

Town of Amherst Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

5:00pm via Zoom

Attendees:

Dick Duquin

Tim Gardner

Pam Hart (excused)

Kim Kriner

Michael MacDonald

Guest:

David Franko

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 5:36pm.
- B. *Mr. MacDonald made a motion to approve the minutes from June 2021, seconded by Mr. Duquin. Motion passed.*

Presentation/Public Comment

Mr. Franko presented to the Commission his request to have one pickle ball court reserved for advanced players at the Paradise Park pickleball courts between the hours of 6:30am-9:00am. The Commission thanked Mr. Franko for his time and request. The Commission will look into the matter to see what can be done and will keep Mr. Franko informed.

Old Business

A. Non-resident Pool Pass

Ms. Pouli reported that 37 non-resident pool passes have been sold this season. The goal was to sell at least 50. Ms. Pouli has not heard any complaints regarding the non-resident pool passes. For next year, Ms. Pouli recommends increasing the price of the non-resident pool pass to \$75 if circumstances will allow the pools to operate under normal procedures and not under any COVID restrictions. She also reported that 70 grandparent passes were sold at \$40 each. Ms. Berger asked if there was a way to check how many times the non-resident passes were used this summer. Ms. Pouli said yes and she would provide that information.

B. Field Relocation Updates

Mr. Guzdek reported that bids were going to go out this Friday regarding field upgrades/new designs for the North Amherst Recreation Center, Lou Gehrig, and the previous gun club property (ACC). He then gave a brief summary of what the plans entail.

New Business

A. Fall/Winter Ice Rates

A proposal was presented to raise the ice rental rates \$5 for the 2021-2022 fall/winter season. This increase puts the Northtown facility on par with other ice facilities in WNY. The regular users have been made aware of the potential rate increase and there has been no opposition. Pending the approval of the Recreation Commission, the rate increase will be presented to the Town Board.

Mr. Duquin made a motion to approve the fall/winter ice rates for 2021-2022, seconded by Mr. Gardner. Motion passed.

Liaison Report

Ms. Berger reported on her continuing work with Mr. Guzdek and the various sports leagues regarding the upgrading and construction of the new fields around Amherst. She stated that the leagues are happy with what they are getting in the plans. Finally, Ms. Berger reported that a policy requiring that all individuals wear a mask has been reinstated for parts of Town Hall, the Senior Center, and all of Amherst Libraries.

Executive Director/Youth & Recreation Department Report

Ms. Pouli reported that even with two weeks to go for summer programming, the Department is still having staff shortage issues. She relayed to the Commission that the Department has begun hiring for fall programming and encouraged the members to let everyone know about this employment opportunity. Ms. Pouli also reported that the Northtown Center will be hosting a vaccination clinic this Saturday (August 14th) from 8am-12pm. No appointments will be needed. On Sunday (August 15th) the Williamsville Rotary Club will be holding a car show at the Northtown Center with most of the proceeds going to the Amherst Youth Foundation. Also on Sunday, there will be a ceremony at the Veterans Memorial to dedicate the most recent names added to the memorial wall. This coming Wednesday the Buffalo Philharmonic Orchestra will be playing at Bassett Park. Last Friday, Amherst citizens enjoyed a performance from the Shakespeare-in-the-Park organization. Finally, Ms. Pouli reported that no COVID cases have been reported from camp.

Facilities Report

Mr. Guzdek reported that even though the Department is lacking staff, the staff on hand have been able to support all the needs of the summer programming. Mr. Guzdek remarked on the success of the hockey development camps and the start of a great partnership with Daemen College going forward. Mr. Guzdek further expanded on what the leagues are getting. With the most recent submitted bids and pending approvals, everyone affected should be satisfied. Finally he remarked how quickly Ms. Berger, himself, and Mr. Burroughs (the Town Engineer) were able to move this project forward in just a few months.

Chairperson Report

Mr. Gardner did not have anything to report regarding the Amherst Central Park Task Force. Ms. Berger gave a brief report about the project, stating that soil testing has begun along with a remediation plan which can take up to 2 years to complete. Until the remediation project is completed, the Town of Amherst will not bid on the property.

Liaison Reports

- A. Daemen College, AYB, Football - Mr. MacDonald had nothing to report other than with COVID rates rising again in the area, he is unsure what the new academic year will bring for Daemen College.
- B. Skatepark, Parks & Playgrounds, Amherst Skating Club – No Report
- C. High School Baseball, Little League Baseball, Youth Softball, Adult Softball – No Report
- D. Golf – Mr. Duquin stated that course usage is up, especially at the Par 3 course. The biggest issue is equipment and getting the parts needed. Another ongoing issue is irrigation and drainage. The irrigation system is now working, but still needs some upgrades. A survey is being conducted by Indigo on customer satisfaction with the overall result so far that people are happy with the course. The Audubon Course will be open for all seasons. Finally, the public is able to buy apparel in the gift shop and the updated website looks good.
- E. Ice Hockey, Town Recreation Facilities – No report
- F. Individuals with disabilities – No report
- G. Racquet Sports, Soccer, Lacrosse – No report

Correspondence

No report

Press Releases/News Articles

None

Adjournment

Mr. Duquin moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Gardner. Meeting adjourned at 6:06pm.

The next meeting will be September 21, 2021 at 5:00pm.