Diversity Equity Inclusion Justice and Belonging (DEIJB) Committee

Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2026

City Council Chambers

37 Green Street
5:30 PM

Attendees:
Noemi Wierwille
Zoey Murphey
Sheila O'Leary Zakre
Fr. Jean C. Beniste
Mayor Champlin
Karen Juall
Amy Girard-Crush
Jennifer Kretovic, Council Representative
Ex-Officio Member: Cara Meeker, Representing Concord School District

Absent:
Alison Murphy
Vijay Bhujel
Clement Nsenga Kigugu
Ali Sekou, Council Representative
Ghana Sharma
Usha Thapa Shrestha
Ex-Officio Member: Merrimack Valley School District, Vacant

Call to Order on 5:40.
Minutes Approved.

Discussion with David Gill about Parks and Rec Fees
David provided an overview of the annual process to set fees, both indoor and outdoor facilities.
David had met with a constituent who had raised a concern about the fee process.
Purpose of application and fee process is to ensure that space remains available for the public and that when members of the public want to reserve space, they can do that.
Fees are based on residency, the vast majority of rentals are from non-profit organizations.
Fees were reduced at the community center, and consideration was given to having free facilities, but ultimately decision was to have some fee. Some worry that people would reserve and not use.
8–10% of Revenue Park brings in is through fees. Roughly 70K-90K annually.
There is a process by which fees can be waived. There are not a lot of requests for fee reductions.

The application does not articulate there is a waiver, but it is listed on the website. This change was recommended to the application.
Dave clarified the requirement of liability insurance vs. signing the waiver.
Fee schedule is differentiated by resident/non-resident. But fees are the same for profit vs. non-profit.

Committee Discussion on Park Fees
Fees are consistent based on facility and amenities.
Fees are in place to reserve space - which restricts access/availability for the public park.
There's an opportunity to increase transparency about the waiver.
Fees to use city amenities are lower than other non-profits and organizations that offer space to the public (Women's club, churches).
Some discussion if the waiver fee actually could create some fairness/equity concerns.
Sheila O'Leary Zakre, proposed a resolution "we would like to see a uniform waiver policy to be developed for a uniform policy that is applied uniformly".
Discussion of flexibility and clarity/transparently that's applied consistently. And amendment was made to include "other".
The spirit of the recommendation is to clarify and make accessible the waiver process.

Recommendation on Park Fees :
The committee recommends the parks and rec department clarifies and makes transparent and accessible the waiver process for discussion at the next RPAC meeting.

Discussion with David Gill about Trash in Public Parks
David gives a brief overview of how trash has been handled across parks.
Reference photos/handout. (Note, there is a typo to the heading on the bottom of page 1. Should say July 2025).
RPAC decided to remove trash cans in July.
This summer there is persistent trash challenges at Keech. Sometimes this happens at White Park on the Weekend.
Parks and Rec have updated signage in multiple languages.
All groups are responsible for their own trash.
It's been dramatically different this summer from last summer.
Dave's recommendation is more work to be done to work with community leaders and members that are the biggest users of the park.
Discussion of all parks becoming carry in and carry out.
Discussion of a Park Equity Analysis (See Hand Out).
Discussion of what has been put in place, signage and need to see those things play out a bit.
Discussion of if the cities resources are distributed equally across parks, recommendation by a committee member to carry in carry out.
Some potential solutions by making investments in technology enabled trash cans, although perhaps cost prohibitive at this time.
Recommendation to learn more: from residents who live near work park.

Meeting adjourned at 7:20

Meeting minutes taken by Noemi Wierwille