

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting
Monday, May 19, 2014 7:00pm
Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center

The regular meeting of the Harrisonburg Parks and Recreation Commission was held on Monday, May 19, 2014 in the Cecil F. Gilkerson Community Activities Center. Chair John Marr called the meeting to order with the following commissioners present: Joshua Mathews-Ailsworth, Steve Barranco, Anthony Hill, Joe Riley, Jason Rooney and Abe Shearer. Also present were Lee Foerster, David Wigginton and Wanda Jones from Parks and Recreation.

1. Welcome—Chair John Marr welcomed all present.
2. Approval of February Meeting Minutes-with no additions or corrections, the minutes for the February meeting were approved.
3. Overview of Youth Football Program—Erik Dart gave a presentation on youth football. The greatest concern with youth football is concussions. The coaches are given cards with common symptoms and signs of concussion. Coaches are told “when in doubt, sit them out”. Parks and Recreation is currently using a 4-5 star rated Riddell helmet. No helmet is concussion proof. Another concern is parents conduct at practices and games. Parents and players must sign a Code of Conduct and parents are encouraged to attend a parents meeting before the season begins. A variety of solutions have been discussed including; added security at the games, no longer keeping score and a parents meeting at practice. A partnership is being formed between the Parks and Recreation’s Athletics Department, Anthony Hill, the schools and the coaches. Most coaches are afraid to confront the parents.
4. Report on Dance Program and Recital-There are twenty-six youth dance classes with 277 students enrolled, 160 city residents and 117 non residents, with a total in fees of \$20,615.00. This is up over 100 students over the last seven years. There are four adult classes with 15 enrolled, all city residents, with a total in fees of \$1090.00. This year, the recital was on two different days, Saturday evening and Sunday afternoon. The rehearsals were held on Wednesday and Thursday nights.
5. Project Status Update:
 - a. Westover Playground-The playground has been expanded with new equipment for all ages. This project was funded by with a Community Development Block Grant. A two car handicap parking area will be added as well as a handicap ramp for the playground. A handicap water fountain with a dog bowl will be added at a later date.
 - b. Ramblewood-The construction company is still hauling in dirt to spread over the liner. Construction of the ball fields should begin next month. The restrooms have been set and a press box will be installed on top of the restrooms. The light poles will be installed within the next month and the fields should be seeded by July.
 - c. Dog Park-The grass is up, the shelter is finished with picnic tables inside and the road going into the park is spread with rock. The deadline for installing the fence is August 15th.
 - d. CFG Community Activities Center Energy Efficiency Project-Approximately 400 old ballast were replaced with T8 ballast, sensor switches replaced old light switches and 16 new HVAC units have been installed. This should reflect a tremendous reduction in electric used.

6. Westover Pool Season Conversion – To convert the pool from winter to summer is a three day process between deflating the dome to reinstalling the diving boards. This involves a crane and approximately 20 personnel.
7. David Wigginton presented Joshua Mathews-Ailsworth with a 2012-2014 Service Award.
8. Comments, Questions from Commissioners-How often does helmets need to be inflated? Several times a year. Are coaches trained on basic expected behavior? Yes. Do you see fewer concussions in flag football? Yes. Has Parks and Recreation considered going into an all flag football league, with no tackling? We may have to in the future. What would you like to see happen with football? All coaches abiding by the code of conduct, work on the game over winning, parents that are not negative but more supportive, maybe move to an association (like SVU) where you will have a board and more help and volunteers. Has anyone ever looked into deducting points due to poor sportsmanship of either the player or the parent? No but that is a good idea. Do you have the number of concussions in a year? No but Tommy might. What changes can be made for the next coaches meeting? Zero tolerance for misconduct of coaches. Someone from USA football to talk about concussions. How much does Parks and Recreation get out of the \$21,000 made from the winter dance program? \$5,000 to \$7,000. How does someone donate money for new starting blocks? They should make a donation to VAST or the school. Does SVU pay for the use of the fields? No, but they do reimburse for the paint used to mark the fields. Will Ramblewood be available next year? Hopefully next spring.
9. Adjournment-with no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.

The next scheduled meeting is Monday, June 16, 2014 at 7:00pm