

Portland Parks and Recreation Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 10, 2025

Buck-Foreman Community Center

Parks and Recreation Office

265 Main Street

Present: Commission Members: Chair, Chris Donahue, Karen Agogliati, Amie Leary, Amanda Lebel, Reagan Fitzgibbons

Also: Andy Dionne, Parks and Recreation Director and Michael Pelton, First Selectman

Absent: Kevin Backman, Deb Rooth

1. Call to Order

Chris Donahue called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

2. Roll Call/Appointment of Alternates

Amanda Lebel was seated for Deb Rooth.

3. Approval of Agenda

Amie Leary made a motion to approve the agenda for the February 10, 2025 meeting. Reagan Fitzgibbons seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Karen Agogliati made a motion to approve the minutes for the December 9, 2024 meeting. Reagan Fitzgibbons seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Seasonal Events

The 2025 Easter Egg Hunt was discussed. This year's event will be taking place at the Portland Recreational Complex at 10:00am on Saturday, April 12, 2025. The make up date will be April 13, 2025 at 1:00pm. Parks and Recreation will reach out to Angela Aresco from Carl Guild and Associates to see if they are still interested in participating in the event. Other discussion items included the parking lot gate, extra candy being available for participants who may not find many eggs, getting balloons or something similar for the Parks and Recreation table and participant age groups.

6. Park & Field Updates

Andy Dionne mentioned that sponsorship letters for the 2025 Athletic Fields Advertising Program were mailed out. 16 local businesses participated in 2024 and had vinyl signs with their company logo displayed at the Portland Recreational Complex from April to November. Interested businesses for the 2025 program can submit paperwork online through RecDesk or in person at the Parks and Recreation Office.

Rental applications for the Spring Season (April 1, 2025 – June 30, 2025) will be reviewed on March 1, 2025 and need to be submitted to the Parks and Recreation Office by February 24, 2025.

7. Parks and Recreation Programs

Andy Dionne reported that registration for this year's Summer Quest programs is open. Early Bird pricing is available until May 1, 2025. Westchester Circus Arts will be performing during the first week of Summer Quest on June 25, 2025 thanks to a grant from the Community Foundation. Summer Quest Base Camp participants will have the option of attending a field trip to a Connecticut Sun game on July 9, 2025. Summer Quest Teen Camp field trips include two trips to Brownstone Adventure Park, a baseball game at Dunkin' Park, and Chris Cote's. The Summer Quest Carnival is scheduled for August 7, 2025.

Base Camp and Teen Camp will run from June 23, 2025 to August 8, 2025. Kiddie Camp will be a shorter program this year.

Summer Quest Counselor and Kiddie Camp Assistant Director job openings are posted on the Town's website. The deadline to apply is March 28, 2025. Andy Dionne mentioned that the majority of last year's staff are currently planning on returning.

Registration for three weeks of Slamman Jamma Basketball is open. The first week is taking place during April Break (April 14, 2025 to April 18, 2025). The other two weeks are taking place during the summer (the week of July 14, 2025 and the week of July 28, 2025).

Registration is also open for Adult Dance, a President's Day Art Program with Abrakadoodle, a second round of Youth Virtual Golf at Chris Cote's, Jr. Golf with Gerry D'Amora at Portland Golf West, Kids' Blast, a Spring Skyhawks Multi-Sport Program at Riverfront Park for ages 2 – 5, Tai Chi, Yoga and Youth Dance.

Gerry D'Amora's Spring Ladies Golf Clinic has already sold out.

Andy Dionne mentioned a potential problem with Summer Quest staff training. The program is scheduled to start on June 23, 2025, so staff training at the High School was originally scheduled for June 18, 2025 and June 20, 2025. The last day of school is now June 17, 2025. If there are more snow days this year, then the training schedule may need to be adjusted. Andy Dionne mentioned the difficulty of not having any dedicated space for the Parks and Recreation Department in Town. In year's past, the room on the second floor of the Buck-Foreman Community Center was used for Summer Quest staff training. The Parks and Recreation Department no longer has access to that room.

Andy Dionne is working with Inspire Girls Basketball to set up two weeks of the program in Portland this summer. The dates are not finalized yet.

8. Budget and Capital Needs

Andy Dionne mentioned that he submitted the Parks and Recreation Budget to Michael Pelton and Tom Robinson.

Chris Donahue mentioned items in the Capital Improvement Plan including the Brownstone Monument near Gildersleeve and the outdoor courts at Brownstone Intermediate School.

9. Public Comment

Michael Pelton discussed fundraising ideas. The annual “Come on Over” 5K was discussed, and Michael mentioned that he is willing to help with this event. Michael also mentioned the possibility of Parks and Recreation being involved with next year’s midnight 5K at the High School. Amie Leary mentioned the previously discussed idea of a Color Run at the Portland Recreational Complex.

Chris Donahue asked about the meeting at the Portland Recreational Complex regarding cross country trails. Andy Dionne confirmed that the meeting took place and that the next step in this potential project is getting quotes for what it might cost to have an engineer design a trail.

12. Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made by Amanda Lebel. Reagan Fitzgibbons seconded. The motion was approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 6:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Andy Dionne

Parks and Recreation Director