

Working together is success.
— Henry Ford



Community Facilitation for the
Town of Auburn and
Parks and Recreation Program

June 19, 2018



Promoting Excellence in the Public Sector

Purpose of the Session

The Town of Auburn invited Primex³ to assist in facilitation of a discussion regarding the future of Parks and Recreation in the Town. The session took place June 19, 2018 from 6-8 pm.

Who is Primex³

Founded in 1979, the New Hampshire Public Risk Management Exchange (Primex³) is a public entity risk pool organized and operating as a trust on behalf of member municipalities, schools, counties and other governmental entities. Primex³ is your premier risk management partner by delivering superior coverage programs, trainings and services that create extraordinary value for our members.

The exercise was facilitated by:

Rick Alpers, Risk Management Consultant, Primex³

Shelley Walts, Member Services Consultant, Primex³

Participants

Members of the community, boards, departments and elected officials were invited to participate to insure a solid cross section of the community is represented. Participants were further divided into three smaller groups for small group discussion. The following are the three small groups and their members:

Group A

Keith Leclair, Select board

Alan Villeneuve, School Board

Pat Kelly, Soccer League

David Nye, Parks and Rec Commission

Jeff Porter, Conservation Commission

Kim Lufkin, former Parks and Rec Commission

Peter Miles, Budget Committee Chair

Group B

Samantha Belcourt, School Board

Lisa Canavan, Parks and Rec Commission

Pat Clement, Duck Race and Library Friends

Patrick Glennon, Auburn Fire

Jennifer Anderson, Parent

MB Lufkin, Budget Committee

Mike Dobmeier, Parks and Rec Maintenance

Mary Royer, Citizen

Amy Lachance, Parks and Rec Coordinator

Group C

Jim Headd, Select Board Chair

Barbara Carpenter, School Board

Margie McEvoy, Parks and Rec Commission

Michel O'Rourke, AVS Assistant Principal

Walter Milne, Town Treasurer

Bill Herman, Town Administrator

Patti Allard, Trustee of Trust Funds

Jamie L'Italien, Parent

Setting the Stage

Jim Headd, Select Chair, began the evening with brief comments regarding the facilitation.

- For a number of years now, there has been various processes and discussions as to what is the future of Parks & Recreation in Auburn.
- Auburn has grown from a small rural community where almost everything was completed by volunteers.
- One of the goals set by the Board of Selectmen for 2018 was to have a community discussion to help the Selectmen and other officials determine what the proper direction is for Parks & Recreation in Auburn.
- Should we remain a Commission of volunteers supported by part-time employees or should it become a more formal department of the Town.

Amy Lachance, Parks & Recreation Coordinator then provided a brief power point presentation on the department as it currently stands today. This included data collected through small group meetings, an online survey, and finally, this facilitation session.

Question 1

Participants shared their reasons in small assigned groups. Once each group completed their assignment, a group spokesperson was chosen to represent and share the group's thoughts to all the facilitation participants. The following are the small groups results to the question:

What Do You Want from Your Parks & Recreation Program?

Group A

- New indoor facility / multi-purpose
- Storage
- Lights on soccer and softball fields
- Centralized Administration
- Partnership with other Towns
- In need of additional staff
- Programming to stay current with popular activities
- Location other than Wayne Eddows?

Group B

- Community Center
 - ✓ Storage
 - ✓ Parking
 - ✓ Kitchen
 - ✓ Meeting rooms
- Adult programs
 - ✓ Additional Senior programs
 - ✓ Sports
 - ✓ Education
- Special Needs Programs
- Recreation vehicle for staff use
- Partnering with other Towns for programs such as swimming lessons
- Fundraising
- Dedicated Parks & Recreation maintenance person and other full-time positions
- Community dances
- Fix the ice rinks

Group C

- Maintenance Facility
- Add Pickle Ball to the programming
- A desire to grow the program
- Town facility
- Community Center
 - ✓ Seniors
 - ✓ Teams
 - ✓ All others - need for 13-16 year olds
- Walking path behind Circle of Fun
 - ✓ Boardwalks
 - ✓ Scout Project
- Skate Park - unsuccessful
- Wall Ball
- Sailing lessons
- Kayak / Crew

Question 2

The following are the small groups results to the question:

How Does the Town of Auburn Envision Providing These Continued Services and Wanted Additional Services?

Group A

- Partnership with Manchester Water Works
- Self-funding activities - user fees
- Involvement of Auburn Youth Athletic Association
- Expand role of Parks & Recreation Coordinator to accommodate facility use

Group B

- Partnerships
- Sponsors (corporate)
- Land / Location
- Volunteers - Teens, involve more Town groups
- Ultimately it comes to managing taxes
- Combine Library / Community Center

Group C

- Need for more paid positions?
- Location, location, location - convenient and central
- Is there a way to have the Community Center fund itself?
- Partnership with Library
- Partner with Scouts
- Partner with Manchester Water Works
- Pursue sponsorships/ donors
- Research other Town Community Centers
- Committee of members from Town groups to research

Findings and Suggested Next Steps

There is clearly an interest in expanding the Parks and Recreation program within the Town of Auburn. Each group spoke of a Community Center which would accommodate all ages in Town. The location and cost will need to be determined, but there are a few ideas in this report. The formation of a committee to visit other communities for ideas on programming, Community Centers and funding is recommended as the next step for further review and clarity on what the Town of Auburn wants from its program.

Conclusion

It was a pleasure working with the Auburn community and *assisting with this very important discussion.*

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Walts

Rick Alpers

Center for
Public Sector
A d v a n c e m e n t



Bow Brook PLace
46 Donovan Street
Concord, NH 03301

603-225-2841
800-698-2364

www.nhprimex.org

Trust. Excellence. Service.