

City of Ellsworth
1 City Hall Plaza, Ellsworth, ME 04605
RECREATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting
Tuesday, October 15, 2024 at 8:30 a.m.

1. Call to Order

Chair Marichal called the meeting to order at 8:30AM.

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

Members Absent: none

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

2. Adoption of September 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chair Fitch moved to adopt the September 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes. Member Workman seconded the motion. **The vote to adopt the September 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes was UNANIMOUS.**

3. Update on Ice Rink

Chair Marichal mentioned he did some research online, specifically on PolyGlide Ice. For a 24' x 60' space it would cost roughly \$17,000.00. The location of the ice rink will help determine the size, and the framing will be an additional cost to remember. If they get sponsors than it should be reasonable. Williams mentioned the Waterville "fake ice" rink and that they had zero complaints and used theirs for rollerblades. Marichal mentioned that they should cover the rink when not in use and questioned who would be responsible for covering it every night.

The Commission discussed different locations and made a list of the following:

- Parklet (may not be closed to traffic this winter)
- Empty Lots or Church Lots
- Knowlton Park (picnic area too small)
- Harbor Park (needs platform)
- Pickle Ball Court (insurance company needs to be consulted)
- Basketball Courts

Marichal offered to measure spaces and mentioned that the panels were 4'x8'.

Member Stein brought up the Pilot Program previously discussed. Williams mentioned they did have \$4-5,000.00 in the budget. Fitch asked if a sponsor would match for the pilot program. Workman asked if the City would match from general funds. Williams cautioned against spending the whole budget on panels and to save some for signage. He then suggested Knowlton Park of the YMCA for the pilot program and mentioned that Public Works could build a platform next year.

4. Discussion on Ice Festival and Tree Lighting

Fitch asked about the Tree Lighting Call for Vendors. Williams replied they had not advertised yet, but Planning and Community Development Assistant Merrill could make a flyer this week. There was then a

discussion on the tree for the Tree Lighting. It was determined that they had a tree available from Aurora, but they still needed to find a company to transport it. They may have a potential back up tree and it is not unmeasurable to get sponsors for the tree.

Discussion then turned to the location and other events. The tree will not be in the parklet but up by City Hall. The City will do Letters to Santa at the Ellsworth Public Library, leading up to the Tree Lighting Ceremony. Marichal said his company is sponsoring the books again. Fitch mentioned that the Reindeer are not an option this year as the person retired. She then asked if the lights had been ordered and said that the light poles had been fixed. Williams said the lights would be ordered this week and confirmed that the poles had been repaired. Fitch mentioned there were 30 posts but one had not been put back up so there are really 29 from the bridge to upper Main Street. Workman asked what was happening to the old lights. Fitch said they would use them at other events. Workman suggested using them at the ice rink. Marichal asked what else was happening at the Tree Lighting. Fitch replied with the following:

- Ellsworth American is putting together a song book with coloring pages and different organizations for local giving
- Flex-It is providing hot chocolate again
- The library is doing something
- Woodlawn is doing something
- The Grand is running the Tree Lighting Ceremony
- The YMCA is doing something but focused on breakfast with Santa
- HTCP is doing something with buoys
- Live music

Fitch said someone asked about the potted cedar trees and if they could be put in the parklet with solar lights. It was determined the ones in the parklet were owned by the Arbor Commission and the ones downtown were owned by the Heart of Ellsworth.

Fitch then turned the discussion to the Parade, saying the announcement was going out this week and that it would be the same format/route/time/etc. as last year. There is a chance there would be a different Santa. The theme is Christmas in Toyland.

Marichal said he talked with YMCA about the canoe races and needed to confirm the date. They would keep the canoes to cardboard and duct tape, so no paint or other decor would pollute the pool.

Fitch asked about the fireworks. Williams said he would follow up with them. Frost asked if they would be at the high school. Fitch confirmed that they would be there on Saturday night and mentioned Friday night would be a community bonfire at Knowlton Park. There would be firepits, not a real bonfire, live music and food trucks. She also mentioned that Woodlawn would be doing carriage/sleigh rides and hosting a Christmas Market, Artsworth would also be doing a gathering, the Grand is doing something, and she would follow up with the ice carving person after Christmas.

5. Public Comments

Zabet NeuCollins from the Heart of Ellsworth said, “You are doing great! Keep up the good work.”

6. Member Comments

Marichal asked about new members. Williams replied they would advertise after City Council voted on the ordinance change on Monday.

Fitch asked about an update on Knowlton Park items. McLean stopped in to give a brief report, saying they had ordered the bridge, swings, and would be installing the smaller things but the suspension bridge might not be installed until the spring.

Stein asked about the parklet and if more user information was needed. Williams replied that he did not know what the plans were for that. Stein asked if the commission could do anything to help. Williams advised him to talk to the City Manager.

Stein asked that he would be giving a plug for Rec Staff and asked if there was anything else. Workman suggested they should be thinking about a dog park because people are using Knowlton Park to let unleashed dog roam free. Stein replied he could put a call for ideas out to the public. Fitch recommended they invite Alyssa from Something to Wag About to one of their meetings and thought she had something in the works. Workman mentioned an example on private property where people could pay to take their dogs and book times but would get more information.

7. Staff Comments

There were no staff comments.

8. Adjournment

Member Workman moved to adjourn. Vice-Chair Fitch seconded the motion. **The vote to adjourn was UNANIMOUS.**