

Town of Amherst Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, August 10, 2021

5:00pm via Zoom

Attendees:

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

Guest:

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 5:02pm.
- B. *Mr. Duquin made a motion to approve the minutes from August 2021, seconded by Mr. Gardner. Motion passed.*

Presentation/Public Comment

Mr. Drongosky presented to the Commission a request to change the rates at the Audubon Golf Course for the fall based on the fall rates offered at Erie County golf courses. The Commission thanked Mr. Drongosky for his time and proposal. Mr. Duquin will share this information with the management at the course.

Old Business

A. Field Relocation Updates

Mr. Guzdek updated the Commission on the status of the North Amherst Recreation Center fields, ACC fields, and Lou Gehrig field. Each project is waiting for final reports or lease agreements. In the case of the North Amherst Recreation Center, the staging for the project begins this week.

New Business

A. COVID Updates

Ms. Pouli reported that there was one COVID case involving a youth on the last day of summer camp. No one else was affected. No cases of COVID have been reported in the after school program as of this meeting. At the suggestion of the town's Emergency Operations Center and Supervisor Kulpa, all committee meetings will continue to be conducted by Zoom only. Ms. Pouli also restated the mask policy for the Youth & Recreation Department programs. Within program, masks are mandatory for all youth under 12 years old as well as for all staff members. For the Family Room, children over 2 years old and all parents are required to wear a mask. For adult programs, if the person is unvaccinated, they are required to wear a mask at all times. All vaccinated adults are not required, but are encouraged to wear a mask when participating in our programs.

B. Dana Heights Park

Ms. Pouli discussed the community meeting regarding the revitalization of Dana Heights Park. Community input was strong and a preliminary redesign of the playground will be reviewed in October. The next meeting for the project will be in October at the park itself, or in case of inclement weather, on Zoom.

C. Neighborhood Meetings

Ms. Pouli announced that Supervisor Kulpa is conducting neighborhood meetings throughout Amherst to present updates on COVID safety measures and the economic recovery plan. She encouraged the Commission members to attend their neighborhood meeting to show support for their community.

Liaison Report

Ms. Berger reported to the Commission that the decision has been made to keep the Audubon Golf Course. There will be some reconfiguration of the course, but it will remain 18 holes. Ms. Berger also reported that there will be some changes to the design of Amherst Central Park to be revealed at a later date.

Executive Director/Youth & Recreation Department Report

Ms. Pouli reported that 352 youth attended summer camp this past season at the six different sites. The overall number is down due to the need for social distancing. Regarding the non-resident pool passes, Ms. Pouli reported that 40 individual non-resident passes were sold along with 60 non-resident family passes. As far as when those passes were used, at the North Forest pool there was an average of 24 non-resident reservations per day. For the Clearfield pool, there was an average of 53 non-resident reservations per day. Total resident attendance for each pool this season, based on reservations are as follows:

North Forest	5,586
Clearfield	33,600

Ms. Pouli stated that normal attendance is over 50,000 during a regular summer season, so we did quite well under the Covid restrictions. Additionally, Ms. Pouli informed the Commission that she and Mr. Guzdek met with the Board of Directors of the Jurek Post, the American Legion building adjacent to the North Amherst Recreation Center. They conducted a walk-through to view the property and found the facility to be advantageous to the Youth & Recreation Department's needs. Ms. Pouli stated that the conversations will be on-going with an offer to buy the land and facility perhaps by the end of the year. Finally, Ms. Pouli made announcements regarding the Fall Fest at Willow Ridge Park happening this Saturday, September 25th; a meeting with the Willow Ridge Community to begin planning the new playground there; the Amherst Police Department hosting a Bills game viewing party at the Harlem Road Community Center this Sunday, the 26th; the Youth & Recreation Department's Harvest Fest at Bassett Park on Saturday, October 2nd; and finally the many volunteers that recently helped to improve the Williamsville Youth Center and playgrounds in Amherst, including volunteers from Key Bank, Congregation Shir Shalom, North Presbyterian Church, and Amherst Y.E.S. youth.

Facilities Report

Mr. Guzdek reported that the Northtown Center is ready for the winter season with Amherst Youth Hockey and Amherst Skating Club in full swing. Mr. Guzdek also alerted the Commission to the construction of the new parking lot at the Northtown Center, to the west of the skatepark.

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 – No Report
- D. Golf – Mr. Duquin stated that course usage is good with a financial report coming soon. He relayed that they expect new carts for the course arriving in early October. Throughout the winter, there will be two full time staff to maintain and open the course if the weather is good. The driving range and Par 3 were especially busy this season. Discussions have begun regarding ideas for next year's camps, programs, and new leagues.
- 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

Mrs. Kriner moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mrs. Hart.. Meeting adjourned at 5:30pm.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 12, 2021 at 5:00pm via Zoom.