

Harvard Parks and Recreation Department



To: Mayor, City Council, and Lou Leone

From: Superintendent Ryan Knop

Date: January 12th, 2024

Monthly Report for Parks and Recreation

Hope you all had a wonderful holiday season! I have a plethora of things that are currently happening, or have happened since our last meeting. Our Zumba and Limber Life programs completed last week. Limber Life has been well received by all participants, and continuing that program for two additional sessions is already happening. Zumba is a new program that was implemented this past year and there were some growing pains as to be expected. Registration and participation numbers were an issue, which could be expected from a brand-new program offering. I have had numerous conversations with our Zumba instructor and she feels that due to the low participation rate during classes, she feels she does not want to proceed with a second class offering. I would like to have additional Zumba classes in the future, but some additional details such as instructors, time, participation, and building access need to be explored.

Programs for this upcoming year are still in progress, and I am making great progress on those. We will be having three different dance classes starting in May, so be on the look out for those. Some other programs that are being worked on are the Swim Lessons, Water Aerobics, Chess and Strategy, Art Classes, and Creative Writing just to name a few. Basketball season has officially started with games being played the first weekend in January. Everything has been going great with that, and we are seeing constant improvement in our youth participants. I have been in contact with some of the other programs to discuss playing some inhouse games during our practice time to allow our players more time on the court.

Our English as a Second Language Program officially kicked off on January 10th. Our first week presenter was Donovan Day with the topic about all thing Community and Economic Development here in town. There were five participants in attendance that asked great questions, and the feedback from week one was well received. To see the full list of presenters that are upcoming visit cityofharvard.org or the Harvard Parks Department Facebook page.

In addition to everything listed above, the Parks Department has been working on a summer soccer tournament. We have joined forces with Harvard Men's Soccer in a collaborative effort to ensure a successful tournament. At our initial meeting we started working on the planning process, where we discussed different aspects, objectives, and goals for this new tournament. We have a second meeting that is scheduled for Tuesday, January 16th, where we will be discussing the tournament style, promotional material, and tournament operation aspects. Thank you to the Harvard Men's Soccer program for their assistance with this new event, and everyone is excited to see what this will bring for our community.

Current Tasks In-Progress:

Task 1: Parks and Facilities Weekly Inspection Worksheet

I have completed the second draft of a detailed parks and facilities weekly inspection worksheet. This worksheet will be available out our Park Board Meeting to show in detail everything that will be inspected weekly. The objective of this worksheet is to document all assets that are currently located on City property, and the condition of each asset.

Task 2: Contractor Estimation for City Maintained Property

I am currently identifying and obtaining quotes from potential contractors who can take over the maintenance of city-maintained properties. I have reached out to three different companies over the past two weeks. One company was able to supply an estimate already, but the other two companies are currently working on snow removal and will touch base with me this week. The objective of these estimates is to see if outsourcing our current property mowing would be financially beneficial over an extended period due to ongoing equipment maintenance, and upcoming equipment replacements. One of the estimates being explored is the Husqvarna robotic mowers.

Task 3: Obtaining Additional Playground Quotes for Mary's Park

I am in progress of obtaining additional quotes from different companies for a playground renovation at Mary's Park. Over the past months there has been numerous discussions on the condition of the Mary's Park Playground. The objective of these quotes is to maximize the options available, and allow all parties involved to make an informed and educated decision for replacement in the upcoming future.

Task 4: Program Development

As mentioned earlier in my report, I am currently working on developing Recreation Program opportunities that will start in May. I have compiled a template for over 35 different programs. The objective currently is to finishing finding instructors for these programs to allow time for scheduling purposes. I have been in contact with numerous individuals and we are making progress on that. I am hopeful that CUSD 50 will be able to assist in promoting these programs to our High School Students for the instructor roles. Our goal is to be sending out a park program flyer to every residence in the 60033 zip code to boost participation for these new programs.

Thank you all for your continued support, and I look forward to another productive month in the world of parks and recreation. As always, please feel free to contact me with any comments, questions, or concerns you might have.

Sincerely,



Ryan Knop
Superintendent of Parks and Recreation
City of Harvard