

RECEIVED
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Meeting February 14, 2022

Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Kevin Sullivan, Vice Chair Steve Nelson, Thomas Murphy, Bill Gaffney and David Norden

Staff in Attendance: Parks & Recreation Director Brendan Egan and Program Coordinator Kelly Lehman

Chair Sullivan called the meeting to order at 6:03 pm in the Basement Meeting Room of the Burlington Town Hall Annex, 25 Center Street

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Norden moved to approve the Recreation Commission meeting minutes of January 24, 2022 as presented. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Murphy.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Public Participation

None

Director of Parks and Recreation Report

Parks and Recreation Director Egan presented the following report:

Town Meeting

Director Egan reminded the Commissioners that the Town Meeting will be held Wednesday, February 16 at the Burlington High School starting at 7:30 pm.

Regan Park Walkway

Director Egan confirmed with Town Counsel that the easement for the walkway from Putnam Road into Regan Playground was, in fact, filed with the State. He, along with Superintendent of Recreation Maintenance Bill Baker, are finalizing a plan to create a floating walkway over the water that is flooding the path.

Annual Report

A complete copy of the Department's annual report was emailed to all the commissioners prior to the meeting. Director Egan reviewed some of the highlights of the report with the Commission, which was submitted to the Town Administration.

Parks Superintendent Report

Director Egan presented the following report on behalf of Superintendent of Recreation Maintenance Bill Baker:

- Prepared the Simonds Park and the Town Common for the Winter Carnival
- Staff has been renovating the holiday figures, painting and repairing picnic tables and a memorial bench
- Once the holiday lights are removed, the bucket truck will be used for tree work
- Work continues on servicing and repairing all of the Department's large and small equipment
- Trash removal at all the parks, schools and Town Common

Chair Sullivan inquired how, if at all, the maintenance staff could be of additional assistance to the Public Works Department throughout the winter months. Director Egan will reach out to the Public Works Department to explore the possibility if there are projects that the maintenance staff may be able to assist with.

Commissioner Nelson noted that, after the recent blizzard, the parking lot at Simonds Park was not cleared prior to the residents arriving to use the popular sledding hill. He noted that the blizzard was a unique situation, with not only a large amount of snow, but substantial drifting as well. Director Egan explained that the maintenance staff is required to plow roads first, followed by plowing out the parking lots starting with the most heavily used. Director Egan mentioned that he and Superintendent of Recreation Maintenance Baker would set up a meeting to see if they could work out a schedule that would allow the staff to both plow roads and clear parking lots in a simultaneous manner.

Programming Report

Program Coordinator Lehman presented the following report:

American Camp Association National Conference

Emma Jones, CTRS our Therapeutic Recreation Specialist received an opportunity to attend the American Camp Association's National Conference in Portland, Oregon at no cost to the Department. While attending the conference, Emma had the opportunity to network with other professionals from around the country and attend some very dynamic sessions.

Inclusion Training

While in Portland, Emma conducted an inclusion training for our staff and contracted vendors. This training outlined our inclusion request process internally as well as how the Department works with instructors and vendors to make modifications to programming to allow people of all abilities to attend. This training was very well received by all those in attendance and we will be holding more training in the future.

Year in Review

The programming staff has been working on a Year in Review document to release to the community giving them a snapshot of what has been accomplished over the last year. This document is designed to highlight the Department's changes and growth. It also takes into consideration where Burlington stands compared to other departments of our size across the country. Once the social media page has been updated, we will be releasing the document publicly.

Department Sponsors

The Department completed and mailed the annual community partnership brochure to encourage businesses to partner with the Department either financially or in-kind. The brochure highlights each of our large special events, annual sponsor packages, volunteer opportunities and more.

Commissioner Gaffney asked how the Department develops the list of businesses that are used. Program Coordinator Lehman stated that they start with past sponsors and work with other departments (such as Planning and Town Clerk) to add to the list.

Chairman's Report

None.

Subcommittee Report

Commissioner Gaffney stated that the Planning Board had some discussions regarding the refurbishing of the basketball court at Simonds Park and the potential loss of 2 parking spots. Additionally, members of the Planning Board suggested that some landscaping be included around the portable restroom at Simonds Park to help hide the unit further.

Commissioner Norden reported that the Sculpture Park Committee is starting the search for new artists and sculptures to rotate into the Park at the end of this year. As part of their search, they are also researching alternative funding, including grants, to be able to sustain the Park. He further went on to say that the Historical

Commission has some questions regarding the use of the land adjacent to Grandview Farm. They believe the land was designated to be used for historical purposes when the property was renovated.

New Business

FY23 Budget

Director Egan presented the FY23 Parks & Recreation Department budget to the Commission. It represents a 2.27% increase over the previous year's budget. He reviewed each of the lines from both sides of the department that either increased or decreased and provided the explanation for each. Major drivers of the budget include:

Recreation Director

Full-time staff increase due to the addition of Assistant Director.

Part-time staff decrease due to staffing changes.

Contracted Services decrease based on no longer printing a seasonal brochure.

Transportation decrease due to the van purchased through last year's warrant article.

Maintenance

Full-time staff decrease due to staffing changes.

Part-time staff decrease due to the removal of 2 part-time staff positions.

Director Egan went on to discuss the need for the additional position of Assistant Director for the Department to be able to maintain the current level of service provided to the Town. He spoke about the growth of the Department since the departmental reorganization in 2008, the unanticipated consequence of losing a programming position in the process of the reorganization, the amount of additional hours that the current staff is working and the lack of overtime funds to compensate them accordingly and the responsibilities of the new position.

Commissioner Gaffney asked what, if any, succession plan is in place currently for the Department. Director Egan responded that currently there is no succession plan and that it is a growing concern for the Department as well as the Town.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if the Department will be able to increase services with the addition of the Assistant Director position. Director Egan indicated that the addition of the position will allow us to maintain the current level of services provided to the community while ensuring the staff does not experience burn out from the additional hours required to currently operate.

Commissioner Murphy felt that if the position is needed to maintain the current level of service, that should be the focus of any presentations made at future commission/board meetings.

Commissioner Norden agreed that the staffing hours for the Department is currently over the limit and wants to ensure that the current level of service would not be impacted. Thus, he is in support of the Assistant Director position.

Commissioner Nelson agreed that the growth since the reorganization is significant and has occurred but the staffing levels have not been adjusted to meet the increased need.

Commissioner Nelson made a motion to approve FY23 budget in the total amount of \$1,979,983 which represents a 2.27% increase over FY22 and a new Assistant Director position at Grade 13, Step 11, seconded by Commissioner Gaffney.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Director Egan mentioned that next would be a presentation to the Ways & Means Committee which is currently scheduled for March 16.

Old Business

Director Egan informed the Commission that progress has been made on the Treehouse project at Simonds Park. A deposit will be sent to The Treehouse Guys which will secure an early fall installation (weather dependent). It is estimated that it will take 6 - 8 weeks to complete the treehouse once work begins.

Commissioner Nelson asked if the sun shade at Wildwood Park would be installed this summer. Director Egan let the Commission know that, with the current inflation, the cost has grown by over 40% and the current funds would not cover the cost. He is hoping that costs shift downward and we are able to purchase the sun shade at a future date.

Executive Session

Not Required

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Nelson, and seconded by Commissioner Murphy.

VOTE: 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.

Next meeting is TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Lehman
Program Coordinator