

**Holyoke Parks & Recreation
Commission Meeting
Thursday, April 1, 2021 5:00 pm
Zoom Meeting**

Meeting ID: 870 4341 5803
Passcode: 216366

Minutes

Please Note: Due to the statewide mandate to observe social distancing, this meeting will be held remotely.

1. Call to Order

Chairman Rivera Called the meeting to order at 5:05 pm. Commissioners Jose Bayron, Helene Busby, Assistant Director Maureen Tisdell and Director Teresa Shepard were in attendance.

Several attendees were in the audience and did not wish to address the Commissioners.

2. Acceptance of Minutes from the January 28, 2021 Meeting

Chairman Rivera made a Motion to accept the Minutes as presented. Commissioner Bayron seconded the Motion, all were in favor.

3. City Council Orders

Introduced by Councilor Todd McGee

Ordered, Order that the Parks & Recreation Department and DPW review the park space at Jones Point to develop a plan to better utilize the space.

In City Council, March 16, 2021. Received and referred to the Public Service Committee and DPW and Parks and Rec.

The Order was received and accepted by the Commissioners. A discussion took place as to current and future park improvement projects. The potential renovation/redesign of Jones Point had already been designated as a prioritized future project.

Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

April 1, 2021

Minutes

Page 2

4. New Business

- Director Shepard forwarded copies of the MIAA and the State Guidance regarding youth and Amateur sports for the Spring of 2021 related to COVID. A lively and informative discussion took place regarding organized sports and the actual enforcement of these guidelines. The Commissioners agreed that simple/concise signage should be in place at all playing fields and City Parks regarding Social Distancing.
- Backboards and Hoops have been authorized to be put up at all basketball courts in Parks and on School Department property.
The discussion of New Business was briefly interrupted by computer bombers. The meeting was discontinued for approximately 5 minutes.
- At the request of Director Shepard, the Parks & Recreation Commissioners addressed the placement of porta-potties throughout the City and public safety issues. A consensus was reached that porta-potties are not an ideal situation for any user. The Commission felt that eliminating the porta-potties would be punitive and harmful to park users. It was agreed upon to try to work with members of the youth athletic groups to somehow increase the monitoring of the porta-potties and attempt to make them safer for the public. Commissioner Busby suggested that the Parks Department determine the distance of availability of public restrooms in Parks & Playgrounds. Chairman Rivera suggested inviting Acting Superintendent Anthony Soto to the next Commission Meeting to discuss possibly opening School Facilities during Organized Sporting Events.
- Chairman Rivera announced that the Community Preservation Committee has awarded \$210K for improvements at Mayer Field, including installation of play equipment and field improvements. A site meeting was held the week before with the City Engineer, Robert Pierent to discuss safety improvements.
- Advertising for part-time positions will commence as of April 12, 2021. Lifeguards, Activity Leaders, Program Leaders and Support Staff. The hourly minimum wage is \$13.50

Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

April 1, 2021

Minutes

Page 3

- Pouliot Pool is scheduled to open by July 1, 2021. All Social Distancing Requirement will be strictly adhered to. (Possibly open earlier)
- The Basketball Courts at the Robert Sports Complex will be resurfaced prior to June 30, 2021. City Engineer Mr. Pierent has managed the renovation project utilizing Community Development Block Grant Funds.

5. Old Business

- Public Hearings regarding the proposed Master Plan for the redesign of Springdale Park were tentatively scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 17th and Thursday, April 29th at the Park. The Company SLR is in the process of coordinating the hearings with the Park Director. Prior to the end of June 2021, new playground equipment will be purchased; and installed hopefully in the Fall at Springdale Park. The equipment currently in place is very old and does not meet code to keep in place.
- The 2021 (final) rental agreement with the Pioneer Valley Blue Sox was unanimously agreed to by the Commissioners
- Director Shepard reported that the expansion of the Water Spray at Pina Park has been moving smoothly. The project is expected to be completed by the end of June 2021.
- Chairman Rivera volunteered to continue to be the Parks & Recreation's Commission Representative for the CPA. Commissioner Bayron discussed the amount of time that has been dedicated to this Committee by the current representative. He suggested that the CPA consider paying its members a small stipend.

Maureen Tisdell reported on the progress of the Safe Routes Committee and the improvements that the group would like to make to Pulaski Park. Following that discussion, Chairman Rivera reminded the Board that he requested the Parks & Recreation Department sponsor a program which would encourage local artist to assist and develop murals at the City's Skateboard Park at Pulaski. Since last year

Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

April 1, 2021

Minutes

Page 4

the skateboard park has been inundated with graffiti artist/taggers. The Commissioners requested that the Superintendent of Public Works be invited to

the next Commission Meeting to talk about the status of the skateboard park. It was suggested that the skateboard park be painted over.

- Commissioner Bayron reiterated his request to determine whether the handball court at the Roberts Field Sports Complex has lighting. This request was made last year. He also requested that permanent trash receptacles be installed at the tennis & handbag courts at the Roberts Field Sports Complex.
- Copies of the Department's Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Request had been emailed to the Commissioners.
- The Commissioners were also email copies of the CDBG grant requests: Handball Court Improvements at Ward II/Jim Jackson Courts and Improvements for Ingleside Park.

6. Recreation Report

Maureen Tisdell updated the Commissioners on the following programs: Spring Drive Thru & summer programming.

7. Other Business

The Commissioners requested that Michael McManus, Superintendent of Public Works, and Anthony Soto be invited to the next Commission meeting.

8. Schedule the next Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

T/B/A – Dependent on Superintendent McManus & Acting Superintendent Soto's availability.

9. Adjournment

The Meeting was adjourned at 6:48 pm.

Parks & Recreation Commission Meeting

April 1, 2021

Minutes

Page 5

Respectfully Submitted,



Teresa Shepard

Addendum:

The listing of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Parks & Recreation Commissioners which may be discussed at the meeting.

Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.

RECEIVED
MAY 21 10:14 AM 2021