



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

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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



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Wednesday February 14, 2024, at 4:30pm

**Members Present:** Jeremy Gatcomb, Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Sara Parker, and Julia Bergeron-Smith

**Absent:** Tim Cogle and Dawna LaBonte

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

**Department Update:**

- **Walton School future potential** – The group talked about potential opportunities if Walton were to become a community center one day.
  - could be used for all child care
  - Could be used for offices
  - Could be used for rental space
  - Could run Grab N' Go program out of the kitchen
  - Gym stage area could be ideal for b-day parties
  - Could be office rental space
  - Could have a dance studio
  - Is there a potential that there could be a pool at that location

**New Business:**

- **Tour of Walton School** – Sara took the committee on a tour of the school, she explained that parents did not have to get out of their vehicles while dropping off their children off, which made it a much easier process. She showed them where each grade was located during the summer day camp program as well as where they ate and the playground etc. The staff and kids were able to use all the lockers in the hallway. There was summer school at Walton as well, but they did not need a lot of space, so it was able to work well. The group talked about the need for more space during the summer and Misty encouraged Sara to ask for more this upcoming season.
  - Kindergarten, 1<sup>st</sup> · 2<sup>nd</sup> graders downstairs ~ didn't work
- **PAL Fundraiser** – Sara reminded the group that it is being held Thursday February 15<sup>th</sup> at Burnt Ends in Auburn
- Sara told the switching up the brochure combining spring and summer. The senior center and PAL will have separate calendars (people will be directed to a link)

**Work in Progress:**

- **Brainstorming session** –

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday March 13, 2024 – 4:30pm at the Senior Center



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

Wednesday March 13, 2024, at 4:30pm

**Members Present:** Jeremy Gatcomb, Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Sara Parker, Dawna LaBonte, Tim Cogle, and Julia Bergeron-Smith

### **Absent:**

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

### **Department Update:**

- **Department Update** – Dawna went through what she presented to the council on Monday March 11<sup>th</sup>. Dawna told the committee that PAL was moving to Hasty April 1<sup>st</sup> while the new building is being built (she will also need to build the staff when the new building is up). Grab N' Go will be running out of the pond building at Pettengill Park (we currently serve over 400 people). The other large ticket item was that the recreation department will take on ALL the porta potty expenses. Dawna also informed the committee that we have hired a new Recreation Specialist that will start Monday March 16<sup>th</sup>. She said that there has been an increase from 896 to 925 youth sport participants and the need for this position is necessary. We are in the process of hiring Park Rangers (these positions are ARPA funded).
  - **Adult Sports** -. There are over 4,000 that participate in adult sports (currently trying to get kick ball tournaments set up), 1,400 pickle ball participants.
  - **Seniors** – Currently there are 29 senior programs with over 2,400 participants.
- **Summer Camp** - Meeting w/Wayne Door (principal of Walton) to go over the space that is needed for summer camp. Custodians will work 5:30-7:30 (after camp leaves) to clean. Registration has been open for 2 weeks and we are already ½ full for all camps. Approx. 20 families have obtained scholarships.

### **New Business:**

- **Park Tours** –
  - **Pettengill Park and Pond Building** – Tour in April
  - **Raymond Street and Anniversary Park (and the bench)** - Can be done in the same meeting since they are so close to each other – Tour in May
  - **Lake Grove Park** – Tour in June
    - Misty also wants to see the bathrooms (keys will be needed) Tennis/pickle ball courts behind East Auburn School will be added to the park tours.
  - **Tot Lot** – Tour in July
  - **Dog Park** – Tour in August
  - **Lake Auburn** – Tour in September
  - **PAL** – Tour in October
- **CIP Projects** - Dawna told the committee that the only CIP projects that were left under Recreation is the portable restroom (mobile restroom). All other CIPS have been moved to other departments.

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The wall padding for Pettengill Park ballfield was moved to Public Works. Rebuild the back garage at Hasty (there are no walls) and add an equipment check out area was moved to Facilities.

- **Mentorship Program** – Misty said that sending a staff member to the BNI meeting to possibly get more mentors or funds donated.
- The committee decided that they would take the month of December off from holding meetings.
  - **Haley/Julia; all in favor unanimous**

### Work in Progress:

- **Tot Lot** - Misty received a letter of support from the Ag Committee. She will reach out to Sam at the Conservation committee.
- **Lake Grove** – CIP for repairs to basketball courts, parking lot and adding a new parking lot. There will be something posted about the times the park is open. There will also be a concrete cornhole, people will have to bring their own toss bags (unless the rangers are there)
- **Dog Park** – Looks like Gracelawn is the leading place for the dog park. The group also said that Moulton would be a good place for a second location. Julia did ask about parking at Moulton, she said there needed to be a place for people to park that were not walking there.
- **Bonney Park**– No splash pads this year.
- **PAL Center**– The fund raiser was held on February 15<sup>th</sup> , unknown amount raised
- **Walton School** – Misty asked since the school is not closing and staying open for another year if there should still be a plan in place should they decide to close it for the City to obtain that location.

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday April 10, 2024 – 4:30pm at the Senior Center or first park depending on the weather.



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

Wednesday April 10, 2024, at 4:30pm

**Members Present:** Jeremy Gatcomb, Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Sara Parker, Dawna LaBonte, Tim Cogle, Julia Bergeron-Smith, and Philip Savignano

**Absent:**

**Meeting Minutes:** March's approved Haley/Tim; all in favor unanimous.

### **Department Update:**

- Dawna informed the group that PAL has started at Rec (April 1<sup>st</sup>) there is an average of about 32 kids every day (more than anticipated). Anita's closet and Grab N' Go have been put on hold for about 2 weeks while they get settled into the Hasty building. The budget for Grab N' Go has been cut by the City Manager, but this has not been solidified by the council. Dawna also said that if there are people in need of food they are still receiving. Sara also said that although the Grab N Go has been put on hold and or may end that the PAL kids are still being fed and will continue to be fed.
- The new Recreation Specialist has started (Zachary Boyd) he is a youth sports specialist also an Auburn native.
- We currently have 4 Park Rangers (they will start at the beginning of June), there is still a need for 1 or 2 more.

### **Summer Camp:**

- Sara and Dawna are meeting with the new principal at Walton the week of the 26<sup>th</sup> to discuss spaces and the needs of summer camp.
- There is a need for 6 more staff members, Sara is in the process of interviewing. The

### **New Business:**

- Misty introduced Philip Savignano as the newest member of the committee.
  - Phil worked for Auburn Recreation Department as a Recreation Coordinator in the 70's, he also served on the Advisory Committee in the past.

### **Pettengill Park Building Tours:**

- **Senior Center:**
  - Dawna took the committee through the senior center, she said that yes there are committees that use the building there have also been several rentals for

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all different types of events (wedding reception, baby showers, bridal showers, meetings, birthday parties).

- **Hasty**
  - Dawna took the committee through the Hasty building the offices, the gym, Auburn Adventures, and the PAL location (the purpose of that room was originally supposed to be used for a fitness room).

### Work in Progress:

- **Dog Park & Walton School** – Julia thought it may be a good idea to have a list of questions (the same for each park) then everything would be consistent for all parks. She also asked if it was ok to store documents in Google docs. Misty said that is typically where they are stored.
- **Tot Lot**– Misty said the committee was supposed to be put on the council agenda with a plan to use the \$50,000.00 to refurbish Tot Lot (the ball had been dropped a bit on this). The group discussed the best plan is to wait until budget season is over and go back to council to have the money reapproved. Misty told Phil that the committee is partnering with the water district (they will be building trails, and the committee will be the trail heads).
- **PAL Center**– Work started Monday April 8<sup>th</sup> but needed to be stopped due to abatement once the abatement is completed then work on can continue and the building can be demoed.

### Other Business:

- Misty said that her largest goal is to get the restrooms at Lake Grove Park up and running.
- Misty also raised the question on how to get the committee more involved to hear information about properties or land that can be acquired by the city for green space or parks.
- Misty also asked if there is a potential for someone that oversees Festival Plaza to attend a meeting and present the plans for it (what it will look like when it is redone).

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday May 8, 2024 – 4:30pm at the Senior Center or first park depending on the weather (Raymond Street and Anniversary Park and the bench).



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

Wednesday May 08, 2024, at 4:30pm (public works)

**Members Present:** Jeremy Gatcomb, Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Sara Parker, Tim Cogle, Julia Bergeron-Smith, Philip Savignano, Elisabeth Collier, and Corey Kinnan

**Absent:** Dawna LaBonte

**Meeting Minutes:** April's approved Haley/Phil; all in favor unanimous.

### **Department Update:**

#### **Summer Programming Update:**

- Sara told the group that the fall brochure will come out in September.
  - Football registration is posted.
  - Lacrosse is currently running.
  - Recreation staff is trying to get a girl's flag football team going (3<sup>rd</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> grade).
  - A fishing derby is scheduled for Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup> of May. The fish will be stocked on Thursday the 16<sup>th</sup>.

### **Summer Camp:**

- Planning is in full swing, the Recreation staff met with Wayne Dorr, the new principal from the school department to review the spaces that will be used.
- Not all the rooms that were given originally are available now so there was a need for some shuffling of classrooms.
- There is more space than last year so Sara remains hopeful that it will all work out ok.

### **New Business:**

- **New Member Introductions:**
  - Misty introduced Elisabeth and Corey as the newest members of the committee.
    - Elisabeth Collier
      - 2-year Auburn resident
      - Relocated to Maine from Orlando Florida
      - Works at CMMC
    - Corey Kinnan
      - 9-month Auburn resident
      - Relocated to Maine from Nebraska
      - Rebuilding home that was built in 1904



- Volunteering as a youth coach
- **SWOT Analysis Sheets:**
  - Julia said this will help facilitate a process that will help move the needle on items that need to be taken care of.
  - Sara said that there may need to be a Council vote when it came to fees etc.
- **Google Drive:**
  - Julia has invited everyone on the committee to the Google drive.
- **Park Tour - Lake View Park:**
  - Tabled until another meeting.

#### **Work in Progress:**

- **Dog Park & Walton School** – No update
- **Mt. Apatite** – Misty asked Phil since he was on the Friends of Mt. Apatite community group if he would be the liaison with the committee.
- **PAL Center** – Jeremy told the committee that demolition of the building has been moved from May to late June.
- **Tot Lot** – Misty asked Corey if he would be the liaison with the committee.
- **Lake Auburn Community Center** – Misty asked Tim if he would be the liaison with the committee.
  - Tim did say that they have been doing some excavation work up there. Jeremy said that they were taking out the foundation of the building that was on site there.

#### **Other Business:**

- Jeremy gave the committee a rendering of the field renaming at Pettengill Park in honor of two of the victims from the October 2023 shooting.
  - Lower Field ~ Tricia Asselin
  - Upper Field (closer to building) ~ Joseph Walker
- Jeremy told the committee there are 118 high school kids (Freshman-Juniors) participating in community service day Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> of May. They must have a certain number of volunteer hours, and this will go towards that.
- The locations will be:
  - River Walk
  - Evergreen Cemetery
  - Pettengill Park
  - Anniversary Park
  - Mt. Apatite

- PAL, Gully, Chestnut St. area

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday June 12, 2024 – 4:30pm at the Senior Center or first park depending on the weather (Raymond Street and Anniversary Park and the bench).



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

Wednesday June 12, 2024, at 4:30pm (Anniversary Park)

**Members Present:** Jeremy Gatcomb, Misty Edgecomb, Dawna LaBonte, Sara Parker, Tim Cogle, Julia Bergeron-Smith, Philip Savignano, and Corey Kinnan

**Absent:** Haley Warden and Elisabeth Collier

**Meeting Minutes:** May's minutes approved Phil/Julia; all in favor unanimous.

### **Department Update:**

- Dawna reminded the group that July is Parks & Rec month
  - The theme is for this year's Parks & Rec Month is "Where you Belong"
  - She gave the committee a schedule of what would be happening to review
  - She handed out the "meet the team" brochure. This is a review of the staff at Auburn Recreation and their roles and explains a bit more about their positions.

### **New Business:**

- **SWOT Analysis Sheets:**
  - Julia reviewed the sheets w/the group. This committee will complete these sheets (based on their observations) as they conduct park tours/discuss park use. They will be collected and then they will be added to a Google drive where the information will be easy to access.

### **Work in Progress:**

- **PAL Center –**
  - Jeremy told the committee that demolition of the building was on Monday June 17<sup>th</sup>. The pieces of things will come put slowly. Construction of the new building will begin July 12<sup>th</sup>. Dawna said that she did a walkability tour with Landry and French (Construction Company). They will be sure that they leave a 4 ft space for the PAL kids to walk through so that they can walk to Pettengill Park.
- **Walton –**
  - Julia reached out to Sue Dorris; she will be the Superintendent (currently the Assistant Superintendent) who connected her to the Ad-hoc School Committee. The Ad-hoc Committee wants to meet with the Advisory Board, a date, time, and agenda will be decided.

- Dawna said that there is a push with the new council to host large events at Festival Plaza
- There are currently almost 30,000 people in Auburn so there definitely will be a need for more event space and fields etc.
- Dawna told the group that the Grab N' Go program is currently for sale. She also said that it could potentially fall back on Rec.

#### **Parks Tours Notes:**

- **Anniversary Park –**
  - Auburn's newest park that's still a work-in-progress
  - This was used as a community space after Lewiston shooting
  - Summer shed use - vendor rentals, art and book night, maybe food trucks someday.
    - Rentals happen through downtown coordinator
  - People go fishing here
  - Lots of public art
  - We anticipate increased use if the area is redeveloped/built up with shops and housing
  - Issues:
    - There is a potential for future flooding
      - December flooding caused kayak rental locker to float away
      - Stairs were ripped out
    - Christmas tree is not very large and there was not enough space for the holiday event
    - Drivers try to use the parking area/road as a throughway
- **Sullivan Square –**
  - Green space is good but it doesn't appear to be used regularly
  - Foot bridge is in the master plan
  - It appears to have drainage issues and noisy traffic
  - Ideas to promote use:
    - Plum tree, apple trees, blueberry bushes, herb garden/raised beds
    - Partner with seed companies or gammon nursery or cooperative extension to do learning session
    - Consult the neighbors about how they would like to utilize the park.
    - They might become users/stewards of the space
    - Find out who uses this park by taking random head counts
- **The Bench Park –**
  - Tiny but pretty cobblestone space – more of a sitting station
  - Doesn't necessarily need anything more than some sprucing up and an additional access point. Other ideas include:

- Clean out brush and make herbs or a pollinator garden
- High bush blueberries
- Again, engage the people across the street to find out what they want to use the space for
- Make it easier to access - no entry point from the back of it
- More bushes on the street to block some of the traffic
- **Raymond Park –**
  - This is the last park out this direction of Auburn
    - It's near Walton School, so if Walton became something else it may benefit from increased traffic
  - Slated to get renovated and there is a public works plan in place - playground equipment will be replaced
    - If approved, it will go through a bidding process (RFP)
  - Lots of green space - great trees and shade
  - Not fenced in - lots of traffic but this has not seemed to be a problem (no police reports about traffic accidents)
  - Ideas for improvements:
    - Talk to the neighbors about their ideas
    - Ask about leveling area for picnic tables
    - Basketball hoop and flat space
    - Charcoal grills
- **Strategies for assessing Parks –**
  - Develop a playbook for how to engage the public to gather data and ideas about the park spaces (concerns, needs, ideas, hopes)
  - Most parks would benefit from bathrooms, free wifi, and water bottle filling stations

#### **Other Business:**

- Corey asked about brown tail moths. He thought it would be a good idea to send something out to the community about how bad they are, and their presence in Auburn. He moved from out of state and was unaware of how bad they were.
- Corey also mentioned the importance of there being and AEDs in each facility, more specifically the room/location where the sport is being played and being sure that they are easily accessible and not hard to locate.
- Corey brought up issues with a private youth organization (DEI concerns/issues). Dawna recommended reaching out to the Recreation Department for a copy of their policies and procedures.

**Meeting was adjourned, Julia / Phil all in favor unanimous.**

Next meeting will be held Wednesday July 10, 2024 – 4:30pm (Park Tour Continues)



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

Wednesday July 10, 2024, at 4:30pm (Tot Lot)

**Members Present:** Jeremy Gatcomb, Misty Edgecomb, Corey Kinnan, and Elisabeth Collier

**Absent:** Dawna Labonte, Haley Warden, Sara Parker, Tim Cogle, Julia Bergeron-Smith, and Philip Savignano

**Meeting Minutes:** June's minutes approved Elisabeth /Corey; all in favor unanimous.

### **Department Update:**

- Sara said that the staff has been great, and that summer camp is going well. She said that the gym is the only area that does not have any form of an AC. Per the school the AC is broken.
- Sara reminded the committee that July is Parks and Rec month. There is a flyer with a list of activities, concerts, hikes & programs happening in Auburn on Facebook (this flyer is also posted at the Hasty Community Building).
- Road Trip Roundup has started you can n pick them at Auburn Public Library or the Rec
- Movies in the park will start this Friday July 12<sup>th</sup> will be held at the Joe Walker Memorial Field

### **New Business:**

- **New Park Potential:**
  - **Crescent Beach –**
    - Misty explained to the committee that Crescent Beach is owned and was run by an elderly couple. The husband recently passed and the wife although she wants it to remain a public beach, she does not want to run it alone. The city would like to take that over. Jeremy will reach out to someone at city hall about contacting her.
- **Neighborhood Associations**
  - Misty said the committee should investigate this further

### **Work in Progress:**

- **Walton –**
  - Julia and Haley did have a meeting with the superintendent, and they will report back next month as both are absent this month.

**Parks Tours Notes:**

- **Tot Lot –**
  - Jeremy told the committee that there were a few weddings that had been held at Tot Lot
  - The committee discussed road repairs due to the flooding (there have been groups that had difficulties getting into Tot Lot for their events). The committee agreed that there was a need for repairs and rebuilding, maybe creating a new road entrance with better drainage.
  - Tot Lot also abuts 150 acres of water shed property that is protected by the Androscoggin Land Trust. They have already started to build trails on that land. Misty said that Tot Lot could possibly be a trail head for one of those trails.
  - Misty pointed out a space that may work for a fountain. She also said that she remembered all the same playground equipment from when she was a child.
  - Misty told the committee that there is a company in Gray that designs community food forests. She thought that keeping it local would be a good idea

**Meeting was adjourned, Corey/Misty; all in favor unanimous.**

Next meeting will be held Wednesday August 14, 2024 – 4:30pm (Park Tour Continues)





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

Wednesday August 14, 2024, at 4:30pm (Mother's Park, Bonney Park, and Moulton Park)

**Members Present:** Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Corey Kinnan, Elisabeth Collier, Tim Cogle, Julia Bergeron-Smith, Jeremy Gatcomb, and Philip Savignano

**Absent:** Dawna Labonte and Sara Parker

**Meeting Minutes:** July's meeting minutes were not approved and will be in September.

### **Department Update:**

- None – Dawna and Sarah were on a work trip and unable to attend the meeting.
- Dawna aimed to send updates to the committee via email at a later date.

### **New Business:**

- No new business items were discussed.

### **Work in Progress:**

- No work in progress items were discussed.

### **Parks Tours Notes:**

- **Mother's Park –**
  - The committee discussed the various strengths of the park like the new benches, table, trashcans, and how this "pocket park" is a safe play space on a quiet street used by the surrounding neighborhood. It is likely especially useful for folks in apartments that lack their own greenspace. Some additional improvements to the park could include adding a structure for shade, a bike rack, foursquares, additional greenery like bushes or blueberries, and partnering with a corporate sponsor to help pay for these additional amenities. One additional idea generated during this discussion was about potentially having a fundraiser selling pavers where residents could place their mothers' names on them and uses these to replace existing walkway that needs repair.
  - Misty informed the group about the recent renaming of the park to Mother's Park for \$5,000. This generated more questions than answers for the committee, specifically, what are the parameters for renaming any Auburn

park (for example, determine naming rights, purchase cost, frequency of park renaming, the purchasing group's responsibility to the park once renamed), and how to get this committee involved in establishing or at least weighing in on these boundaries going forward.

- **Bonney Park –**

- Misty and Jeremy reminded the committee about the current plans to bring new play structures and a splash pad to this park next year. Haley noted the library's story boards starting at this park, and Tim pointed out the access bridge to Lewiston.
- The committee then went on to discuss the space's acute issue of turning into a homelessness encampment, rather than a play space for the city's youth. Tim explained that while patrol cars drive through and police engage in community policing with these residents, the space is not currently being used as its intended capacity and this likely relates to the rise of people experiencing homelessness and the fair weather. Corey added that the natural formation of the park (i.e., being set lower than the street level and surrounded by trees and bushes) is not an ideal design for creating a safe space.
- The committee discussed the potential of having a reopening of the park once the new play equipment is installed and having things like food trucks to generate foot traffic and an event that will inspire continued use in the way that the space is intended.

- **Moulton Park –**

- Misty opened up the discussion explaining how Rails to Trails will be extended past Moulton Park in the near future and how this will likely bring increased exposure to and use of the park. Julia reminded the group that this park has been previously identified as a dog park option given its natural design and walkability for area residents. The park's lack of parking makes it harder to access. Phil noted that there used to be a staircase from the CLT to the park and Jeremy noted that the hill, but the CLT parking lot is used by the city to dump snow and how the snow does gather in that side of the park.
- The group thought the skate park portion of the park could be converted to a parking lot. Jeremy noted that the paved park from Moulton to Bonney was recently paved and that the additional lighting was also added. The group agreed that parking is one of the bigger challenges of the space.
- The size of the park, its plethora of shade, and its enclosed space makes it suitable for dogs. Adding fencing and a water faucet would be ideal. This placement of a dog park may make it more accessible to residents with small dogs/dogs in an apartment while larger dogs or dogs that do not need a fence could go to Lakeview Park or Mount Apatite. Julia noted that a bulletin board could be added to the park that communicates to users when it is going to get mowed or cleaned by the city. This could also be a spot for dog trainers to post their information or could be used to tell residents about upcoming events in Moulton or other parks.

**Meeting was adjourned, Tim/Misty; all in favor unanimous.**

Next meeting will be held Wednesday September 11, 2024 – 4:30pm (Park Tour Continues)



City of Auburn  
Recreation Department  
Dawna LaBonte', Director  
48 Pettengill Park Road | Auburn, Maine 04210  
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### **Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday September 11, 2024, at 4:30pm (Lake Grove)

**Members Present:** Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Corey Kinnan, Julia Bergeron-Smith, Jeremy Gatcomb, and Sara Parker

**Absent:** Dawna Labonte, Elisabeth Collier, and Philip Savignano  
Misty/Haley; all in favor unanimous. Approved Tim Cogle's absence

**Meeting Minutes:** July's minutes approved Haley/Julia; all in favor unanimous.

August minute approval was tabled to approve until next month (October's meeting)  
Haley/Misty; all in favor unanimous

### **Department Update:**

- Sara reported that the gym floors have been refinished again due to the wax peeling.
- Misty asked how Walton school went this summer opposed to last summer. Sara said it was like night and day, MUCH better this year.
- Zach has football running right now, there is also 3<sup>rd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> grade cheering running as well
- Little Eddies soccer has been running
- Unified soccer started Sunday the 15<sup>th</sup>
- Volleyball may become a program in the fall (partnering with the High School)

### **Work in Progress:**

#### **Walton School:**

- Julia and Haley had a meeting at Walton and reported to the committee that if Walton were to close as a school there would be an assessment done to see what could/would be held there. The timeline is aimed for this decision is to be this November. Corey asked who was deciding if Walton would close as a school. There is an ad hoc committee, people could get more info or provide feedback if they go to a school committee meeting or reach out to your school committee ward representative.

**Food Forest:**

- Misty e-mailed the City Manager and he told her to reach out to Jane from the Conservation. They went for coffee and there are for sure other people interested in the food forest. Jane asked why the committee was looking at Tot Lot specifically Misty clarified that the committee was charged with updating Tot Lot. Misty also asked the City Manager if another RFP would need to be written (a response was not received).

**Parks Tours Notes:**

- **Lake Grove –**
  - The committee toured Lake Grove Park. Jeremy informed the committee that there are still plans to have an additional 12 parking spaces, but that is was cut from this FY's budget. There will also be repairs to the parking lot.
  - Misty confirmed again that she wanted a splash pad at Bonney Park
  - Corey asked if there were partnerships with the local high schools trade programs for having students build restrooms and do other upgrades as well. Misty said that there are trade programs at the Community College and that they could do building electrical etc.
  - Jeremy will be submitting repairs and improvements to the basketball court in the next FY's CIP process. The hoops, backboards and rims have already been purchases but will not be installed until the court surface is replaced.

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday October 9th, 2024– 4:30 pm – Lake View Park



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

Wednesday October 09, 2024, at 4:30pm (Lake View Park)

**Members Present:** Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Julia Bergeron-Smith, Jeremy Gatcomb, Sara Parker, and Philip Savignano

**Absent:** Dawna Labonte, Elisabeth Collier

Misty/Haley; all in favor unanimous. Approved Tim Cogle and Corey Kinnan absence

**Meeting Minutes:** August minutes approved Haley/Julia; all in favor unanimous

September minute approved Haley/Julia; all in favor unanimous

### **Department Update:**

- Fall programs are all in full swing! Our Fall/Winter Brochure is out and available on our website. The (2) season format seems to work well so we are trying it again for this brochure. Check out the brochure to see what we are offering! I have attached it to this email.
- Recreation is hoping to bring back the Winter Competition Cheering after our break last season. Offering 4<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade teams. If the committee knows of any athletes looking for an affordable option to try out cheerleading send them our way! The football program is back to post COVID numbers, and our teams are doing amazing. Fall Adult sports are underway- including soccer, basketball and softball- and we are at capacity for both numbers and space. Senior trips will be slowing down come winter, so we are hoping to increase our in-house programming to make up for less excursions.
- The committee should consider looking at current Park Ordinances and discuss updates that need to be made so Dawna can start the process of reviewing them with the City Manager. That way come spring they are approved by Council and can be enforced.
- Dawna had a conference call with NRPA (National Recreation and Parks Association) about a possible site visit to Auburn in December. They will be in Maine, specifically in the Portland area, to review Maine's park-based recycling or start a case study if nothing has been established. Dawna spoke about how currently we are doing basic trash/bottle recycling- they mentioned that they would love to attend a City Council meeting if recycling was an agenda item. She will check, however maybe the committee can host them at the December meeting and we can make it a topic of discussion.
- Sara said that pizza and pj's will be held again this year, but they are looking to do something a bit different because some people that register for the free program do not show up.
- Vacation camps are open for registration

### **Work in Progress:**

**Playground at the old Lake Street School:**

- Misty asked if the playground that is being constructed there has been inspected as someone from the community donated it. Jeremy said that he will investigate this and report back next year. Jeremy did inform the committee that this property was not owned by the city.

**Halloween table for trick or treating event plan:**

- Sara said that recreation is the process of planning the annual Fright Festival- this year we will be joining forces with the Communications Department to host the event Downtown Auburn. This will be a Trunk or Treat type of event that will include several departments within the city along with business that are on the Main strip.
- The committee will have a table this year, glow sticks and candy will be given out.
- The road (Main Street) will close at 3:30 and the event is from 5:00-7:30. Ok to park in the parking garage.
- There will be several departments from the city that will have vehicles or tables so the hope is that Main Street will be full.

**Parks Tours Notes:****Lake View Park:**

- Misty reminded the committee that in the past the park was a land fill. She said because there is so much space there could be a few different things in this location.
- Jeremy pointed out that a large sum of money was put into a field to repair it at one point in time and the following year the land fill had shifted so the field was a mess.
- Misty mentioned that there should be a dog park at this location. Since it is so close to the pet store, there could be walking trails that you could put in to get there. She also said because you cannot plant trees there etc. there will be a need for some sort of shade.
- She said that she was hoping that a smaller workgroup could be formed (out of some of the committee members).
  - There was a motion to make a work group for the dog park Haley/Philip; all in favor unanimous
- The committee discussed that this would also be a good location for a pump park.
- Philip also pointed out that this location would be a good space to hold outside festivals

**Other Business:**

- **Ad hoc bonafide committee:**
  - The mayor is putting together a committee to help determine and define the parameters for bonafide agricultural recreational and natural resource land use.
  - One representative from the committee will be asked to attend
  - Philip said that he will attend (the meeting was held 10/09/24 at 6:00PM in the community room at city hall)

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday November 13th, 2024– 4:30 pm – Pettengill Park



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

Wednesday November 13, 2024, at 4:30pm (Senior Center)

**Members Present:** Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Julia Bergeron-Smith, Jeremy Gatcomb, Sara Parker, Corey Kinnan and Elisabeth Collier

**Absent:** Dawna Labonte,  
Corey/Haley; all in favor unanimous. Approved Tim Cogle and Philip Savignano absence

**Meeting Minutes:** October minutes approved Misty/Julia; all in favor unanimous

### **Department Update:**

- **Fright Fest:** This event was a huge success! The city welcomed over 500 attendees and enjoyed the creative displays of around 20 decorated vehicles. Thank you again to the committee for your participation in hosting the recreation minibus.
- **Holiday Celebration:** A new addition to this year's Holiday Celebration will be a community parade, in addition to the traditional tree lighting and photos with Santa. This parade was previously held jointly with Lewiston, but the tradition was paused in 2019. Jeremy said that there is still a need for more participants (floats) and if they do not get more then it will just be city vehicles escorting Santa.
- **Winter Programs:** Winter sports are right around the corner! Please encourage sign-ups for youth basketball (evaluations were held the week of November 11<sup>th</sup>, indoor clinics, and winter cheerleading. The adult basketball league has started and is full! Recreation staff are also seeking additional registrations for the December vacation camp, which has been split into Christmas and New Year's sessions. As the weather gets cold, AAC and PAL programs have moved inside the building. This will be the first winter utilizing the space for both groups, and hopefully this will be a smooth transition. Sara informed the committee that pizza and OPJ's will be open for registration November 20<sup>th</sup>. Misty said that the middle school 8<sup>th</sup> grade had 50 children show up for basketball but only 10 will get a spot on the team. Sara said that we have been sending kids to Lewiston as they have a program there. Halloween Bowl for football (tournament) was held at Pettengill Park and it was great success.
- **PAL Building Update:** The construction of the new PAL building is progressing rapidly (they seem to be two weeks ahead), and we recently attended the installation of the final beam. The project is currently two weeks ahead of schedule, thanks to favorable weather conditions.
- **Field Maintenance:** Due to the recent drought, the softball fields will require significant attention this spring. Recreation staff are hopeful that they will receive CIP funding in FY26 to improve the appearance and safety of these fields. Staff have already initiated discussions with Public Works regarding the improvements.
- **Holiday Closure:** Please note that the department will be closed on Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday.

### **New Business/Open Session for Public:**

- **Winter work begins:**



- **Review of SWOT analysis for parks:**
  - **Raymond Street Park:**
    - Strengths: Green space, large trees. Misty asked if they could ask that the trees not be cut down.
    - Weaknesses: not fenced in, no wi-fi
    - Opportunities: possibly add a basketball hoop, new equipment picnic tables etc. Outside grills, lack of lighting, plaque with information about Raymond (who the park is named after).
    - Threats: Non identified
  - **Sullivan Park: (will be done at the next meeting)**
  - **Anniversary Parks:**
    - Strengths:
    - Weaknesses: One way in one way out, there needs to be more shaded areas, no restrooms, no kayak slip next to the stairs to the river, no wi-fi
    - Opportunities: At the very least you need to have porta potties, a need to have a water-filling location (for drinking). Need wi-Fi
    - Threats: Near the river and has the potential to flood
- **Opportunity for playground grant:**
  - Misty read a letter from Darcy who works at Park Avenue about a grant for outdoor fitness equipment. Jeremy said it is more of a jungle gym than actual workout equipment. The committee will connect Darcy with Rita who is the Grant Manager for the City.
- **Unhoused in the Parks:**
  - Corey has a growing concern that the unhoused have overtaken the parks. He has spoken to several people, and he feels that there is a need to form a coalition. Jeremy said that there is an old marketing building on Mill Street that is being renovated to have services for the homeless (more of a resource center for the unhoused). He also said that there is a homeless shelter in Lewiston on Sabbattus Street. Corey said he heard that other cities were purchasing bus tickets to send the unhoused to other cities. He feels that this should be investigated (he feels that the unhoused are just being shuffled around). Corey will reach out to Glen Holmes from CDBG or Jenn Edwards from General Assistance.

#### Other Business:

- Julia asked if there should be a councilor at the meetings. Misty will check with Emily
- Misty is also going to ask Emily if the committee can have a Google Drive. Would it be possible for IT to create a folder for the documents. Misty will also ask about transcribing instead of recording the meeting. Jeremy asked about the terms (they are listed on the City's website as

Name	Term Expiration
Tim Cougle	10/1/2025
Misty Edgecomb	10/1/2026
Julia Bergeron-Smith	10/1/2025
Haley Warden	10/1/2026
Philip Savignano	10/1/2025
Corey Kinnan	10/1/2026
Elisabeth Collier	10/1/2026

**Work in Progress:**

- **Ad Hoc Committee:**

- Phil sent an update on what was discussed at the meetings and will give a live update at the December meeting.

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday December 11, 2024– 4:30 pm – Senior Center