



City of Auburn
Recreation Department
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Parks and Recreation Advisory Board - Meeting Minutes

Wednesday November 13, 2024, at 4:30pm (Senior Center)

Members Present: Misty Edgecomb, Haley Warden, Julia Bergeron-Smith, Jeremy Gatcomb, Sara Parker, Corey Kinnan and Elisabeth Collier

Absent: Dawna Labonte,
Corey/Haley; all in favor unanimous. Approved Tim Cogle and Philip Savignano absence

Meeting Minutes: October minutes approved Misty/Julia; all in favor unanimous

Department Update:

- **Fright Fest:** This event was a huge success! The city welcomed over 500 attendees and enjoyed the creative displays of around 20 decorated vehicles. Thank you again to the committee for your participation in hosting the recreation minibus.
- **Holiday Celebration:** A new addition to this year's Holiday Celebration will be a community parade, in addition to the traditional tree lighting and photos with Santa. This parade was previously held jointly with Lewiston, but the tradition was paused in 2019. Jeremy said that there is still a need for more participants (floats) and if they do not get more then it will just be city vehicles escorting Santa.
- **Winter Programs:** Winter sports are right around the corner! Please encourage sign-ups for youth basketball (evaluations were held the week of November 11th, indoor clinics, and winter cheerleading. The adult basketball league has started and is full! Recreation staff are also seeking additional registrations for the December vacation camp, which has been split into Christmas and New Year's sessions. As the weather gets cold, AAC and PAL programs have moved inside the building. This will be the first winter utilizing the space for both groups, and hopefully this will be a smooth transition. Sara informed the committee that pizza and OPJ's will be open for registration November 20th. Misty said that the middle school 8th grade had 50 children show up for basketball but only 10 will get a spot on the team. Sara said that we have been sending kids to Lewiston as they have a program there. Halloween Bowl for football (tournament) was held at Pettengill Park and it was great success.
- **PAL Building Update:** The construction of the new PAL building is progressing rapidly (they seem to be two weeks ahead), and we recently attended the installation of the final beam. The project is currently two weeks ahead of schedule, thanks to favorable weather conditions.
- **Field Maintenance:** Due to the recent drought, the softball fields will require significant attention this spring. Recreation staff are hopeful that they will receive CIP funding in FY26 to improve the appearance and safety of these fields. Staff have already initiated discussions with Public Works regarding the improvements.
- **Holiday Closure:** Please note that the department will be closed on Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday.

New Business/Open Session for Public:

- **Winter work begins:**

- **Review of SWOT analysis for parks:**
 - **Raymond Street Park:**
 - Strengths: Green space, large trees. Misty asked if they could ask that the trees not be cut down.
 - Weaknesses: not fenced in, no wi-fi
 - Opportunities: possibly add a basketball hoop, new equipment picnic tables etc. Outside grills, lack of lighting, plaque with information about Raymond (who the park is named after).
 - Threats: Non identified
 - **Sullivan Park: (will be done at the next meeting)**
 - **Anniversary Parks:**
 - Strengths:
 - Weaknesses: One way in one way out, there needs to be more shaded areas, no restrooms, no kayak slip next to the stairs to the river, no wi-fi
 - Opportunities: At the very least you need to have porta potties, a need to have a water-filling location (for drinking). Need wi-Fi
 - Threats: Near the river and has the potential to flood
- **Opportunity for playground grant:**
 - Misty read a letter from Darcy who works at Park Avenue about a grant for outdoor fitness equipment. Jeremy said it is more of a jungle gym than actual workout equipment. The committee will connect Darcy with Rita who is the Grant Manager for the City.
- **Unhoused in the Parks:**
 - Corey has a growing concern that the unhoused have overtaken the parks. He has spoken to several people, and he feels that there is a need to form a coalition. Jeremy said that there is an old marketing building on Mill Street that is being renovated to have services for the homeless (more of a resource center for the unhoused). He also said that there is a homeless shelter in Lewiston on Sabattus Street. Corey said he heard that other cities were purchasing bus tickets to send the unhoused to other cities. He feels that this should be investigated (he feels that the unhoused are just being shuffled around). Corey will reach out to Glen Holmes from CDBG or Jenn Edwards from General Assistance.

Other Business:

- Julia asked if there should be a councilor at the meetings. Misty will check with Emily
- Misty is also going to ask Emily if the committee can have a Google Drive. Would it be possible for IT to create a folder for the documents. Misty will also ask about transcribing instead of recording the meeting. Jeremy asked about the terms (they are listed on the City's website as

Name	Term Expiration
Tim Cogle	10/1/2025
Misty Edgecomb	10/1/2026
Julia Bergeron-Smith	10/1/2025
Haley Warden	10/1/2026
Philip Savignano	10/1/2025
Corey Kinnan	10/1/2026
Elisabeth Collier	10/1/2026

Work in Progress:

- **Ad Hoc Committee:**

- Phil sent an update on what was discussed at the meetings and will give a live update at the December meeting.

Meeting was adjourned, Haley/Corey; all in favor unanimous.

Next meeting will be held Wednesday December 11, 2024– 4:30 pm – Senior Center