

Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes from Monday November 14, 2022

Members Present were: Mark Eccher, Wayne Simarrian and Larry Pollard.

Ex Officio Members Present: William Best, Evan Chelman, Steven Cooke, Bjorn Dragsbaek, Stephen Gatewood, Ryan Jette and Bridget Sweet.

The meeting took place at the Recreation Department Office.

The Meeting was called to order by Chairman Simarrian at 7:05 PM.

The Minutes from the previous meeting were approved as read.

There were no public comments.

♦ Fields and Playgrounds Updates

- a) The lacrosse wall as part of The Beaver Street Park Expansion Project has been installed and painted. Franklin High School athletes helped to paint the lacrosse wall. Signage for all the field use at Beaver Street Park went up on September 22nd 2022. The Beaver Street Park press box is being discussed for a 2023 installation.
- b) Ryan reported that the Master Plan for King Street Memorial Park is underway with several revisions being considered. The following are the improvements that were originally proposed for the park: site lighting for the parking areas and the roadways, new playground equipment with safety surfacing, a new concession stand and restrooms, additional parking spaces near the existing flag pole, four new pickleball courts, and a splash pad. A citizen engagement session was held on October 26th 2022. Some abutters attended the session and articulated the following concerns: field lighting spill (shields will need to be used to minimize light spill), noise that would emanate from the pickleball courts, drainage issues in the parking lot and flagpole and the need for a walking path around the perimeter. (At the Recreation Board meeting a concern was voiced that some areas of the roadway at King Street Park are too narrow and do not allow two large vehicles to pass simultaneously). Board members from the Franklin Youth Soccer Association expressed a need for a timely approval of the lighting project at the King Street Memorial Park and a need to begin the actual project (at a minimum the installation of light poles) soon. Committee members advised the FYSA board members to request a meeting with the Town Administrator to express their concerns with the current timeline.
- c) Ryan reported that the town is working with a consultant and a playground company on the design for the the Nason Street Tot Lot. CPC funding in the amount of \$300,000 is in place to cover the costs of the new Tot Lot. Installation is set for 2023.

- d) Ryan reported that a \$50,000 grant from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has been allocated for playground enhancements at the Fletcher Field playground. An additional \$50,000 from the town will be used as well. The project will be put out to bid.

♦ Recreation Programs/Updates

- a) Ryan reported that the fall flag football program was a huge success. Not only did a significant number of youths participate in the program but also a fundraiser was conducted for the Franklin Food Pantry. The food pantry fund raiser brought in \$1,380 and 300 pounds of food. An event was held for a young boy named Gavin Beaulieu. Gavin has been diagnosed with Leukemia. The event included Gavin walking through a line of the players and parents giving and receiving high fives. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness about Leukemia and to raise the spirits of this young boy. It appears both goals were achieved.
- b) Ryan reported that the field hockey program had the largest number of participants to date. Field hockey even surpassed the highly popular girls' lacrosse program.
- c) Girls Volleyball seems to be making a comeback. It has 16 participants.
- d) Recreation Basketball K- 8th grade began last week with 900 youths participating. The Recreation High School Basketball program will begin December 1, 2022.

♦Fletcher Fund

- a) There was nothing new to report regarding the Fletcher Fund.

♦New Business

- a) A committee made up of town officials are working on updating the 2015 Open Space and Recreation Master Plan. A capital wish list has been presented to the Committee for their consideration. ADA Improvements and new improvement projects at King Street Memorial Park, Fletcher Field, Dacey Park and Horace Mann will be the focus.
- b) The Disability Commission will join town officials to identify any ADA improvement needs.
- c) An ex-officio member expressed the need for lighting behind the bleachers at the High School Football Field. Safety was the main focus of the need for this lighting. Several ex-officio members in attendance, who utilize this area, agreed that this was a safety concern.
- d) The Committee agreed to explore an appropriate way to acknowledge the many contributions to the youth of Franklin made by Nello P. Bassignani. Mr. Bassignani contributed extensive time and efforts in building and promoting many youth activities in Franklin for both girls and boys. Mr. Bassignani passed away in March of 2022.

♦Old Business

- a) The committee announced that the dedication of the entrance way to the Beaver Street Park to Paul Socci and the dedication of the new playground at Beaver Street Park to the Joseph Vendetti family will take place at the park on Tuesday November 22, 2022 at 2:00 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Next meeting TBD

**Respectfully submitted,
Larry Pollard**