

LACONIA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, September 20, 2021
Laconia Community Center Gym
6:00 P.M.

CALL TO ORDER: Commissioner Mitch Hamel called the meeting to order at the above date and time.

RECORDING SECRETARY: Secretary Liza Kelleher recorded this meeting.

ROLL CALL: Commissioner Chair Hamel called the roll with the following Commissioners in attendance: Rodney Roy, Laura Ringer, Arthur Kirk and Deanna Guyer.

PARKS AND RECREATION STAFF PRESENT: Director of Recreation and Facilities Amy Lovisek, Asst. Director and Facilities Matthew Mansur and Secretary Liza Kelleher.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

1. Regular meeting minutes of August 19, 2021
Commissioner Rodney Roy moved to adopt the minutes from August 19, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Arthur Kirk. All were in favor.

I. FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM:

- A. Winnepesaukee Muskrats- Robbie Mills and Memorial Field- Saturday and Sunday, October 16 and 17, 2021 from 8:00am to 8:00pm for the 2021 Winnepesaukee Muskrats Fall Baseball Classic Tournament. Commissioner Roy motioned to accept the request pending upon the submission of certificate of insurance, tournament fee and light fee for Winnepesaukee Muskrats Fall Baseball Classic Tournament. Seconded by Commissioner Kirk. All were in favor.
- B. Weirs Action Committee- Endicott Rock Park parking lot- June 11, 2022, to June 19, 2022 from 8:00am to 8:00pm for Laconia Motorcycle week event. Commissioner Roy motioned to table the request due to no representation. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- C. Laconia Kiwanis- Rotary Park Gazebo- Tuesday, September 21, 2021 from 5:30pm to 8:00pm for Kiwanis Club meeting. Commissioner Roy motioned to accept the request for Kiwanis Club meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.

II. OLD BUSINESS:

- A. Commissioners' assignment to Park houses- Commissioners Rod Roy and Laura Ringer are assigned to attend the Leavitt Park meeting held every 2nd Wednesday of the month. Commissioners Arthur Kirk and Deanna Guyer are assigned to attend the Weirs Community

Park meeting held on the 2nd Monday of the month. Commissioner Mitch Hamel will be the floater between 2 park houses.

III. **ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVALS-ROTARY PARK, BEACHES, WEIRS AMPHITHEATER & PAVILION**

1. Laconia Boy Scout Troop B&G- Weirs Beach Amphitheater- Tuesday, September 28, 2021, for the Court of Honor event.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A new Veterans Memorial monument is being planned at Veterans Square in Laconia. Director Lovisek presented the design for the new granite monument that will be built at Veterans Square. This will represent the lists of the Veterans from this area who have served our nation on foreign soil from the end of Vietnam war to present, living or deceased. Commissioners suggested that monument should be for Laconia residents only same as the previous monument.

V. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

VI. **NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS & ELECTIONS:**

VII. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

VIII. **COMMUNICATIONS:**

IX. **OTHER REQUESTS REQUIRING COMMISSION ACTION:**

X. **PARK ASSOCIATION REPORTS:**

- A. Leavitt Park Association- No report
- B. Weirs Community Park Association- No report
- C. Tardif Park Association- No report

XI. **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

- A. Director's Report submitted by Amy Lovisek

This month has brought with it the end of summer officially! Our beaches are all closed for the season, and everything ended well. The summer programs have ended as well. Fall can never come quick enough for this department!

We had a tough time filling positions to keep the beaches open through Labor Day, but we made it with the help of Matt Mansur who stepped up and took a few shifts himself, so thank you Matt.

The beach season was a success in my opinion. The crowds were there all throughout the season (when the sun was out). We saw a lot of families enjoying the beaches. The weekends are expected to be busy, and they were, but we saw a lot more visitors during the work week this year. We had a couple of

people give the staff a hard time about the no cooking rule, but for the most part everyone seemed happy with the rule and made it a point to mention that to the staff as well. They especially liked the no tolerance policy we enacted. This cut back significantly on the alcohol at the beaches. This, in turn, cut back on the bad behavior we have seen in the past. Overall, the beach season was great.

The maintenance crew have been hard at work all summer and will continue that trend throughout the fall. We hired a new employee who started on September 13 and then gave his notice on September 14th. He was not able to do this job! This position is not easy and not unskilled in the least. On that score, I am working on boosting our staff up a couple of grades in the pay scale. It is hard to find someone who can do what we ask for only \$16.75 to start.

The Timberman went well for both the city and the Ironman organization. Our department didn't have any extra expenses for the event, but we put a lot of work into the park to make it look it's best. It looks like they will be coming back next year, and the push is to have them here after the Labor Day weekend. The reason the city is pushing for this is because we already have visitors here in August, but we would like more in the community after the holiday. This will affect soccer, but it would affect them either way.

The CIP report has been submitted and will hopefully be received favorably. Our presentation will take place on October 14th at 6:30pm at City Hall if anyone would like to attend.

I have attended a couple of meetings at the Belknap Mill recently. One of which was for the new Powerhouse Patio that was approved to move forward. The other meetings have been with Eversource to clean up the area in front of the Mill that they destroyed 2 years earlier. We have come up with a landscape design for the area and Eversource will be paying for and doing the work. This will be a perennial garden and they have given the Mill permission to paint the large electrical box in the middle to make it look less institutional.

B. Assistant Director's Report submitted by Matt Mansur

Summer Wrap-Up

This has been the most smooth summer that I have been apart of in my 2.5 summers so far! There wasn't a super high bar set given that I started mid-summer in 2019 and last year was Covid, but I am excited nonetheless.

Beaches

All in all, this was a very successful summer at Weirs Beach. We had an overwhelming amount of support from patrons and local business owners throughout the summer. By the end of the summer, the few that were upset by our new policy this summer became less vocal. After a very rainy August, we saw an increase in traffic during the weekdays. Additionally, we are still currently hovering around a quarter of the total amount of garbage hauled out of the beach. Finally, the swim lines have been brought in for the summer and stored in the woman's bathroom at the Weirs.

We still have swim lines up at the in-town beaches, but I plan on pulling those early this week. We did still have a handful of issues with patrons at our in-town beaches (mostly boat launching, alcohol consumption, and dogs being let run all over the beach and in the swim areas). I believe the issues and

their frequency was consistent with past years, but I am still trying to learn what that consistent number is.

Once again, this was a very successful summer for our beaches and we're looking to build off of it next year!

Opechee Day Camp

Opechee Day Camp had its ups and its downs, but the team held strong. I think the program may have gone two weeks too long and it ended with Matt in charge of 20 kids on his own on Friday afternoon of the last day, but we made it. This was definitely limping over the finish line. I am not sure which staff will be able to return next year, so we may be in another "rebuilding" summer, but we will recruit heavily and try to retain one or more staff. We would certainly bring back 4 of the 5 staff that worked for us this summer.

We may need to revisit the idea of field trips. With the increase in travel costs, it cost us just under \$1000 to send the kids mini-golfing and to get sundaes (all within the city). I can't imagine what a trip to Chuckster's in Concord or Whale's Tales would be.

Seasonal Maintenance

This is where we struggled this year. We could not find reliable seasonal staff, lost two full-time staff (one after two days), and therefore were short-staffed all year. That plus additional demands on the landscaping from city council (particularly downtown and Opechee), gave cause to a lot of morale issues here in this department. I am concerned about more jumping ship in the future. How do we make these positions desirable? How do we make Laconia Parks, Rec, and Facilities an employer that people want to work for?

Community Center Programs

We are in the process of developing the Fall program schedule. This will be the first time we are opening up the gym to a full program schedule since spring of 2020, so we are trying to do so very intentionally. Our two biggest demanded programs are Pickleball and Line Dancing, so we are trying to provide more time for those activities, while remaining true to our school age open gyms in the afternoon. We have begun looking for part-time gym attendants for the afternoons and evenings, so if there are any recently retired commission members who have been a part of Laconia sports for a long time and may have the initials RR who would like a small part time gig, let me know!

C. Foreman's Report submitted by Tim Ford

Mow and trim parks and fields

Lower / raise flags

Clean bathrooms

Election set up and clean up

Paint lines on fields

Clean up from triathlon

Drag skin areas

York rake beaches

Irrigation checks – valve replacement, head readjust, backflow turn on

Employee interviews
Fertilize parks and fields
Overseed parks and fields
Rotary gazebo light check
Water meter readings
City Hall Clerk – mount credit card readers
Library – replace lights

XII. **PRESENTATIONS**

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Roy motioned to adjourn at 6:50pm. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza Kelleher
Secretary

Mitch Hamel
Commissioner Chair