

City of Concord Recreation and Parks Advisory Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2023 5:30pm

Committee Members: Chair Mary Miller, City Councilor Nathan Fennessy, City Councilor Candace Bouchard, Marilyn Fraser, Jennifer Roff, and Althea Barton.

Staff Members: David Gill, Parks & Recreation Director, Laura Bryant, Assistant Parks & Recreation Director and Heather Shank, City Planner

Meeting was called to order at 5:36pm by Chair Mary Miller

Minutes approved as written from the January 2023 meeting (no meeting in Feb 2023).

New Business:

CIP Review: David reviewed the CIP process for RPAC and then shared staff recommendations for FY24. There are 3 general categories when reviewing CIP projects, safety/life safety and equipment, Multi Year Initiatives and Planning our years from each location.

For safety/Life safety and equipment the Parks and Recreation department typically receives 300-500K. For FY 24 staff is recommending the following projects, pricing is an estimate:

- Rebuild small failing retaining wall at Blossom Hill (\$100,000)
- Rebuild large retaining wall that failed several years ago at Blossom Hill (\$350,000)
- Replace truck that was damaged in Dec wind storm (\$65,000)
- Replacement of several mowers: two 2008 mowers and 2006 infield machine. (\$100,000)
- Repair to storage building at the park that was damaged by fire couple years ago (\$80,000)

RPAC discussed current ongoing multiyear projects not listed in staff FY24 recommendations. David explained the following are ongoing (many with pending grant applications) and the city may need to consider additional funds for the following projects: Monkey Around Playground, Merrimack River Greenway Trail Phase 2 and the new Riverfront Park in Penacook. He also highlighted Phase 2 of Terrill Park and he is requesting extensions on the construction permits as they are beginning to expire. The project remains fully design and permitted from 2018. David suggested within the next couple of years he will need to start identifying neighborhoods that don't currently have a traditional park and look at buying land for future parks.

In addition, he mentioned several new groups who have approached the city looking for improvements such as Lights at Keach Park, Martin Park field improvements, a Disc Golf course as well as a Pump Track. He hopes the concept plans for the Merrimack River Recreation and Open Space Corridor will be completed later this spring or early summer.

Discussion continues about Parks and Recreation Department focusing on the cemetery operation. Marilyn asked how long the cemetery has been under Parks & Recreation, since 2011. Jennifer inquired about a Friends of Blossom Hill group. David reminded the group that historically "friend groups" are developed by citizens not city staff. David also reminded RPAC that the cemetery has trusts to help support some improvements and

some of the yearly operating costs. Heather suggested a PR campaign to bring attention to what goes into maintaining the cemeteries.

At the end of the CIP discussion Candace made a motion to accept all staff recommendations except the repair the storage building at White Park that was damaged by fire couple years ago, Mary seconded, passed.

Summer staffing update: Laura updated the group to let them know we are currently working on recruiting summer staff. Staff will be visiting local high schools, we have a social media campaign and have included information weekly in the City Managers newsletter and well as the Parks & Rec brochures.

Five minutes of Public Input: Project Story participants along with Charm Camacho and Councilor Stacey Brown had several questions for RPAC.

1. How can we get lights at Kimball Park basketball court? David explained the process of putting in a request, public meetings and so on.
2. How can kids get more time at the gym in the community center? David and Laura shared the current drop in schedule and agreed to look into adding more opportunities.
3. What should they do if the current lights (basketball/parking lot lights) at Keach Park aren't working? David let them know to call or stop by the office and we can get them fixed. Note: lights are currently in working order on courts while a couple of the parking lot lights are out. Will have those fixed shortly
4. Why are age groups separated for open gym at the community center? David explained it is for safety of participants.
5. Charm asked about giving the neighborhood kids more access to the community center. Mary explained the need for supervision and making sure we know who is in the building at all times. She also explained the center was built to serve the entire community.

Mary made a motion to adjourn meeting at 6:57pm, seconded by Candace, passed.

Summited by Parks and Recreation Assistant Director Laura S. Bryant