

Hartford Parks and Recreation Commission
Thursday January 14, 2021
5:30 p.m.
Hartford Town Hall-Virtual Meeting
Meetings Minutes

Commission Members in Attendance: Brett Mayfield, David Crocco, Michael Vanasse, Allison Childs

Others in Attendance: Scott Hausler P&R Director, Joe Major Select Board Liaison, Caroline Hamilton Hartford High School Student Liaison.

Commission Members not in Attendance: None

Meeting called to order: 5:35 pm by Michael Vanasse

The December meeting minutes were moved and approved.

Citizen Comments: None

Commission Member Comments: None

Directors Reports for November 30: Given by Scott Hausler,
See attached Reports:

Report items with further discussion:

- Light Up Hartford was a great success with over 65 participants.
- New sessions doing well included After-School Lego Club, Weekly Scavenger Hunt, and Improv Comedy.
- New programs starting are Crafternoon Afterschool Program, Step-It-Up Snowshoeing, the Let's Go Fishing Derby, and Youth Basketball.
- St. Johnsbury Academy is renting sheets of ice at WABA.
- A financial rebate of \$6,000 was received by Efficiency Vermont.
- The VLCT PACIF Grant was awarded to the department for an eyewash station for Maxfield.

Old Business:

- Community Center – No Updates
- Pool Project Update: The Rec Department is continuing work on the pool and an advisory pool group was put together by the Rec Department Director.

New Business:

- Department Budget Review was passed to the next meeting.
- Election of Slate of Commission Officers passed: Michael Vanasse, Chairperson, Allison Childs, Vice Chair, Brett Mayfield, Secretary.

Agenda Items for Next Rec. Commission Meeting:

- Budget review

Motion made to adjourn and all excepted.
Adjourned at 6:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted: Brett Mayfield, Commission Secretary

Next meeting January 11, 2021.

Signed By: _____ Dated: _____

DRAFT

Parks & Recreation Department
Significant Activity Report
January 11th, 2020
Respectfully Submitted By: Scott Hausler, Director

Program Highlights

- A new session of the After-School Lego Club started on January 4th. COVID Restrictions are in place and is held at the Hartford Town Hall Room 2. We have twelve participants which is the max we can take for the class.
- Youth Karate started a new session on January 4th as well. Six participants are enrolled in the program instructed by Brett Mayfield. COVID Restriction are also in place for this program.
- The Department's weekly scavenger hunts continue. A golden ticket is discreetly hidden in one of our public parks and clues are sent virtually using Facebook and other social media outlets. All this winter be on the lookout for the Golden Ticket as it will be hidden at one of our parks and relocated each week. A close-up picture of the ticket will be posted on our Facebook page as a clue. Families who find the ticket must take a picture of the ticket at the park and upload it to the Facebook post or email the photo to the department.
- Step-it-Up Hartford Parks & Recreation Snowshoeing begins January 12th from 9:00am to 11:30am. We have four locations available and pre-registration is required. There is no fee for the program and participants will need snowshoes, gloves, boots, water, beanie and warm clothing. If snowshoeing conditions are unfavorable, we will switch gears and plan to do a Village Walk in Wilder, Maxfield or White River Junction. Transportation to and from is available.
- Three sessions of the Crafternoon Afterschool Program are sold out. The first session begins January 14th and will be held at the Hartford Town Hall. The program offers a wide variety of arts and craft projects for grades K-5 to stimulate creativity, social interaction and skill development. The goal of Crafternoon is to provide an experience that will allow each child to explore their imagination through creative engagement while having fun. COVID guidelines will be in place for this program. Twelve participants are enrolled for all three sessions.
- The Department is working on the final details of our annual Let's Go Ice Fishing Derby at Dewey's Pond. This will be a COVID-19 Modified Event in lieu of the traditional derby. The event will be for youth 14 and under and pre-registration is required. This is a free event and takes place on the free fishing day sponsored by Vermont Fish and Game. Registration started January 8th. The event will be held on January 30th from 7:00am to noon with social distancing guidelines in place which will require household only locations on the ice. Parks & Recreation Staff will be on site to check registered participants in and assist with drilling holes if needed. Participants will receive a Welcome Bag and free bait will be provided while supplies last. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, we are unable to loan out equipment.
- Youth Basketball is a very popular program for the Department. We are working in collaboration with the Hartford School District to develop a plan to offer a safe and fun youth

program this winter season. Before we can solidify a program, we need to assess coaching interest for the age specific programs. The program is designed for participants in Kindergarten through High School. For us to successfully offer the program we need volunteers to assist with check-in procedures and assist with entry and exiting the building during the program.

- Improv Comedy continues. The program is instructed by Tatum Barnes, Director of Creative Lives Afterschool and Summer Programs. Tatum has been a youth worker and teacher for the past 10 years through classroom and out of school teaching, tutoring, mentoring, and meditation facilitator. As part of his experience, Tatum has helped youth develop their character, gain social-emotional skills, and consider their responsibilities to themselves, others, and the natural world. This program is virtual and does require some materials to participate. Materials Needed - Computer with Zoom platform, imagination and a sense of humor. Participants will discover collaboration skills through improv! This course is an introduction to improvisational performance for children ages 8 - 12. We will explore improv comedy games, character exercises and team building to develop flexibility and confidence. Together with our troupe, each member will laugh and learn through structured play. With creative thinking and active listening, students will flex their imagination muscles to the fullest! The class will culminate in the creation of a comedy sketch that will be recorded and shared.

This course represents a collaboration between Creative Lives and the Hartford Rec. Dept. to apply a holistic approach based on Ellen Tadd's Framework for Wise Education and is funded in part by a grant from the Jack and Dorothy Byrne Foundation."

- The Department continues the In-The-House Skate at WABA but is limited now due to the restart of youth and high school sports. The program at WABA follows the COVID Guidance that was set by the Governor's Office when youth sports was paused. In-The-House Skate started the week of December 8th.

Parks/Facilities

- WABA Arena has re-opened under the updated guidance within Governor Scott's COVID-19 Executive Orders. The new order allows youth sports and high school practices and clinics to begin. Still no games or scrimmaging are allowed at this time. Occupancy on the ice is limited to 25 participants on the ice. Adult league play is not allowed at this time. We anticipate the schedule to be at 50% of schedule operations which continues to be good news for the WABA operations.
- St. Johnsbury Academy is renting several sheets of ice at WABA. They may engage in games at our facility once the VPA starts back up competition.
- Hartford Memorial Middle School has scheduled several sheets of ice during the school hour for special activities program. We anticipate the Middle School and High School to start up Physical Education Classes soon.
- The Department submitted the December billing for WABA usage.
- A financial rebate of \$6,000 was received through Efficiency Vermont. The rebate is part of the programmed rebate following the installation of the REALice System and Heat pump.
- The Department continues to work on the new pool project. We anticipate having a contractual agreement for the Design Build Project soon. In the meantime, we are completing a survey of the site and will be completing additional geotechnical borings in a few locations

identified by Breadloaf Construction. The work is funded by existing funds as part of the Preliminary Design and Engineering Local Options Tax Funds. The work is planned to take place on January 16th. A Pool Project Review Committee was established and will be engaged in the project once the contractual agreement is finalized.

- Department continues to work on the Bond Bank Application for the Municipal Pool Project. The Planning & Development Director is assisting with the application process.
- The Hartford Tree Board continues the Tree of the Month Program. The January Tree of the Month highlights the American Elm Cultivars that were planted by the State of Vermont along Hartford Avenue and those planted by the Town of Hartford between Pine Street and the COOP parking lot. A sign has been placed identifying the Tree Board Tree of the Month.
- Two portable mounds were purchased and have arrived for the youth baseball fields at Maxfield. The clay mounds on two of the youth fields will be scrapped level and the portable mounts installed. The clay mounds, as built, require a tremendous amount of maintenance, labor and materials to maintain properly. The portable mounts are made from an artificial surface that surrounds a molded fiberglass surface. The new mounds allow for consistent play and will not require daily maintenance to maintain properly.
- The Parks & Recreation Office Window on the north side of the building was vandalized. Someone apparently broke the window with an object. The Hartford Police Department filed a report and we filed a claim with the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Granite State Glass was on site and developing a proposal for the replacement of the window.
- The VLCT PACIF Grant was awarded to the Parks & Recreation Department for the purchase of a portable eyewash station for Maxfield, closed caption cameras for the WABA Lobby. 40% of the cost is covered by the grant and requires project completion and pre-payment prior to reimbursement.
- Staff continue to plug away at general facility upkeep, i.e. painting, cleaning, ice maintenance, etc.
- Department is preparing to send out RFP's for spring and summer turf maintenance.