

MINUTES OF THE RECREATION COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
March 20, 2024 – 4:00pm

Committee Members Present: Councilor Nancie Cameron, Chair
Councilor Richard Michaud, Vice Chair
Councilor Robert Gibson
Councilor Crystal Paradis-Catanzaro

Administration/Staff Present: City Manager, Bob Belmore
Director of Public Works, Michael Bobinsky
Recreation Supervisor, Kristen Davenport
Planning Secretary, Anna Stockman

Chair Cameron called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

APPROVE PAST MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 25, 2023

Councilor Michaud made a motion to approve the minutes of October 25, 2023. The motion was seconded by Council Cameron and passed 4-0.

BUTTERFLY PARK/ASH ST. PARK UPDATE

The Committee discussed the memorandum provided by Public Works Director Bobinsky. The landscape plan has been sent to Home Depot with information in the grant application. A plant list was provided with the grant application. Staff anticipates to hear a decision on the grant this Spring.

City Manager Belmore provided information regarding the use of project funds for the initiative.

Supervisor Davenport provided an overview of the different sign options she has been exploring, which include a butterfly lifecycle interpretive sign designed by a company in Illinois. She noted the design would fit nicely within the park. She shared the project cost estimate and provided detail on the material of the sign, high pressure laminate that has a graffiti resistant coating. She said staff plan to go onsite with a piece of cardboard to help decide on the size and location of the sign.

Councilor Paradis-Catanzaro referenced the site plan provided to members and suggested the sign be located in the mulch area along the path and amongst the flowers.

Supervisor Davenport shared another sign option, which is a big butterfly that would be mounted on posts. She noted cost estimates have been provided. She mentioned the design could provide a good photo opportunity for residents and visitors.

Director Bobinsky stated the plan is to install a new high-quality, high-grade bench if the budget allows for it. The bench would not have a back to create some flexibility. He provided information regarding the budget source for the project.

Councilor Gibson suggested a sign list all of the project funding sources. Manager Belmore stated that another option would be to hang a thank you plaque of all the donors at City Hall similar to what the City did for the Veterans Memorial contributors.

MALLEY FARM BALL FIELDS USE

City Manager Belmore provided an overview of a meeting that was held to discuss the proposed use of the Malley Farm ball fields by the USA Softball League for small tournaments.

Supervisor Davenport stated the meeting involved a discussion of short-term logistics of year one and year two of the field use. She noted the league would assist with trash removal and maintenance of the infield and park area. During events, ADA-compliant porta potties would be provided in addition to the use of food concessions. She mentioned discussions involved the establishment of a Somersworth youth softball program. She noted the benefit the youth program would bring.

Councilor Gibson asked about the timeframe for tournaments. Supervisor Davenport stated tournaments will take place Friday evenings through Sunday evenings from early May to the second week of August. They would work around the High School's game schedule. There may be occasional opportunities for Fall ball.

Manager Belmore noted the City leases other municipal fields and this agreement would mirror other field lease agreements.

Councilor Gibson stated this initiative would be good promotion for the City. He asked about the proposed plan for parking during sports events. Supervisor Davenport stated games would be staggered and similar events have been held at the fields and can easily accommodate such events.

MISCELLANEOUS

Supervisor Davenport stated the Rec Desk Management software has been phenomenal for managing recreation programs. She noted the Recreation office has received good feedback from parents that the software is user-friendly. She shared information about upcoming recreation programs including Biddy Basketball, the Hilltoppers Walking/Hiking Program, and the Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for Friday, May 29th. She mentioned the Tiny Toppers Play Program will return this Spring and registration for Track & Field is now open. She noted registration for the 2024 Kids Camp opened on March 11th and a large portion of the previous staff are returning for this season.

ADJOURNMENT

Councilor Cameron made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilor Gibson and passed 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 4:54 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Stockman, Planning Secretary