

LACONIA PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, July 19, 2021
Laconia Community Center Gym
7:00 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, Deanna Guyer, Arthur Kirk, and Laura Ringer.

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

ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS:

1. Regular meeting minutes of June 21, 2021

Commissioner Rodney Roy moved to adopt the minutes from June 21, 2021. Seconded by Commissioner Deanna Guyer. All were in favor.

I. **FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM:**

- A. Rock Steady Boxing Lakes Region- Wow Trail- Saturday, September 18, 2021, from 9:00am to 1:00pm for 5k run and walk event. Commissioner Roy motioned to accept the request pending upon the payment of special event fee, submission of the certificate of insurance and approval from the City Council for a fundraising event. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.
- B. WOW Board- Opechee Track, track building, park house, parking lot and WOW trail- October 15 & 16, 2021, Friday from 4:00pm to 6:00pm and Saturday from 5:00am to 4:00pm for 6th Annual Runaway Pumpkin 10/5K race fundraiser. Commissioner Roy motioned to accept the request pending upon the payment of special event fee, special event approval and final approval from the City council for raising money in the City property. Seconded by Commissioner Kirk. All were in favor.
- C. Temple B’Nai Israel- Bartlett Beach- Tuesday, September 7, 2021, from 12:00pm to 4:00pm for a picnic. Commissioner Kirk motioned to accept the request and waived the special event fee for the picnic at Bartlett beach. Seconded by Commissioner Roy. All were in favor.
- D. Leavitt Park Community Club- Outside Leavitt Clubhouse- set up August 20, 2021 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm and event August 21, 2021, from 3:00pm to 6:00pm for Leavitt Park Carnival. Commissioner Ringer motioned to accept the request for Leavitt Park carnival. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.

- E. Laconia Police Department- Sanborn Park-Tuesday, August 3, 2021, from 4:00pm to 8:00pm for a National Night out. Commissioner Roy motioned to accept the request for the National night out at the park. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.

II. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. Archaeological Study at Weirs beach- Archeologist Nathaniel Kitchel of Dartmouth College presented a brief summery of his plans to do a small dig at the park. This will take place at the earliest in the late fall 2022. Commissioners asked to be updated with the timing of the study as well as any findings. Commissioner Kirk motioned to approve the request for Archeological exploration. Seconded by Commissioner Ringer. All were in favor.
- B. Request to move the meeting earlier than 7:00pm- Commissioner Roy motioned to move the Parks and Recreation Commission meeting to 6:00pm. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer. All were in favor.

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

1. NH Human Society- Robbie Mills Parking lot- Friday, July 9, 2021, from late afternoon until evening for a dug-out dinner event.
2. Lakes Region Community Services- Tardif Park- Thursdays' July 1, 2021, through August 26, 2021, from 9:00am to 10:00am for a traveling playgroup.
3. Kristine Tine- Weirs Pavilion- Sunday, July 25, 2021, from 10:00am to 1:00pm for a kids' birthday party.

IV. **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Commissioners' assignment to Park houses
To be further discussed at the next meeting when the schedule for park house meetings is available.
2. Use of fields by non-resident teams. Commissioners requested to research other areas and ask what they do for non-residents. This will be discussed again at the next meeting.

V. **ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

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

VII. **PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Cooking Ban at the Beach- Last summer we received complaints from the residents regarding excessive trash, charcoal in the ground, diapers, alcohol and smoking in the beaches. Residents attended our meeting and express their frustrations on what is happening in our beaches, they brought pictures of how our beaches are being treated.

At the current meeting, we had some residents and business owners that voiced their opinions regarding the rule banning the cooking in the beach.

Commissioner Hamel said that we are open for discussion, and anyone is welcome, and we will keep in mind all the comments that we are receiving from the public.

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**

Summer is in full swing even though the weather does not always cooperate. The temps have been unseasonably cool and rainy one day and sweltering the next.

This year's 4th of July was unique. The weather was poor and that made a huge impact on our guests. The Weirs Beach was mostly deserted due to the rain. Opechee Park had poor attendance at the beginning for the Celebration (bands, vendors & fireworks) due to rain, but the parade was widely attended. Opechee did start to see an increase in attendance around 8:30pm for the second band and during the fireworks show. We had roughly 1500 people come to the park.

The city has a new look to our website and the Parks Department has a designated page now. This new page will help those using a mobile phone to see what they need easier. Please take a moment to check it out and let us know your thoughts. Keep in mind that we do have some altering to do as the page just became live on July 1st and this is our busy season. We will be adding calendars and more content when time allows.

We have initiated the zero-tolerance policy for rule breaking at the beaches and parks. The Laconia Police Department has been a great asset to us in this endeavor. The policy seems to be working as we are seeing a change in the atmosphere. People seem happier and more jovial. They are not drinking alcohol and therefore we are not having the problems that come with that.

We are working with a young man and have started a drop-in soccer game over at Opechee Smith Field on Sunday nights. It is free of charge, and we just require a registration form from each player. I am hoping for a huge turnout. This just gives people more things to do in Laconia!

There is a walk-through for the downtown tree replacements this week and we are hopeful for many interested parties. This is for phase 1 of a 3-phase plan for the downtown trees.

The Opechee Day Camp is going well. Again, the bad weather is keeping the kids inside more than they would like. The counselors are getting them outside as often as they can and coming up with some very creative things to do indoors. Well done staff!

We are now, as a department, thinking of CIP items that need to be addressed. If you wish to speak with me regarding a CIP item, please feel free to reach out. We are always looking for new ideas for the betterment of the parks!

B. Assistant Director's Report submitted by Matt Mansur

Summer Time!

I like using the metaphor of a plane (or planes) for the summer and I am happy to share that the planes are in the air! Take off was a little bumpy, but a lot better than last year. Now we begin to look towards the landings.

Personally, I am very tired. It is certainly a busy time of year and our department is pulled in a lot of directions. Overall our staff has been great with just a few hiccups here and there.

Beaches

Overall we are doing pretty well given that there is a staffing crisis facing the Lakes Region at the moment. We have had to adjust our schedules a little bit here and there – especially because we lost one of our Bond Beach lifeguards just recently – but we were able to come up with a solution and we still operational. Our staff at Weirs Beach has gone above and beyond in terms of keeping a friendly and welcoming environment while enforcing our rules.

We have had overwhelming support and approval from citizens and local business owners concerning our rules and rule enforcement this summer. There have been one very vocal business owner who is not happy, but the majority of the feedback has been great.

Support from the Laconia PD has been wonderful as well, especially when hearing what had happened to a lifeguard enforcing rules down in Worcester.

Our staff at Bond Beach have been incredible as well. After losing one guard, we have changed the schedule around so that we have the beach guarded Tuesday through Sunday. One guard is working 6 days a week now until he leaves for college in mid-August.

We are still seeing some of the same behavior as years past in some of our in-town beaches, but overall things seem to be going well.

Please come see the Weirs this summer!

Opechee Day Camp

We are still piecing the ODC together, but our staff are flexible, responsible, and positive. They have been great so far this season. We may be bringing one more person on to help fill some gaps in the day. It is tough to run summer camp out of one room when it is raining non-stop, but the team is still going strong. We will begin exploring the idea of field trips soon.

Website Redesign

The City of Laconia Website has launched! Please check out our website at laconianh.gov/parks and let me know what tweaks can be made. We are hoping to have a comprehensive schedule up there soon.

Community Center Programs

We are still slowly opening programs here at the Community Center. We are getting more and more requests. We are in a position here to modernize our systems for operating the community center this year, but finding the right balance is necessary.

C. Foreman's Report submitted by Tim Ford

Set up for fireworks

Clean up from fireworks

Prep fields for games – Robbie Mills, Memorial

Clean up wood – wind damage – Blaisdell, Bartlett, Weirs Community Park

Edge, weed, mulch beds – Stewart, Rotary, Downtown, Gateway, Millstone, Vet Sq

Mow and trim parks, athletic fields, and cemeteries

City Hall – fix drawer in Finance

Move white board 200a

Library – move chairs, throw some out

Fix lights in bathroom

Repair frost free spigot

LPD – replace floor tile

Repair sink faucet

Aerate fields – Robbie, Leavitt, Opechee

Verti-cut – Robbie, Opechee

Over seed – Opechee

Spread compost – Opechee

Repair irrigation breaks – Stewart, Gateway, Robbie, Rotary

Install volleyball poles and net at Bartlett

Remove grills from Leavitt and Bond

Remove plants at Gateway

Trim trees - LPD, Gateway

XII. **PRESENTATIONS**

XIII. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Commissioner Roy motioned to adjourn at 8:07pm. Seconded by Commissioner Guyer.
All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Liza Kelleher
Secretary

Mitch Hamel
Commissioner Chair

