

Town of Amherst Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, March 9th, 2021

5:00pm via Zoom

Attendees:

Dick Duquin
Kevin Durawa
Tim Gardner
Pam Hart
Kim Kriner
Michael MacDonald (excused)

Guests:

Christopher Drongosky

Jacqui Berger, Amherst Town Board Liaison
Mary-Diana Pouli, Executive Director/Youth & Recreation Department
Eric Guzdek, Recreation Specialist/Youth & Recreation Department

Call to Order

- A. Mr. Gardner called the meeting to order at 5:06pm.
- B. *Mrs. Kriner made a motion to approve the minutes from January 2021, seconded by Mr. Durawa. Motion passed.*
Mrs. Kriner made a motion to approve the minutes from March 2021, seconded by Mrs. Hart. Motion passed.

Presentation/Public Comment

Welcome to our new member, Dick Duquin.

Old Business

A. COVID Updates

Ms. Pouli informed the Commission that the Youth & Recreation Department offices will open to regular operation on May 3rd. This will conclude the requiring of appointments for resident to get Town ID cards. She also stated that 80-85% of the Youth & Recreation Department staff has been vaccinated against COVID-19. Due to school districts going to 5 days a week for their elementary students, the Youth & Recreation Department has increased staffing for the after school programs.

B. Royal Park Upgrades

Ms. Pouli relayed that Daemen College has received a grant to help with park upgrades. The park will be the home of their soccer program. The following is planned: a multipurpose field with seating, relocation of the tennis courts, relocation of the basketball court, permanent installation of bathrooms and a concession stand, establishment of trails and shelter, installation of adult fitness equipment, and ultimately a splash park. Ms. Pouli announced that there will be a meeting in May to inform the community of the coming improvements. She remarked that traffic was the community's biggest concern. Ms. Pouli also stated that this year's CIP budget is being amended to allow for a shelter to be built this year next to the playground. Also, Ms. Pouli stated that a shelter will be installed this year at Willow Ridge Park as well.

New Business

A. Bassett Park Activities

Ms. Pouli discussed the need to rent out the Bassett Park due to ongoing COVID safety issues and the demand for it being so high since the pandemic began. Historically, the park was only used by the Town of Amherst. The Youth & Recreation Department will hire a 40 hour per week seasonal worker to manage the facility during rentals. The potential renters must submit COVID Safety Protocols and a Certificate of Liability Insurance (COI).

Liaison Report

Ms. Berger reported that leagues and programs are getting what they need, especially the organizations that have had to relocate. Due to a delay in construction and the continued improvements to the fields at the NARC, Ciminelli is allowing for the recommissioning of the two football fields at the Northtown Center to be used for flag football. Amherst Girls Softball will be using Diamond 2 at the Northtown Center for games. Ms. Berger did say that July 11th is the last day to use any of the fields at the Northtown Center. She also stated that they have finalized the user agreements and obtained insurance from the various baseball leagues, Williamsville Junior Football, and D'Youville College. They are still working on completing the agreement with the Amherst Girls Softball League. Ms. Berger then reported on Indigo Golf Partners with regards to the Audubon Golf Course. She also stated that improvements continue to be made at Audubon and at the Par 3 course. Additionally, the

Highway Department has begun to remove dead trees from the Audubon Golf Course. The Town continues to look at options for an 18-hole course at Oakwood. Ms. Berger remarked on the well-attended number of the drive-thru community events sponsored by the Youth & Recreation Department along with the Amherst Senior Center, the Amherst Police Department and the Audubon Library. She said the community feedback was very positive for those events. Finally she stated that the Town is working to complete the business deal with regards to the Amherst Central Park.

Executive Director/Youth & Recreation Department Report

Ms. Pouli stated the Spring Recess camps went well along with the Open Gym program. Enrollment for the summer camps remains high.

Facilities Report

Mr. Guzdek reported that flag football is running at the Northtown Center and will be going to the NARC by July 21st. The softball fields at the Northtown Center are 75% recommissioned. Mr. Guzdek anticipates the fields will be ready for the Aunt Rosie's Softball Tournament which starts at the end of May. Mr. Guzdek also informed the Commission that the Diamond 7 field at the Northtown Center will be transitioned to a multi-use field to help with the needs of the softball league. The Youth & Recreation Department is also adapting a back field at the Lou Gehrig Complex for baseball. At the Clearfield Community Center, the splash park has been decommissioned with the new structure arriving this week. Also, roller hockey will begin at the Northtown Center. Finally, he stated that his staff was transitioning from inside work to outside work with the changing of the season.

Chairperson Report

No report

Liaison Reports

- A. Daemen College, AYB, Football – No report
- B. Skatepark, Parks & Playgrounds, Amherst Skating Club – No report
- C. High School Baseball, Little League Baseball, Youth Softball, Adult Softball, Golf – No report
- D. Ice Hockey, Town Recreation Facilities – No report
- E. Individuals with disabilities – No report
- F. Racquet Sports, Soccer, Lacrosse – No report

Correspondence

No report

Press Releases/News Articles

None

Adjournment

Mrs. Kriner moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Durawa. Meeting adjourned at 5:45pm.

Next meeting is May 11. 2021 at 5:00pm via Zoom