

Recreation & Parks

October 7, 2025, 6:00 PM

Community Center

Attendance: Rossana Ferrante, Karin Ernst, Chris Kennedy, Shelly Bedrossian, Larry Simpson

Meeting called to order at 6 PM.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- 8/27/25: Correct a meeting attendee's name.
- Motion to approve all previous minutes, pending discussed change. Seconded. All in favor, the motion passes.

Village School Lights

- Shelly provided background information on the lights: We were approached by MYS because the lack of lighting limited their ability to practice. They asked about the option of temporary lights, similar to those used at Tower. We approached the building commissioner and a permit was not required. Town planning had no zoning restrictions. The school committee gave approval, but asked us to send a letter to direct abutters. The date on the letter was incorrect. We proceeded after 14 days.
- Feedback
 - Lisa Seymour and Brian Gray provided feedback from neighbors:
 - Why can't lights be placed on the lower field? It would have less impact on the neighborhood.
 - Can the lights be lowered?
 - Can they be hooded or shaded?
 - The lights are bright and visible in some homes. Some abutters did not receive the letter and did not have a chance to ask questions prior to their installation.
- Chris and Shelly will take a look at the lights and try to reach a solution.
- Rossana noted that any future lighting projects at Village will use a different process.

Dog Park (Stephen Cooper, Friends of the Marblehead Dog Park)

- Stephen met with Karin on the 27th, looking to see if there is a way to ensure access to the current dog park. We will go to the Select Board on 10/22 for approval of the expenditure of the Larz request. Ideally we would break ground in May/June, but it may move more slowly.
- Fencing: Karin suggests a focus on improving fencing in the town. The middle fence needs work and the outer fence needs to be higher. She recommends choosing a section of fencing to improve every year.
- We should put an insert in the census for the dog park in January. Last year's insert had a printing error with the QR code; a correct code this year may increase responses.

Charter Language Review

- Rossana would like to receive comments by Thursday so she can consolidate them.

- Jaime: the wording could be interpreted differently by different leadership (for example, it describes the Select Board as executive and the town administrator as chief operating officer).
- Shelly: The Select Board is specified as having power, but does not say it cannot delegate its power to someone else.

Park Updates (Pete)

- Stramski: Essex Tech carpentry classes have been making progress on the drywall. We did receive another quote with prevailing wage that came back around 3,000. The carpentry teacher has decided to teach his students how to do the taping, which will save money. They will move on to finish what they can on the front ramp. They were missing one sleeve for the post out front; it was ordered today and will be picked up tomorrow.
- Gatchell's: a change order came in for the lights at Gatchell's. The contractor was unaware that every pole was going to be replaced. The difference is around 13,000.
- Devereux Beach:
 - BoH hopes to approve the language in their October 14th meeting; the only wording they will use will come from the state.
 - Overall we took in less money than last year, due to poor weather on weekends. Next year it would be beneficial to look at the process of kayak rentals to streamline it.
 - We need a new Gator.
 - We should look into a beach cleaning machine.
- Vine Street: work will continue.

Recreation Update (Jaime)

- Two open positions were posted for the Recreation Supervisor and the Customer Service & Community Engagement Coordinator. Jaime interviewed internal candidates Olivia Ballard (Recreation Supervisor) and Lisa Smith (Customer Service & Community Engagement Coordinator), and would like to offer the positions to them. The positions will be effective Monday.
- The Director of Parks position will be posted in November to hire for February 1st.
- Seaside: We put in for money in the Shattuck Fund. The procurement officer put in for a bid. The walk-through is October 15th, Larry will attend.
- Hamond Nature Center: work on the stairs has started.
- Green Street: we have the lacrosse net and will coordinate with the light department to cover the gaps in the netting.
- October is very busy.
 - On Friday night we had 30 participants for cardboard scarecrow decorating. The scarecrow walk will be on October 18th.
 - Pumpkin decorating will take place at Gatchell's on the October half-day.
 - The Haunted House will take place on Saturday, October 25th. The volunteer group meets every Thursday to prepare the haunted house. We have made some changes to address the line issue from last year.
 - Late fall programming will be up by the end of the week.
 - Jaime is working with procurement to get independent contractors procured.

Public Comment

- Leigh Blander asked clarifying questions regarding the lights at village. They went up the first week in October. The letter said 6 to 8, but they have been shut off around 7:15. They will be up until the end of October.
- Sophia Harris from Marblehead Weekly News asked to clarify if there will be another scarecrow decorating class. Jaime said she will be happy to take any additional scarecrows.

Correspondence

- Lisa Spinale requests the use of all the middle school pickleball courts for a tournament on May 3rd, 2026 (rain date May 4th, 2026) from 8 AM to 6 PM, with approximately 144 people. Motion to approve. Seconded. All in favor, the motion passes.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 21st, at 5:30 PM.

Meeting adjourned at 7:25.

Minutes taken by Mary Herchenhahn