to come and get warm, socialization, bite to eat. Tizz did agree that anyone should be allowed to stop by and get warm in the center for free as an open drop in time. However, if there are program costs and a fee associated with the program, there should be a non-resident fee. Suzanne mentioned exploring grants to help offset the costs of programs and to offer them for free without taking a hit on the department's budget. Joe Gray, concerned citizen, asked if there has been any Council guidance on a current discussion at council level of making 'Bills and Costs' equal between Auburn and Lewiston i.e. water bill. At this moment staff has not received any guidance in reference to what Joe referenced.

**MOTION: to table this item until next meeting Paula/Suzanne; all in favor.**

- b) Mount Apatite: Rick reported the focus for this winter will be signage template, location, and naming of the trails. Marc will attend the next meeting to bring up corporate partnerships and how they can fit into the picture. Paula asked how the board can support development of trails at Mt. Apatite or even Sherwood Heights. Bates College was scheduled to put on a Geology class, and it was cancelled due to weather. The FOMA group will take over the snowshoe event during Winterfest will be transitioned over from ALT.

There were some questions as to why Parks is not under Recreation and why Public Works doesn't have a representative at these meeting since they cover Parks. It was mentioned the Advisory Board Ordinance charge is under Recreation and the Recreation Director.

- c) 2019-2020 Projects: Paula asked where in the CIP does Parks fall under and if there are recommendations from this board on park related projects where should they go. There is a need in general for a list of projects and priority for the Development Ordinance so having this board develop a list is an appropriate task. There is a parks subcommittee under the Conservation Commission and that might be a good place to start.
- **HOMEWORK**: Sabrina will send out the Parks List of updates needed, and the board can prioritize for the next meeting.
  - **HOMEWORK**: CIP List, come with questions for next meeting, and Sabrina will send out 5-year plan with items already funded in FY20.
  - **There was a request to reach out to Conservation Commission to see if someone will join our next meeting to discuss parks and park improvements. Possibly invite Councilors to these meetings when there are items within their ward are being discussed.**
- d) National Fitness Court Campaign: This item was tabled for next meeting and **will be first on the agenda.**

## 5. Department Update – Tabled

## 6. Next Meeting

- a) December 11, 2019 6:30 pm at City Hall Room 204
- b) Items for next meeting
  - a. Sabrina will send out the Parks List of updates needed, and the board can prioritize for the next meeting.
  - b. CIP List, come with questions for next meeting, and Sabrina will send out 5-year plan with items already funded in FY20.

## 7. Adjourn

**\*\*Motion: to Adjourn by Rick Martel/Suzanne Roy, unanimous**