



PARKS & RECREATION AND HARBOR COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 5, 2021, 5:30PM

Remote Meeting via Zoom

To Join the Meeting on a Computer

Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81865987332>

To Join the Meeting on a Phone

Number: 1-301-715-8592

Meeting ID: 818 6598 7332

AGENDA

I. Approval of Agenda

II. Consent Agenda

A. Action Item: Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2020 Meeting (attachment)

*waive the reading, approve the minutes and place them on file

III. Information Item: (15 min.) Update on Parks Foundation, John Bossange, Chair (verbal)

IV. Information Item: (10 min.) Clean Parks Initiative, Paul Morris, Grounds Maintenance Manager, BPRW (verbal)

V. Public Forum: (Time Certain 6:00PM)

Please see page 2 of the Agenda packet for details on how to participate in the public forum for this meeting.

VI. Discussion Item: (20 min.) Memorandum of Understanding Development – Athletics, Paul Morris, Grounds Maintenance Manager, BPRW (verbal)

VII. Information Item: (20 min.) Recreation Update, Gary Rogers, Recreation Superintendent, BPRW and staff (verbal)

VIII. Discussion Item: (15 min.) Cost Recovery, Cindi Wight, Director, BPRW (attachment)

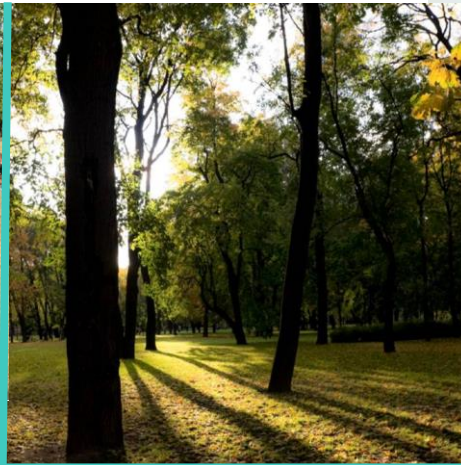
IX. STANDING ITEMS:

A. Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours (verbal)

X. Director's Items (attachment)

XI. Commissioner's Items

XII. Adjournment



The Smart Approach to Cost Recovery in Public Parks & Recreation – Virtual Express Cohort

An approach made possible by 110% Inc. an Amilia Company

A Call to Action for Public Parks & Recreation

Among the biggest challenge the public-sector faces are managing historic customer and community expectations that tax dollars foot the bill for most or all governmental services including parks and recreation. The uncharted territory in which many professionals now find themselves includes the reality that subsidy dollars only be directed to services that provide for the greatest public good, and an expectation of heightened cost recovery or excess revenue generation for services that provide more individualized benefit and not a broader impact on the community as a whole.

The business of public parks and recreation (and arguably, government in general) is at a critical crossroad and has been profoundly impacted by a number of key issues including: increased interest in governmental accountability; increased competition from all sectors; stable or declining revenues with increasing costs; rampant arbitrary pricing and antiquated financial accounting processes; rapidly changing demographics; and maintenance backlogs and deteriorating infrastructure that seem far beyond recovery.

Operating from a foundation built upon sound business principles does indeed challenge conventional wisdom in the public sector. It charges employees with being more diligent about their management decisions with the expectation that they justify how resources are used. It requires the establishment of organization cultures that reflect an interest in defensible management practices and justifying how tax dollars are spent. It encourages productivity and the pursuit of opportunities for efficiency and revenue growth knowing that these efforts can help strengthen systems for the long term. And by applying business principles the long-held notion that certain services can continue to be subsidized because they always have been or because there is a demand that they are is challenged.

We are in this together.

Our commitment is to help set your organization up for long-term financial resilience, strength, and vitality with the Smart Approach to Cost Recovery.



The Smart Approach to Cost Recovery - Virtual Cohort process at a glance

Today's economic and public health crises have prompted the urgency for many organizations to adopt the Smart Approach to Cost Recovery. These new realities have presented a limited window of time to complete this critical work along with the added constraint of entirely virtual efforts. In order to meet these challenges, The Smart Approach – Virtual Express Cohort process was created.

The Virtual Express Cohort process involves multiple agencies within the same geographic region in this collegial yet individualized effort. Agencies are guided through a prescribed mix of collective cohort education sessions as well as specialized consulting designed in response to each individual organization based upon its conditions and realities.

Cohorts:

- Small organization cohort: 4-6 agencies with operational budgets under \$10M
- Mid-sized organization cohort: 3-4 agencies with operational budgets between \$10-\$25M
- Large organization cohort: 2-3 agencies with operational budgets over \$25M

Proposed timeline: ~12 weeks

Proposed price: \$5975 per small organization; \$7975 per mid-sized organization; \$9975 per large organization

Included:

- *SmartRec* Cost Recovery online Tool by Amilia
Included for 6 months after project concludes. Renewals are available.

The Consulting Team



Farrell Buller is the Deputy Town Administrator for the Town of Erie, Colorado, and a project consultant for 110%. A former parks and recreation director, she brings 20 years of practical experience and a lengthy list of accomplishments as a government employee with a strong commitment to fiscal responsibility and accountability to each cost recovery/financial management project.

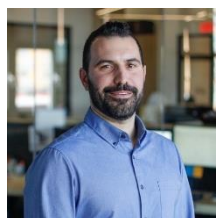
Eric Perowne is a Cost Recovery Associate at Amilia, a park and recreation software company. Eric specializes in helping organizations organize and sort their data efficiently by guiding them in the use of Amilia cost recovery tool. Eric's background in both technology and hospitality provides him with an impressive combination of skills that support cost recovery work in parks and recreation.



Jamie Sabbach is the founder and CEO of 110% Inc, helping organizations be more responsible, strategic, and bold amid dynamic social, environmental, and economic change and a company that has become synonymous with financial responsibility in parks and recreation. Over the course of her 30+ year career, she has served as park and recreation practitioner, university faculty, and as a consultant. Jamie has testified to the United States Congress on the critical importance of parks and public lands and has

been recognized on numerous national stages for her work. She was inducted into the American Academy for Park and Recreation Administration in 2008.

Nicolas Venditti is the Cost Recovery Partnerships Manager at Amilia, a park and recreation software company. Like Eric, Nick specializes in helping agencies organize and sort their data efficiently by guiding them in the use of Amilia's cost recovery tool. He has been involved in the success of cost recovery projects with various sized agencies across the country.



The Smart Approach to Cost Recovery - Virtual Cohort Scope of Work

The Smart Approach to Cost Recovery – Virtual Express Cohort process is a program designed in five (5) phases combining educational trainings, recorded webinars, interactive digital work sessions and one-on-one meetings.



Project Kick-off Virtual Meeting with each Organization's Project Team

(scheduled approx. 2-3 weeks prior to Phase #1)

- Project team expectations
- Review of each project phase
- Data and information request
- Review of project timeline
- Expected quality and format of all deliverables
- Preparation of and planning for Phase 1

Phase 1

Staff Education & Training: 1 1/2 -hour Live Virtual Workshop

Education and training on the front end of the process with up to 20 staff per organization provides a comprehensive understanding of the process, why the organization would choose to engage, and how the outcomes are ultimately intended to positively affect operations. Further, it offers an

introduction to the topics of financial management and cost recovery in the public sector and enhanced education on the merits of how revenues are and/or may be generated, how to think about spending, and about the importance of a cost recovery philosophy for sustaining parks and recreation systems long term.



Phase 2

Service Category Development: 1-hour Live Virtual Work Session

A team of representative organization staff will be tasked with the development of the organization's initial working draft of service categories. Resources will be provided to the organization to assist in the self-directed development of service categories as well as category definitions.

Phase 3

Cost of Service Analysis

The Cost of Service Analysis is the "heavy lifting" phase of the process. Staff who are needed to assist with this phase of the process include but are not limited to those at an administrator level along with those who are "gatekeepers" of the organization's financial data.

A Data Import Spreadsheet (DIS) and supplemental instructional guide along with support from the consulting team will be provided to assist the organization and ensure there is clarity and understanding regarding data identification and collection. This cost of service analysis will be supported by:

- A Cost of Service Workshop & Introduction to Cost Recovery Tool – 1-hour live online session
- Ten one-hour work online sessions with specific project team members to facilitate the work.
- Weekly check-ins with the organization's project team (as needed).

The weekly check-in meetings will be held until such time that all necessary costs and revenues have been incorporated into the DIS, and there is a high level of confidence in the integrity and accuracy of the data and that all reasonable assumptions have been made and documented.

Phase 4

Beneficiary of Service Workshops

Once the organization's service categories have been developed and agreed upon, staff, policy makers and/or advisory boards and stakeholder groups will actively participate in determining each service category's "beneficiary of service".

Organization staff, council and/or boards can be invited to participate in workshops where participants rank the organization's service categories starting from services generating the greatest "community benefit" to those services generating the greatest "individual benefit".

The result of these workshops allows for the organization to begin building their cost recovery model - a visual representation of their strategy. By plotting all service categories on a continuum that illustrates which services provide for the common good in contrast to those services which are more individualized and specialized, the organization begins to see which services should receive the greatest subsidy (community benefit) in contrast to those that may receive little to no subsidy (individual benefit).



Phase 5

Unveil the Results of Cost of Service Analysis & Set Cost Recovery Goals

After the data collection and importing processes conclude, staff will view the organization's **Cost Recovery Tool** and the results of the cost of service analysis. These data and supplemental reports include the cost to provide (both direct and indirect) each individual service in the system, current cost recovery performance levels and a series of other important information.

Current cost recovery performance results can be used as the baseline from which the organization can justifiably and rationally set cost recovery/subsidy allocation goals and targets that will be placed on their cost recovery model, essentially completing this visual representation of the organization's philosophy. Results will also guide the organization in establishing fees and charges, and making other informed financial decisions moving forward.

Key Deliverable

Cost Recovery Model & Strategy

Once the cost of service analysis is complete and the organization determines cost recovery/subsidy allocation goals that are credible and relevant based upon current performance, analysis insights and budget projections, the organization's cost recovery model and strategy takes shape. This key actionable deliverable sets the stage for implementation and momentum towards aligning today's fiscal reality with the organization's tax use and revenue enhancement philosophy as designed throughout the process.



This unique approach is designed and offered to North American park & recreation organizations by:





**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes
January 5, 2020**

Commission Present: Barlow, Traverse, Johnson, Farrell, Todd, Hurley, Lantieri and Harte

Staff Present: Wight, Morris, Rogers, Allen and Bushnell

The meeting was convened at 5:34p.m. by Traverse

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Barlow, second by Harte, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Traverse waived the reading of the consent agenda and motions into the record for approval.

Approval of consent agenda by Traverse, second by Farrell, motion carried.

Update on Parks Foundation

As John Bosange was not able to attend the meeting, this item was tabled for a future meeting.

Clean Parks Initiative

Paul Morris provided the commission with background on the project and its goals – identifying areas or parks that need frequent cleaning and organizing staff to work with volunteers to clean up said areas on Green Up Day. Following Green Up Day, Morris worked with Kate Alberghini of Green Up Vermont to develop year round green up events. Also assisting in the development and running of these events were Kent Spencer from Planet People and Marina McCoy from Waste-free Earth. This project put dedicated groups of volunteers into specific parks and provided them with necessary cleaning supplies. The events began in July and ran through the autumn totaling 15 cleaning days. There was one work stoppage due to state lockdown orders. With the Diana Woods promoting the event on social media, 132 individuals volunteered for a total of 255 Volunteer hours and 157 bags of trash picked up. Moving forward, the goal is to build the program by developing leaders and volunteers into stewards for specific parks.

Todd commended Morris on the program and asked if there was a title for the lead volunteer. She also mentioned that commissioners would be willing to put out information on their local FPFs to reach out to more volunteers. She asked the Morris reach out to them in the future.

Barlow commented that a small group of core volunteers might be better than one single leader as work could be divided between all volunteers and done according to availability over the course of the week. Morris agreed, stating that he and his team were able to leave a lockbox with supplies for the weekend volunteers when staff couldn't be on site.

Traverse asked if the project was on hold until spring and Morris confirmed that it was. He did also mention that people are still reaching out. Morris is still the contact person for this project.



Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00PM)

Public Forum was opened at 5:54pm

Dylan Kunkel is the leader of the Burlington Burn Club. His group of about 48 fire performers/enthusiasts and circus artists meet in Battery Park to practice their skills and perform to amplified music until around 10pm. They are family friendly and often draw large crowds. Over the summer there were some complaints about the volume of the music they use during their performances. The group discovered that they were not permitted to have amplified music and ended up having to end their performances at 9. Kunkel asked if there might be some middle ground. His hope was to get a permit extension, allowing the group to begin performing in April and end in November (both are months when the sun sets earlier), allow amplified music at full volume until 9pm, or extend the time the group can use the park with limitations on the sound. He and his group are willing to be flexible, but performing over this summer was a struggle.

Wight commented that the amplified music restriction is part of the city ordinances and would need commission approval to for an exemption. She recommended that Kunkel put the request in writing and send it to Meghan O'Daniel. O'Daniel will put the item on the next agenda for consideration. Kunkel thanked the commission for their time and assured them he would do so.

Public forum was closed at 6:07pm

Memorandum of Understanding Development

Over the summer, a fence was installed at the Leddy baseball field without a permit or contact with BPRW. This led to the discovery that the little league organization in the city do not have MOUs. Morris met with the presidents of each little league organization to get an idea of the issues (what works, what doesn't). All little leagues have now been informed that they will have MOUs before next season. Currently, there is a draft ready of a general MOU that will work for every little league. Morris will sit down with the little league presidents before finalizing the draft.

In addition to the MOUs, Morris has also been working on developing standard operating procedures. He has developed an excel spreadsheet to catalog fields, usage, equipment, and other needs. The goal is that this information will help make clear who is responsible for what. When he sits down with the little league presidents he will seek their input on ownership and needs. The fields will ultimately be entered into Civic Rec so that they can be used with not occupied by little leagues. The MOU will also include things like coach background checks and guaranteeing things are up to code.

Harte asked what jurisdictions the little leagues have and if there are or will be any consequences for disregarding the MOU. Morris used the unapproved fence as an example – BPRW assisted them in getting the fence permitted as it was beneficial to the field. Moving forward the MOUs will require BPRW approval for any changes. There will not be any punishments.

Recreations Update

Gary Rogers and Emma Allen provided the commission with an update on the Recreations department. Allen detailed the second annual Holiday Lights contest. In total there were 21 entries (double from last year). There were three categories – Classic, Colorful, and Creative, and bonus points were awarded for energy efficient displays (every entry this year was energy efficient). Pictures were posted on Social Media.



Todd commented that Essex did a neighborhood competition with a map of places to visit. Todd appreciated the idea of setting up the competition to be neighborhood vs neighborhood. Hurley commented that effort should be a category and Allen agreed, calling it technical difficulty.

Rogers reported that, while BPRW was unable to host the yearly Pomerleau Christmas Party, they were able to provide the families that normally attend with 350 \$30 gift cards to Price Chopper (in partnership with Price Chopper).

Rogers continued by detailing the changes made to various sports programming. The rec team provided 1 on 1 basketball clinics and "family" (single household) basketball clinics. The held 80 clinics to over 100 participants, and all offered clinics were filled. Starting 1/9 they will be offering age specific group clinics (15 people max). The Boys and Girls Club has been an extremely helpful partner, allowing usage of their gymnasium space for these clinics.

The Bolton Ski Program, which has always been extremely popular, will offer 3 4-week sessions for 20 kids, allowing for 60 total participants. They were unable to hold the December session due to covid-10 spikes in our area, but are hopeful that they will be able to hold the January session.

Several programs are on hold such as Itty Bitty Soccer and Basketball (due to required parental assistance) and Adult indoor soccer and volleyball. In an effort to get people outside, a temporary 9-hole disc golf course has been set up at Leddy Park.

Traverse asked if Hockey will be happening this year. Rogers confirmed that as of 12/26 teams can practice but are not allowed to have physical contact. So, yes, hockey is happening but it's different than previous years. Wight added that the ice is still rentable but the discount is no longer being offered. Hurley asked about the success of offering discounted ice rentals and Rogers confirmed the response was generally positive, but financially it was nowhere near what they usually do.

Rogers briefly detailed Licensed Child Care Camps that were offered over the winter holidays. BPRW was about to provide care to 50 families.

Online programs for adults and seniors such as ASL have had positive responses. The Senior Fitness program hopes to move online in January. In addition to online bingo and online and phone trivia programs, rec staff has partnered with Eventbrite to provide virtual tours of museums, parks and historic places to folks online. Most of these offerings are free. With Chittenden Senior Center currently closed, staff are making wellness calls again and provided gift bags to seniors over the holiday as well.

Rec staff has continued to assist in the meal delivery programs around the city. The program has shifted from providing individual meals to delivering bulk boxes of food equivalent to 7 days of meals. They are committed to working through January, but may continue depending on school statuses.

Finally, they have been working with Dan Cahill and the planning team to come up with an online interactive map outlining parks and trails available over the winter. The map will also show pop up activities as well as youth ski and snowshoeing in different parks.

Todd asked that Rogers reach out to commissioners if any of these events need publicity.



Cost Recovery

Wight reports that the city will be moving forward with the Cost Recovery program. We had an opportunity to take part in the program at a discounted rate and will be joined by other cities like Essex Junction and Brookline, MA. The program will help us to analyze the cost and benefits of various programs and make sure those two things are in balance moving forward. The goal is to make better decisions and strengthen the community by providing the best possible options.

Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours

Todd had 4 hours working on messaging for multi-users. Farrell had 1 hour at the Parks Foundation. Traverse had 1 hour and confirmed that he would contact Bosange to ensure his presence at the next meeting.

Director's Items

Due to Covid-19, the department is no longer able to fill the rec specialist and trees positions that were originally considered emergent.

The South End portion of the bike path is open. Wight did confirm that there is different equipment used to plow the north and south ends of the path and the timing of the plowing team is not always perfect. That said, they are working to improve.

The city is working towards purchasing an asset management system. Previously every department had its own system. This program will centralize the information and allow everyone to see exactly what is on hand.

The Shamanska Park Barn had some parts issues and struggled to reach completion during Covid-19 restrictions, but is finally almost complete. The Old East Enders already have 4 weeks work of programming for the space. Wight suggested that the commission have one of their spring meetings there.

Todd thanked Wight for helping connect her to Dan Cahill for his assistance on the Arthur Park/Sea Caves project.

Commissioner's Items

There were no commissioner items at this time.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:32 p.m. by Traverse.