



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

Wednesday April 8, at 4:30pm (Senior Center)

Members Present: Julia Bergeron-Smith, Phil Savignano, Misty Edgecomb, Clare Murray, Jeremy Gatcomb, Merissa Beaulieu

Absent: Dawna LaBonte (not needed to be excused), and Ryan Walker

Excuse Absences: approved Clare /Phil; all in favor unanimous

Meeting Minutes: March minutes approved Phil/Misty; all in favor unanimous

Department Update:

Program Launch & Seasonal Staffing

- **Summer Brochure:** The Summer 2026 brochure has been officially released. Programs commencing on or before April 1st are scheduled to run through June 30th.
- **Park Maintenance:** Hiring Park Aide positions are complete. Staff will begin onsite operations at Lake Grove starting **June 1st**.
 - **Lake Grove Beach Hours:** To better align with community needs, hours have been adjusted to: **Mon–Fri:** 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, **Sat:** 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. The opening date currently is set for May 22, 2026

Special Events:

- **Movies in the Park:** We are moving forward with a "Throwback Thursday" theme this year. Screenings will take place every other Thursday throughout July and August.

Budget & CIP Status:

- **Capital Improvement (CIP):** Current requests are focused primarily on essential building repairs and infrastructure maintenance.
- **Municipal Budget:** On March 30th, a budget was presented, suggesting a **7.5% decrease** in municipal spending.
- **Council Feedback:** The City Council has signaled that they do not support this level of reduction. While some minor adjustments may still occur, there is a strong consensus to protect Recreation funding from further cuts, following the significant reductions made last year.

Summer Camp 2026 Progress: Enrollment & Logistics:

- **Registration:** Enrollment is strong with **217 campers** currently registered. Total capacity is projected between 230 and 275, contingent upon available space at Auburn Middle School (AMS). All 20 scholarships have been awarded.

- **Waitlist Management:** The Middle School cohort currently has a waitlist of 5 campers. We are evaluating the feasibility of adding an additional staff member to accommodate these campers.
- **Hiring:** Recruitment is progressing well; we are looking to fill the final **5–6 counselor** positions.
- To ensure high-quality programming without requiring constant direct senior supervision, we are implementing a new tiered leadership model:
- **Program Leaders:** Specialized leads for pre-K–4th, 5th–8th, Gym/Excursions, and STEM/Art.
- **Direct Oversight:** Group Leaders assigned to specific cohorts (two leaders for grades 1–6; one leader each for Pre-K/K and 7th/8th).

Administrative Notes:

- **April Vacation Camp:** Due to low enrollment and staffing constraints, this program has been **cancelled**. This decision was made early to ensure parents had sufficient time to arrange alternative childcare.

New Business/Open Session for Public:

Park Tour Schedule for April-September:

- Julia thought that maybe there should be a schedule for every other meeting
- April ~ Hasty, Pettengill Park
- May ~ Regular meeting
- June ~ Moulton Park, Bonney Park, Edward Little Park (skate park)
- July & August ~ Remain flexible because Raymond Park is possibly getting new playground equipment (committee would select playground colors). Jeremy said it would be mid-May when the council reviews the budget and CIP.
- September ~ Lake View Field. Phil thought maybe the second ½ of the field could be used for public gardens.

Vacancies/Resignations:

- Julia said that there was nothing to report

Items related to previous action items:

- **Open-Space Danville Corner Road – Review #3**
 - They needed an updated recommendation because the planning board directed them to remove the storm drainage area from the open space calculation. This meant less open space and but more money towards the in-lieu fee.
 - Phil said that Phil (City Manager) said there should not be any more discussions about open space just having an in-lieu fee.
 - Clare and Moe did bring up points that until ordinance changes the committee did need to develop their “playbook of questions” that need to be asked.
 - Clare started a Google doc with some initial parameters: the size of the open space, usability, is it ADA mobility, contiguous, open to non-residents, are there parking spaces etc.
- **Auburn Comprehensive Plan Goals & Actions:**
 - They are doing community workshops (community feedback events in April) that is why this is tabled until May.
 - Julia said there were only about 8 attendees at the first workshop while she was there for the first hour.
 - **FUTURE MEETINGS:**

- Location: Auburn PAL Center, 24 Chestnut Drive Time: 5:30 p.m - 7:30 p.m
- Location: Edward Little High School, 77 Harris Street Time: 10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Work in Progress:

- **Skate Park (Clare, Ryan, Eric Santos, Chris Hogan, and Tony Lyden):**
 - Eric Cousens has not emailed Clare back yet regarding a meeting. There has been a slight pause while she waits. Misty suggested a follow-up e-mail to Eric.
 - Not sure of the authorized representative of Parks and Recreation. Is there a permitting process that needs to occur.
- **User Survey (Julia, Misty, & Clare):**
 - Julia said that she would chat with Dawna about using Civic Rec as a platform for sending these surveys out to participants but also wanted to be sure that they are not duplicating efforts. The subcommittee will schedule a meeting with Dawna soon to go over the draft survey.
- **Resource Assessment (Phil, Misty, Moe):**
 - Phil has been reviewing municipal budgets to review expenditures. He said that some communities have recreation under community service. He said it has been a bit of a challenge to get through all of it. (he has reviewed South Portland, Scarborough, Gorham, among others).
 - Moe asked if we were sitting on an “inventory” of parks and recreation items (equipment and facilities that need repairs).

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

Next meeting will be held Wednesday May 13, 2026 – 4:30 pm – Senior Center