

City of Ellsworth
1 City Hall Plaza, Ellsworth, ME 04605
RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, January 21, 2025 at 8:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order

Chair Marichal called the meeting to order at 8:33AM.

Members Present: Chair Eric Marichal, Vice- Chair Kim Fitch, Member Jon Stein, and Member Josh Frost

Members Absent: Member Melinda Workman

Staff Present: Matthew Williams, City Planner and Brittany Merrill, Planning and Community Development Assistant.

2. Adoption of January 13, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes

Frost requested some comments about the parade be added to the January 13, 2025 minutes. Vice-Chair Fitch then moved to adopt the January 13, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes. Member Frost seconded the motion. **The vote to adopt the January 13, 2025 Special Meeting Minutes was UNANIMOUS.**

3. Update on the Fire & Ice Festival

Vice-Chair Fitch said she have met with the event committee but there had been low attendance. She noted Communications Director Maura Condon had done a great job sharing the event. She noted the following events would included in the Fire & Ice Festival.

- Woodlawn Market 10-1 with ice rink, sledding and possibly a snowman building contest
- The Grand – BANNFF film festival
- City -Fireworks
- YMCA – no response yet

She noted the idea was to create the framework of the event and others could jump on it to add more to it.

Kathy Young from Downeast Community Partners let the Commission know that the Black Moon Pub was keep on an ice bar but needed a year to plan it so most likely they would have one next year with games like cornhole.

There was then a discussion on where the fake ice rink could go and alternatives. The YMCA, EMS, Knowlton Park, Basketball Courts, and the Parklet (with platform) were all mentioned as possibilities. It was determined the Parklet would be a great place if it were permanent.

Fitch noted that Zabet had sent out a nice e-mail to businesses hoping they would do something for the Fire & Ice Festival.

Stein mentioned they would do fire pits and hot drinks at Fogtown.

Fitch mentioned the Ellsworth American was doing a nice add for the festival. She also mentioned that the event committee met once a month or more if needed.

4. Update on Ice Rink

Marichal noted that for the demo event the ice should be set up inside at either the YMCA or EMS.

Frost suggested setting it up at the Maine Coast Mall as an alternative.

Marichal asked about the High School but it was not as convenient as the Middle School. He asked how they planned on getting feedback.

Williams replied that Condon would be setting up a survey with a QR code.

Marichal thought they should also have a sign explaining the why and the benefits of fake ice and that the Commission members should be at the rink to help inform.

Williams noted he would reach out to the sign maker and use an A frame for the event.

5. Public Comments

Young mentioned DCP had been awarded a grant to fire and train people to rehab and insulate properties. She noted they did a lot in the community.

6. Member Comments

Stein asked if there was an update on applications and new of one person who had applied.

Williams said he would check again but hadn't seen any come through.

Fitch asked if the terms were up this year.

Marichal asked about the budget timeline.

Williams noted they would talk about the budget in February.

The commission was impressed with the budget process. There was a short discussion on having a representative from the YMCA on the Commission and how they could now with the rule change and that it would be nice to get numbers of actual participation to help the public see value.

Marichal asked about the Deputy City Manager.

Williams replied that the goal was to hire a recreation coordinator to oversee the Commission and take over the Deputy City Manager who was to take over for Williams.

Marichal asked the Commission for their resolutions.

Fitch brought up the Hancock County Commission Meetings and there was a discussion on when they should attend. It was determined that they would move the Regular Meeting in February to the 25th as many of the members would be out of town. They then determined that they should attend the County Commission Meeting in March which was determined to be March 4th.

Fitch noted they should keep pushing for a director and that Knowlton Park still needed help.

There was then a discussion about Knowlton Park and how there was a new nonprofit for the park that could raise fund and the city could match. They noted that capital improvements needed to be in the budget so when the playground needed to be replaced in a few years they could match it. Playground pieces for Harbor Park was also suggested. Joint meetings were also brought up as a good goal.

Fitch noted a community member was working on a Dog Park with trails.

Stien noted recreation signage was important and that he would bring up the Fire & Ice Festival and the ice rink at the Council Meeting.

Young added that there could be opportunity at the new Court House location to use that space after hours for recreation activities.

Stein noted that the Frenchmen Bay Conservatory (FBC) would be looking at the land with the City.

Fitch asked what would happen to the homeless encampments out there as the two didn't mix well.

Stein replied that they needed to coordinate with Healthy Acadia.

7. Staff Comments

There were no Staff Comments.

8. Adjournment

Member Frost moved to adjourn. Member Stein seconded the motion. **The vote to adjourn was UNANIMOUS at 9:20AM.**

DRAFT