



Sally L. DeLuca
Director

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Matt Coleman
Parks Manager

Department of Parks, Recreation & Facilities

Memorandum

TO: Parks Commission and Land Bank Commission

FROM: Matt Coleman, Parks Division Manager, Parks, Recreation and Facilities Department

SUBJECT: Parks Division Update

DATE: October 2018

New Park Manager

I will be managing the day to day operations of the Parks Division (Parks, Athletic Facilities, Playgrounds, Forestry, Horticulture, and Cemeteries) and overseeing the implementation of Parks projects. With my background working with park rangers and park operations, I have set goals to expand the ranger program and improve park maintenance standards.

CIP

Parks CIP priorities have been established by Parks Staff and recommended by the Parks Commission. Staff are now busy gathering quotes, plans, photos and other backup documentation for submission to City Manager and Finance Director.

Park Projects Update

Staff are working on the following funded CIP/Park Improvement projects:

- Cousins Memorial Reconstruction: 7 benches delivered and installation scheduled for this month.
- Deering Oaks Playground Improvements: Site work begins this month. Zip line and net climber coming Spring 2019.
- Futsal Court, Fox Field: Funded by CDBG, planning for late-Fall construction
- Island Playground Improvements: Site work and delivery of equipment currently in progress.
- Lincoln Park Fence Restoration: Staff are waiting on quotes to repair Congress Street portion of fence. Complete restoration will take place in phases.
- Lyman Moore Athletic Facility Drainage and Reconstruction: In progress, 95% complete. Sod has been installed. Completion of hydro-seeding and site cleanup remain.
- Park Signs: Installation on smaller park welcome signs has started on fencing. Materials have been ordered for signs mounted on posts.
- Payson Softball Title IX restroom and locker room improvements: funding secured, spring installation
- Dougherty Field Playground: Design phase and community input to start Fall 2018.
- Rowe Elementary School playground installation has begun and Forestry crew planting 12 trees.



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Unauthorized Tree Cutting

Staff are working on revising city code to specify fines for illegal/unauthorized tree cutting. Will require Council approval. We have had numerous cases lately of unauthorized cutting of city street trees and the City Code is not strongly worded enough to enforce fines that are a deterrent.

Deering Oaks Pond

Pond draining scheduled for the end of the month. This will be followed up with cleaning of pond bottom and removal/storage of duck house

King Middle School Planting

Forestry and horticulture staff teamed up with students from King Middle School for a planting project in Deering Oaks Park. The planting theme was "Bring nature home". A variety of native plants, trees, and ornamental grasses were used to promote wildlife habitat and sustainable landscape.

Winterization of Water Services

Staff will start the process of preparing the 70 various water services throughout the parks for the coming winter season. These include drinking fountains, field irrigation systems, bathrooms and more.

Maine Conservation Corps

A six crew member team will be coming to complete a trail maintenance project at Presumpscot River Preserve. They will be working cooperatively with Portland Trails staff for one week at the end of the month.

Winter Lighting at Pleasant St Park

Working with Portland Downtown, Pandora and CMP to add power to Pleasant St Park for Pandora lights.

Parks Division Staff Update

Changes have been made with staff reporting. The park ranger program and park maintenance staff will report directly to Park Manager. Interviews for the Evergreen Cemetery Administrative Associate have been conducted. Next round of interviews will be for the Athletic Facilities and Horticulture Supervisor positions.

Portland Container Company

Met with Portland Container Company about Opportunity Boxes in Portland Parks. These customizable shipping containers can be placed on a location and used for small-scale retail, food, beverage or recreational uses. We are looking at 2-3 locations in Portland City Parks to set up a pilot program where we would license OpBox to operate and rent space to vendors with a recreational focus (bikes, scooters, kites) or food focus (coffee, food). This has great potential to help activate parks and add activities that will draw park visitors. Potential locations: Back Cove parking lot (post construction), Amethyst Lot.



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Instagram Scavenger Hunt

Initiated instagram parks scavenger hunt in Portland Parks. Participants get clues through our Parks, Recreation and Facilities Instagram account, then race to various Parks to retrieve a toy lobster that has been hidden. The first to find the lobster receives comp tickets to concerts at Maine State Pier and Merrill Auditorium. Sign up at <https://www.instagram.com/portlandmepfr/>

Park Signs

- Large Park entrance signs to be installed at Payson, Lincoln Park, Riverton Trolley Park, Back Cove, Dougherty Field this fall.
- Small park signs (pedestrian size) to be installed in 15+ parks in October/November.

MDOT Coordination

Working with MDOT on repairs to fences along Tukey's Bridge and Dougherty Field.

Negative and Illegal Activity in Parks

Deering Oaks Park and Harbor View memorial Park continue to be hot spots for undesirable activity. Increasing Park Ranger and Police patrols of these public spaces to decrease amount of public drinking, drug use, defecation, urination, etc...

"A Walk In the Park" Series

Good attendance at bike rides and tours in Parks as part of our Walk In the Park series. The final trip of the year will be the Portland Big Tree Bus Tour. More info at:

<http://www.portlandmaine.gov/1990/A-Walk-In-The-Park-Tours-and-Talks>