

REPORT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

The Parks and Recreation Department has faced a very challenging year. The board actively meets two times per month with minutes being posted electronically. It is a priority with the board to keep the community well informed of all activities and events. This is done by utilizing the Tuesday and Wednesday envelopes sent home through the schools and postings on the community bulletin board.

The Recreation Director position was lost due to a zero funded budget. Sue Gorman, the department clerk, also left to pursue other opportunities. The loss of Jay Fenlason and Sue Gorman greatly affected the services that the board would have liked to provide to the town. Each board member has taken on several additional tasks that in the past were handled by the Recreation Director. We were able to provide the youth of the town with many of the same sports programs that we have in the past. Unfortunately, the Fall Festival, the learn-to-ski program and town trips were eliminated. The programs that we were able to offer existed largely through the assistance of a very strong and capable volunteer base. The various sports' coordinators and the RAH board has made it possible for the continuation of these youth programs.

The Summer Activities Program experienced another great season with many theme weeks that provided teens with a fun filled and exciting work experience. The enrollment was down from prior years but the camp provided the children who attended with a memorable summer filled with great activities and interesting guests. The Commissioners would, as always, like to thank the wonderful staff from last year's summer camp program. The dedication, enthusiasm and hard work shown by our town's young people ensured that the summer program was a continued success. We are looking forward to working with many of them again.

The board, in conjunction with the Police Department and the Recreation Association of Hampden has continued to hold movie nights. These events are held periodically and are well attended and enjoyed by many families.

The heavy fall rains caused some flooding damage in Memorial Park. The board would like to express their gratitude to Dana Pixley for all of his assistance not only with the repairs but also the assistance that he offered on how to deal with MEMA. Dana and his Highway Department staff have always been a great help to our department. This year was no exception.

Not everything has been negative. In May Harold House was elected to the board replacing Glennice Flynn after 12 years of dedicated service to our community. Deb House was hired last summer as our clerk. She has been a wonderful addition to our team. Her hard work and dedication has kept us afloat.

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The wonderful staff at Town Hall also deserves our thanks and appreciation. All of our town sports programs are run in conjunction with the Recreation Association of Hampden (RAH). RAH's committed volunteers help to organize and monitor all of our sports programs. Their contributions are integral to the growth of youth sports in Hampden. We are grateful for their involvement.

Respectfully submitted:

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Mike D'Agostino
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