



City of Auburn
Recreation Department
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Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

Wednesday April 9, 2025, at 4:30pm (Senior Center)

Members Present: Misty Edgecomb, Dawna Labonte, Jeremy Gatcomb, Philip Savignano, Elisabeth Collier, Sara Parker and Tim Cogle

Guest Present: Jenna Payne – Age Friendly Recreation Specialist

Absent: Haley Warden, Julia Bergeron-Smith, and Corey Kinnan

Excuse absences Misty/Tim; all in favor unanimous

Meeting Minutes: March minutes approved Elizabeth/Tim all in favor unanimous

Department Update:

- Winter cheering finished this past weekend, they finished out the season with a 3rd place finish and a Spirit award! Little Eddies Volleyball is still going on and that will continue until mid-May. Lacrosse has just started, and numbers are amazing. We have 5 teams of both girls, boys and coed 3rd-8th grade. April Vacation camp will be April 22nd-25th and we are still accepting sign ups
- Summer Camp is full in 3rd & 4th grade and 7th & 8th grade- 5th & 6th grade is almost full and Pre-K & K and 1st & 2nd have availability.
- Adult Draft League teams are full, and Adult league teams are picked for all divisions
- The following programs are open for registrations for this summer: Track & Field, Summer cheer camp, Tumbling (advanced and beginner), and Fishing Derby (May).
- You can find all Senior programs on the City Website- we upload a monthly calendar
- PAL will officially be moving out August 1st- however programming will not start until August 25th. We are hoping we will be able to slowly start moving stuff over in July.
- We have decided that we will not be renting out Joseph Walker or Tricia Asselin Fields out to the public this year. Since we did not get any CIP funding to improve the fields for FY26.
- The Main office will be closed for Patriots Day, Monday April 21st, 2025th

BUDGET UPDATES

- City Council has suggested that we include our Special Revenue accounts into our budget- we have, and it showed a net 0, we have also been told to prepare to make several cuts to help lower the tax levy. Please tune in to the CC workshops to stay updated on ARD budget.
 - o Phil wants to remind the public and council the mission of Parks and Recreation is not for profit, the department has a kid customer base.
 - o Dawna clarified that the City Manager's goal for the department is to break even- Misty commented that that communities are not businesses.
 - o Phil asked if adult programs pay for programs such as summer camp- Sara said yes most adult programming can offset the cost of our youth activities.

New Business/Open Session for Public:

- **Age Friendly**
 - Dawna introduced Jenna Payne, the new Recreation Specialist and welcome the board to ask her any questions about the new programming she plans on running both with the Age Friendly City Committee and within our department.
 - Jenna provided her work background in health and human services and expressed her eagerness to start being more involved in the community. She mentioned she met with the Age Friendly Committee the night before and came up with a plan to host more time friendly activities for a variety of speakers to come to the center- typically the Lunch and Learn program is held between 11-1PM and that limits our choices of options of speakers and participants if that time doesnt work for them. Jenna is also coming up with a plan to help spend down their budget with more Age Friendly activities that engage the Seniors within the Community.
 - Phil asked what "Age Friendly" was- Jenna told him that it was a set of pillars to help reengage the senior citizens back into the current community. Teach them how to live in the "now" and that change is okay.
 - Tim asked if this was same as the groups that play BINGO in the Center. Dawna explained that there were 3 rental groups that use the center and have MOUs with the department. They pay an annual rental fee that allows them all the groups the same services. Jenna added the 3 groups are separate from Age Friendly- all are welcome to Age Friendly programs. Sara added you do not need to be apart of a senior group to participate in our programs or trips.
- **Swin Team Loss**
 - Misty brought up that the YMCA swim team that hosts Lewiston, Auburn, Turner, and Poland kids was cancelled end of last season due to cost related issues. Misty brought up the closest pools were Waterville and Westbrook and that there needs to be an option for our youth swimmers in the Androscoggin area. Dawna mentioned that the organization did ask the council for money in they upcoming budget but with current tax concerns it probably wont pass.
 - Phil asked if the High School was still safe- Sara confirmed that this is just a youth issue, Dawna mentioned it is a feeder program for the high schools so may be an issue in the long run.
 - The end result of the conversation is that the YWCA and Bates are charging too much, and the boards suggestions is that the swim team adjusts how many practices they have to allow for less pool time versus ending the program completely. Sara mentioned there is a new Pool director at the YWCA and the calendar is filling up fast.
- **Summer Parks Tour:**
 - Cleveland (Drive By)
 - Lake Auburn Community Center (May)
 - River Walk and West Pitch (June)
 - Mt Apatite ~ Small Road (July) Rain Location PAL Center
 - East Auburn School ~ Pickleball Courts (August) Rain Location PAL Center
 - Lake View (September) The committee will come up with a plan for a dog park as well

Work in Progress:

- **Food Forest Planning Work Group:**
 - Misty asked Dawna if she had confirmed with Phil about Food Forest location,

Dawna mentioned that she hadn't due to the Budget.

- **Walton Update and Planning:**

- At Monday nights council meeting (4/7/25) Dawna heard from Scott Annear, Assistant Superintendent, that the Facilities Committee is hoping to move 6th grade to the Middle School by Fall 2027. With this move they would also be closing an elementary school. They did not say for certain which one however since this group started due to the concerns of Walton's building issues- it is assumed that Walton students would be moving to Sherwood Heights Fall 2027.
- Misty posed the question- does the Rec board advocate for the City to have Walton? Tim mentioned that it would most likely be taken over by Auburn Housing and City could hopefully still have access to gym and fields. Dawna mentioned that during the Workshop on 4/7 it was said that the school can only be left vacant for only a certain amount of time before the school will need to turn it over to the City. Tim confirmed that he believes the City would own the land once the build was left vacant.

Other Business:

After this discussion, the group took a tour of Pettengill Park 5:15- 5:47PM

Meeting was adjourned, Phil/Misty all in favor unanimous.

Next meeting will be held Wednesday May 14th, 2025 – 4:30 pm – Lake Auburn Community Center (Senior Center Rain Location)