

Parks and Recreation Committee

Notes from 8/22/23 "Working Group"

Rachel Gasowski opened the meeting by instructing that because there was not a meeting quorum, no voting will occur. June meeting minutes will be approved at the Sept. meeting.

Attendance: In person: Rachel Gasowski, Brian Keegan, Joe Friedman, Myrta Janosz
On Zoom: Mike Drooker, Gen Brown, Erin Guyotte

Public Comments: None

Round Table:

1. Mike reported that data collected by the Land Stewardship Sub Committee have been sent off for compilation. He commented that he did not think we learned anything that we did not already know, but it was certainly worth it.

Update From the Director:

Ten weeks of summer camp flew by. Rachel filled in quite a bit at camp once Kellie DeSimone went out on maternity leave, and the camp director having to leave due to a family emergency early in the summer. Half the camp staff were new, so it took more of Rachel's time than expected. The location provided little shade and was very hot. Camp was well attended with 70 kids a day.

The Durham Day Dash: was held on July 15. The rescheduled date saw 40 original runners drop out but they were replaced by new applicants and there were a total of 169 runners. The partnership with Tideline was a success with about 100 runners meeting there after the race. Brian participated and said the whole event had a great atmosphere. As always, the race timers did a great job. Rachel advises it be held on Sat or Sun next year.

A new program through a partnership with Colette Travel, will offer 2 week-long trips for adults. In April 2024, there will be a trip to Ireland; May 2024 trip will be to Canyon County. The info will be up on the website soon, and there will be an info session at the Public Library.

The After School Program includes enrichment and partnership with 7 Rivers Paddling, opened registration on 8/15. There are currently 45 kids enrolled. ORCSD will help with transportation.

Brian spoke about incorporating "Trot in the Trees" with recreation in nature incorporating under-utilized areas.

Downtown Trick or Treat will be on 10/31 so as not to interfere with the other downtown events.

Feather Fest is held Thanksgiving morning in partnership with ORPP at Wagon Hill.

Frost Fest will be held on 12/2.

Business:

There are no updates regarding the UNH/ARRC Lab Proposal as regards community input and parks planning. Rachel expects the project to pick back up once the UNH students return.

The committee reviewed Cathy Leach's draft report to the Town Council. No changes were made. Cathy will present at the Council mtg. on 9/11.

Joe presented a Churchill Rink Working Group Update. Bill Page, Rink Manager, has formed a group of 12 members comprised of parents, coaches and other interested parties. They have had two meetings to date.

Joe indicated that Bill had come to Town council to establish/reallocate other monies into a Trust Fund which will allow the group to accept funding. Early estimates are that 5 million would need to be raised for overall rink renovation costs, all to be privately raised. Bill identified the Wolfboro rink project as a good model to follow as it is a similar floor plan and rink size. In that case, 2.7 million was raised privately and 4.3 million was a town bond. A financial feasibility study will be done. New lighting is here and will be installed; ice will be in by mid-October.

Year to date Parks and Rec Data:

Rachel provided statistics as follows that are fairly consistent with past years:

-40 youth programs with 566 registrations

-45 adult programs with 372 registrations

-11 community events - 10 week Summer Camp

-multiple partnerships that help us do what we do

-Rec-Desk has 4,217 members; that # is up:

- 2,052 from Durham/783 from Lee/403 from Madbury/ 986 from other surrounding communities.

-We have 1.9 thousand Facebook followers and 486 Instagram followers. Both #'s are up.

Brian suggested that age groups served would be another good data point.

Committee Budget request:

Rachel reported that Cathy needs to make a committee budget request. It is currently \$1,500 and we will request the same amount for 2024.

Future Meeting Guests:

Rachel reported that Cathy suggested the following future meeting guests:

- UNH ARRC: Mike Ferguson and Matt Frye
- Durham Business Association Rep

Next mtg is Tuesday, Sept. 26.