

City of Ellsworth
1 City Hall Plaza, Ellsworth, ME 04605

RECREATION COMMISSION

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, June 20 at 8:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order

Member Josh Frost called the meeting to order at 8:33AM.

Members Present: Melinda Workman, Kim Fitch, Jon Stein, and Josh Frost

Members Absent: Chair Eric Marichal, Vice-Chair Kathy Young.

Staff Present: Matthew Williams, City Planner; Elizabeth Ouellette, Assistant City Planner.

2. Adoption of May 16, 2023 Site Visit Minutes

Member Fitch moved to accept the minutes from the May 16, 2023 Site Visit with the revision of adding all members who attended onto the “members present” portion of the minutes. Member Workman seconded the motion. **The vote to adopt the May 16, 2023 Site Visit Minutes with revisions was UNANIMOUS (4-0).**

*The Commission voted to move agenda item #5 to the beginning of the agenda due to time constraints.

5. Discussion on Plans to Advertise Membership to the Public

Member Frost asked City Planner Williams what the procedure was for advertising for a new member. Williams said that the City Council voted to approve the change in membership from 9 to 7, and now Staff will begin to advertise for the vacant spot on the Commission. Williams said that this would be done on the City’s Facebook Page, the City’s Website, and around City Hall. Williams said that the Commission could also pay for a promotional piece to be published in the newspaper. Williams explained that the application period would be open for about one month and then the Commission can decide if they would like to hold interviews. Member Fitch said that the idea of printing something in the paper would be a good idea. Frost asked if there was a way that things could be published in the paper for free. Williams said that Staff could write a press release and see if any of the local newspapers picks it up. Member Stein said that he could also announce the vacancy at the next City Council meeting to get the word out.

3. Discussion regarding May’s Site Visits

City Planner Williams asked the group to give their feedback regarding the Site visits. Member Workman noted that there is a need for signage to the Downtown. She also noted that the Franklin Street Parklet could use some beautification. She then said that she was surprised to see so many large fields in the City that could be used for larger gatherings as opposed to Knowlton Park. Member Fitch said that she believed the site visit was a great opportunity to see the conditions of all of the assets and determine where the needs are. Member Stein said that he was pleased to see the track and was happy that a member of Frenchman Bay Conservancy was present, as they provided a lot of helpful background information. Member Frost said that it was good to see people working on some of the fields as the group made their visit, as those fields were in need of repair. Williams said that he would schedule the second site visit at the July meeting so he can discuss it with the full board.

4. Discussion on Volunteer Opportunities within the City.

City Planner Williams explained that the City wanted to create a page on their website that has volunteer opportunities around the City. Williams said that he believed this should be funneled through the Recreation

Department because they are the ones who would best know the volunteer opportunities. Member Workman said that she thought this was a great idea as there are many motivated people around Ellsworth who are interested in helping. Workman also said that it would be a good idea to list the opportunities and the skills required to complete the work on the website. Williams said that he could make this a monthly item on the Recreation Commission agenda and the Commission can bring forward any opportunities they have been made aware of.

6. Member Comments

Member Stein gave an update on the City Council meeting where there was a discussion around using ARPA funds for repairing the track. Stein said that there is some funds left over that were apportioned to Ellsworth and some funds left over for Hancock County that can be used. Stein also talked about the conversation regarding the Franklin Street Parklet and the road barriers. He said that the barriers had to be in place since it is a temporary road closure, and there are specific requirements for a temporary road closure. He noted that there were some conversations around making the Parklet permanent, and therefore being able to get rid of the barriers. Stein said that there were some concerns regarding snow removal, however the conversation is still going on to see if there are any solutions.

Member Frost said that he has been getting quotes in regards to the repairs needed on the track. He noted that in whole, it will be around \$1 million to completely reconstruct the track and update the lights around the track.

7. Staff Comments

City Planner Williams said that there was a sale on supplies that are needed for the ice rink going on in July. He said that he will encumber the funds that are to be used for the skating rink and use those funds when the sale happens. He said that he believed he could save some funds by purchasing the needed supplies during the sale. He did note that the ice rink will be ready and available to use this winter.

8. Citizen Comments

Cara Ramano and Amy Reisman were present. Ramano stated that the Heart of Ellsworth is working on a grant that will improve the electricity in Merrill Park. The grant is only for \$1,000, but Ramano said that this grant will help strengthen ties with the City and benefit Merrill Park. Reisman said that there will be a winter lights display at the park once the outlets were installed. She also said that there will be a workshop where community members can learn how to make a lighted sphere. Reisman also pointed out the long-term benefits of this upgrade, as many people use the park and will benefit from having electricity there.

Ramano also told City Planner Williams that the Heart of Ellsworth may be able to assist with the volunteer effort by the City. Williams said that he would be happy to work with her on getting a list of volunteer opportunities together.

9. Adjournment

Member Frost moved to adjourn. Member Stein seconded the motion. **The vote to adjourn was UNANIMOUS (4-0) at 8:57AM.**