

Recreation Advisory Committee Meeting Summary September 25, 2023

Attendees: Chelsea Loughran, Beth Cook, Lindsey White, Drew Locke, Christine McGee, Damion Clements, Austin Smith

A major discussion item was the proposed new DPW building and its potential impact on Snows Field. If the DPW remains in its current location and uses Snows as its water source, the field would no longer be usable for recreation. The committee will advocate at the upcoming Select Board meeting for an alternate DPW site to preserve this important community resource.

The committee received updates on the new out-of-school program that will be starting up. Staff hiring is ongoing, with offers extended and acceptances pending. Enrollment data from the past summer recreation program was discussed, including breakdowns by resident/non-resident, number of families participating weekly vs. for single days, etc. These numbers will be provided to the committee for review. This information will help inform future programming decisions.

Developing a new fee structure was a top priority identified to make recreation opportunities more affordable and accessible for families of all income levels. Accessing funds held by Friends of Recreation could help subsidize programs or offer scholarships. Additional training for staff around behavior management techniques was also seen as important, given the increasing needs of participants.

Some additional details discussed around increasing event collaborations included:

- The Halloween celebration held in previous years at the library was a good example of successful collaboration between Recreation, the library, and other town groups like the Family Group.
- For the upcoming Halloween event, Austin will be working with the library to plan programming from 5-7 p.m. on October 28th that incorporates activities and participation from multiple organizations.
- Partnering with the police and fire departments was suggested, such as having their vehicles at the library for trick-or-treating and allowing kids to visit inside the cruisers/fire trucks.
- Coordinating fall and winter events between Recreation, the library, and the school was recommended to provide more shared family-friendly programming throughout the off-season.
- Exploring collaborative event opportunities with the Council on Aging was an identified priority, such as having children volunteer or perform at their luncheons or other functions on a regular basis.

Gym space usage and costs associated with repainting pickleball lines on the floor were reviewed. The condition of the floor surface itself poses challenges and limitations for certain activities. The costs to repaint pickleball lines were reviewed.

The main action items coming out of this Recreation Advisory Committee meeting are:

1. Develop a new fee structure and scholarship program for recreation department programs.
2. Advocate at the upcoming Select Board meeting for the DPW building to be located elsewhere to preserve Snows Field for recreation.
3. Increase engagement opportunities between recreation programs and seniors, such as having children volunteer at senior events.
4. Follow up with Friends of Rec to create additional funding opportunities to support programming.

Follow up

