

no later than 7:30 a.m. six days per week. The maintenance staff is also responsible for plowing snow and clearing walkways at Childs Park, Lower Prescott Park skating rink, Lower Prescott Park parking lot, Prescott Park service road, Upper Prescott Park parking lot, Upper Prescott Building #3, Waukegan Highlands parking lot, and the parking lot at Hamlin-Eames-Smyth Recreation and Conservation Area. Without the truck these tasks cannot be completed.

Projected Maintenance Equipment Needs

Cost Estimate: \$50,000 **Projected Completion:** TBD

It is recommended that a new Ford F-550 One-Ton Plow Truck be purchased.

Cost Estimate: \$18,000.00 **Projected Completion:** TBD

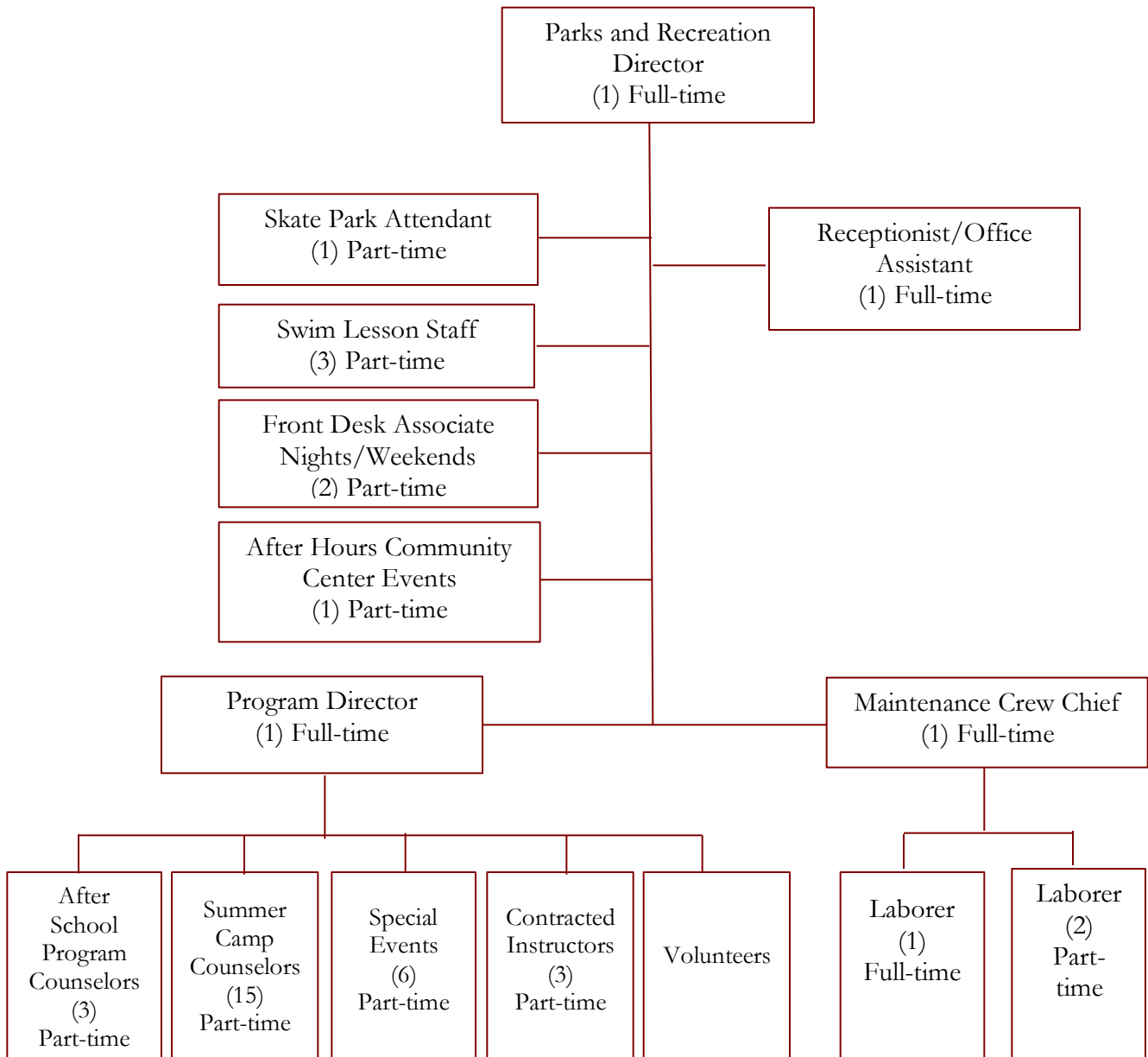
It is recommended that an infield grooming machine be purchased.

Currently infields are dragged with an infield drag mat towed behind a garden tractor. The infield groomer provides several advantages over our current method of grooming infields, such as a zero turning radius, hydraulic down pressure when dragging and several different dragging tools to accommodate all conditions. Dragging equipment currently being used follows the existing contour and does not have the capability of leveling and shaping the infield grades.

The department maintains 5 infields and user groups, as well as the department, expect playing conditions to be of the highest quality to enhance the playing experience and more importantly for safety purposes. The infield groomer would allow the department to better meet these expectations.

Maintenance and Programming Staff Delivery of Services

Parks and Recreation Department Organizational Chart



Parks and Recreation Maintenance Responsibilities

The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for all aspects of maintenance for the facilities (which includes interior and exterior of all buildings and seven days per week seasonally) listed below, which represents a total area of 272 Acres.

Community Center

Circle Drive Park

Lower Prescott Park

Upper Prescott Park

Leavitt Beach

Waukegan Beach

Waukegan Highlands Community Park – lot and trails

Swasey Park

Childs Park

Hamlin-Eames-Smyth Recreation & Conservation Area (Snow Plow Parking Lot)

The routine tasks that are completed at each facility include the following:

Mowing

Trimming

Landscaping

Repairs of all types including: plumbing, carpentry, fencing, painting, etc.

Trash Removal

Cleaning of Restrooms

Spring and Fall Clean-Up

Rake Beaches

Snow Plowing, Path Clearing and Treat Sidewalks

Repair and Paint Skate Park

Open & Close 4 Seasonal Restroom and Storage Buildings

6 Tennis Courts (2 with lights)

2 Basketball courts (1 with lights)

3 Playground Areas

Preventive Maintenance

Maintain 5 Infields

Drag, groom, line and prepare for all Inter-Lakes High School and Inter-Lakes Middle School baseball, softball, lacrosse, tennis, and soccer games and practices. Set up and break down all bleachers, benches, and trash receptacles for all seasons.

Line Parking Lots

The Parks and Recreation Department lays out and lines 2 gravel parking lots representing approximately 155 parking spaces. Repainting is performed on a weekly basis.

Turf Management Program

The Parks and Recreation Department committed to an organic turf management program beginning in 2010 eliminating the use of chemicals in an effort to protect the safety of all people and their pets who visit our parks. The organic program also reduces the amount of phosphorous levels which helps protect the health of our lakes and streams. The department performs all aspects of the turf management programs in house to include seeding, fertilizing, de-thatching, aerating and applying lime, Hum-Amend, GVH and other soil amendments.

Community Center Maintenance

Maintenance responsibilities at the Community Center includes preventive care of the HVAC systems, set up and break down of spaces for multiple year-round activities, special events, meetings, and set up and break down of voting booths for elections. Maintenance staff performs floor refinishing of the entire building twice per year.

Special Event Set Up

The maintenance staff supports several events conducted by groups outside of the department, by setting up, breaking down, and assisting in various ways. A few examples of support are painting field grid for fundraiser at Moulton Farm, setting up Memorial Day and Veterans Day presentations at Hesky Park, setting up and breaking down movie screen and equipment at Hesky Park for the Make-A-Wish

Foundation, and setting up and breaking down for 2 employee recognition days each year.

In House Maintenance Projects

The maintenance staff has performed many projects over the years with in-house staff. A few examples include installation of Jack's Place Playground and the Childs Park Playground (with volunteer assistance), construction of the Community Center garage, field #2 dugouts, new stairways at Waukegan Beach, new storage cubbies at the Community Center, full replacement of all 4 infields at Prescott Park, and made several repairs to the Community Center exterior such as roofing, trim, siding, and sidewalks.

Maintenance Staffing Review

The Parks and Recreation Department currently employs the following maintenance staff:

- (1) Full-time Working Crew Chief
- (1) Full-time Laborer
- (1) Part-time Laborer 28 hours/week March 1 – December 31
- (1) Part-time Labor 40 hours/week April 1 – September 1

Budget reductions in 2010 and 2012 reduced the maintenance staff by 70 hours per week.

The reductions have made it difficult on the department to meet all of the maintenance responsibilities in a timely and consistent manner. Although the reinstatement of one part-time staff in 2017 was a positive step, the department continues to operate with a staff shortage.

Maintenance Staffing Recommendations

Cost Estimate: \$55,000 Annually Including Benefits **Projected Completion:** TBD

It is recommended that one full-time maintenance laborer be added to the staff. Not only does the current work load warrant the additional position, demand on facilities and staff will certainly increase over the next 15 years. It is challenging to recruit and retain dedicated and productive part-time employees.

In recent years new sports programs such as lacrosse and football have been added in Meredith for all age groups including adults. New programs will certainly be added and existing programs will expand over the next 15 years. Demand on the facilities and staff will certainly increase, requiring additional maintenance staff to care for the facilities. The community surveys indicated a desire for additional facilities and programs, all of which will require additional maintenance. For instance a strong desire for more ice skating opportunities and improved skating conditions was expressed. With the advent of youth sports being played year round, facilities no longer have the benefit of “down time” to recover. This places greater strain on the facility conditions and on the staff responsible for their care.

Review and Evaluation of Existing Programs

The former Meredith Senior Center was operated and administered by the Community Action Program and was housed in the Meredith Community Center. The Community Action Program rented space at the Community Center from the Town of Meredith to operate the Meredith Senior Center 5 days per week from 8:00AM-2:30PM year round. The Senior Center offered programming, served a hot lunch daily, and delivered lunches daily to those in need. The Parks and Recreation Department offered strong support to the Senior Center in terms of space usage at the Community Center, far and above the terms of the rental agreement. The Parks and Recreation Department and the Senior Center enjoyed a very positive working relationship.

In June of 2014 the Community Action Program made the decision to close the Meredith Senior Center. Shortly after the closure of the Senior Center, Meredith Parks and Recreation Director Vint Choiniere made the decision to assume the responsibility of offering all of the Senior Adult programs that were being offered by the Senior Center at the time of the closure, with the exception of the daily meals. Since that time the department has added programs and activities for Senior Adults.

The Parks and Recreation Department is in need of direction from the Board of Selectmen on what level of services is to be provided to Senior Adults by the Parks and Recreation Department both short term and long term. Census figures demonstrate that New

Hampshire's population is aging at a rate higher than the national average, and Meredith's population is aging faster than the state average. Whether or not to offer the daily meal program as a Parks and Recreation service should be thoroughly researched and considered.

To address this important issue, it is recommended to add a full-time Program Assistant as well as purchasing a bus. The details of both recommendations are explained later in the master plan.

Currently the greatest demand for programming is found within the 5-12 year old age group. The Parks and Recreation Department strives to expand program offerings for all age groups. However, staffing will need to increase in order to achieve program expansion.

Current Programs - 2016 Participation Totals

PROGRAM	# PARTICIPANTS
After School Program	54
Summer Camp Can Do (ages 5-14)	229
Mystery Field Trip	98
Sky Zone Field Trip	97
Whales Tale Field Trip	120
Canobie Lake Field Trip Grades 4-8	46
Clarks Trading Post Grades K-3	36
Counselor in Training Program	24
Insanity Adult Exercise Class	4
Adult Tennis Lessons	10
Youth Tennis Lessons	38
Youth Lacrosse Program NEW	22
Adult P/U Soccer Program NEW	13
Adult Ultimate Frisbee NEW	11
Swim Lessons	150
Full Week School Vacation Camps	83
Full Day & Half Day School Vacation Camps	74
Climbing Wall Drop-Ins	85
Coed Youth Soccer Program	64
Coed T-Ball	64
Granite State Track Program	28
Preschool Playgroup	57
Adult Coed Volleyball	27
Senior Strength & Balance Program	149
Senior Exercise	49

Adult Day Pickleball Program	133
Evening Pickleball Program	89
Adult Men's P/U Basketball	90
Craft Fair Vendors	30
Craft Fair Attendees	400
Red Sox Trip	43
Birthday Party Groups	39
Community Center Drop-Ins	9750
Skate Park	300
Annual Christmas Tree Lighting	120
Halloween Bash	200+
Holiday Open House	250
North Pole Calling	40
Holiday Movie Night	100
4th of July Concert	400
Annual Easter Egg Hunt	320
Hart's/Parks & Rec Thanksgiving Dinner	60
Senior Drop-Ins Daily Average	12
Senior Computer Class	8
Senior Monday Morning Movies	8
Senior Blood Pressure/Foot Clinic	25
Senior Morning Walking Group	9
Senior Knitting Group	8
Family Cabin Fever Movie Night NEW	100

Review of Existing Program Staff

The Parks and Recreation Department employs one full-time Program Director who supervises the majority of programs. The Parks and Recreation Department also fills several part-time positions in support of its programs year round. All part-time staff members are cross trained, allowing them to perform in a wide variety of roles such as counselors for Camps, After School Program and Special Events, such as the East Egg Hunt, Fall Family Halloween Bash, Holiday Open House and Tree Lighting Celebration. Other part-time roles include Community Center Front Desk Associate, Skate Park Attendant, and Youth Sports Coaching, such as, T-Ball, Soccer, and Granite State Track. Over the past 3 years the availability of current part-time staff to work more than one specific role has declined, making it more difficult to find coverage for the many different department responsibilities.

The Parks and Recreation Department also employs part-time swim instructors and lifeguards. Due to budget cuts, key part-time positions were eliminated such as the After School Program Director and the Summer Camp Director. Those duties were then assigned to the full-time Program Director, which severely limits the availability of time to spend on assuring quality of existing programs, developing new programs, and expanding opportunities. The Parks and Recreation Department's ability to offer new programs is limited by lack of staffing and by policy. Current policy states that if a new program or field trip doesn't generate revenue equal to the cost of conducting the program or field trip, then offering the program or field trip is not permitted. If the policy included some flexibility it would allow time for new offerings to grow over time, even if they fall a little short of the break-even margin on the first offering. The department has experienced recent success in offering some new programs by contracting with outside instructors. The Parks and Recreation Department and the instructor share the revenue on a percentage basis. The department will continue using this strategy in the future.



"Wild Encounters" Parks and Recreation Summer Camp

Program Staffing Recommendations

It is recommended the Parks and Recreation Department hire a full-time benefitted Program Assistant position.

Cost Estimate: \$60,000.00 Annually and Includes Benefits **Projected Completion:** 2019

In 2016 the After School Program Director and Summer Camp Director positions were cut from the annual operating budget. Since 2010, all of the responsibilities of these two important part time positions have been absorbed by the full-time Program Director, placing an even greater demand on the Program Director's time.

Adding additional strain on the Parks and Recreation Department is the fact that over the past 5 years it has become increasingly more difficult to fill the various program staffing needs with part-time employees. More experienced and productive part-time employees move on to full-time positions elsewhere, and the daily lives of people are so busy they are unable to volunteer as often to assist with recreation programs. Over the past 3 years the Town of Meredith has been unable to recruit applicants for key part time staffing positions in both programming and maintenance, which has left a major void in both areas. This has caused the After School Program to operate short staffed in the past two years and has also created a waiting list of 29 children that the department is unable to serve, as well as a loss of nearly \$38,000 in annual revenue. When part time positions are vacant it places a greater burden on full-time staff to meet the department's responsibilities, and negatively affects the quality of programs. In addition to the existing staffing challenges, the department faced a new challenge in September of 2017 when it was formally charged by the Town Manager to increase program offerings for Adults and Senior Adults.

Due to the staffing challenges the department is currently facing, and to meet the recently assigned demand for new programs now and in to the future, it is recommended that the department hire a full-time Program Assistant. Adding this full-time staff member would provide consistency, stability, and a greater level of professionalism to the department. Without the addition of a full-time Program Assistant, the department will be unable to meet assigned responsibilities in a safe, professional, and sustainable manner.

Partnerships and Volunteerism

The Parks and Recreation Department has well established partnerships with local merchants, civic organizations, town departments, and volunteers to offer recreation opportunities to the community at a reduced charge or free in many cases. Volunteers assist the department in programs such as special events, field trips, and youth sports. The department has partnered with many organizations and here are just a few examples; the Trinity Episcopal Church (What's Cooking Class), Beyond the Belt Martial Arts (Karate Class), and the Inns and Spa at Mill Falls (4th of July Concert) to expand program offerings. The department has partnered with the Meredith Rotary Club to construct new dugouts, new restroom building at Childs Park, and to renovate the restroom building at Lower Prescott Park. The department is engaged with the community to explore all possible resources to assist with current programs and program development.



"What's Cooking" Class in Community Center Kitchen

GENERAL DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

Purchase New 12 Passenger Bus

The Parks and Recreation Department is recommending the purchase of a 12 passenger bus to meet the increasing requests for expanding programming and to meet the needs of our senior population.

Cost Estimate: \$75,000.00 **Projected Completion:** TBD

This would be ideal for offering small group trips, especially for seniors. The department has had numerous requests to transport children from summer camp to swimming lessons, scheduled trips to special events, festivals, and more.

Contracting with bus companies is very expensive and makes trip fees too expensive for most seniors. The 12 passenger busses can be driven without a special license and they are equipped with the handicapped lift. The bus purchase would be eligible for grant funding and this type of purchase would be well supported by local civic groups and merchants.

Credit Card Payments

It is recommended to offer patrons the convenience of paying registration and facility use fees with a credit card payment system.

Cost Estimate: TBD **Projected Completion:** TBD

46 percent of those who responded to the survey stated that they would use credit card payment 100 percent of the time. At the same time, only 5% stated that no credit card payment option has prevented them from registering. Many who responded agreed that paying with a credit card would be very convenient and appreciated.

Signage Program

Cost Estimate: TBD **Projected Completion:** TBD

It is recommended that all facilities have professional signage at their entrance to identify them as a Parks and Recreation facility. The signage will also include relevant information to guide all visitors as they enjoy the facility.

Alternative Funding Sources

It is recommended that the Parks and Recreation Department seek alternative funding sources to help fund the recommendations included in this Master Plan.

The Parks and Recreation Department has successfully raised private funding over the past 17 years to dramatically lower the cost of several projects, including the Skate Park, Childs Park, and the Community Center. The Parks and Recreation Department is committed to doing so in the future.

It is hoped that Friends of Meredith Parks and Recreation (FRIENDS) will play a major role in future fundraising efforts. The non-profit group was established several years ago to assist the Parks and Recreation Department with fundraising. Volunteerism and activity within the FRIENDS group has been inconsistent. However, renewed interest will hopefully be generated by the Master Plan.

The pursuit of grant funding will be essential in order to fund the ambitious recommendations included in this Master Plan. The Parks and Recreation Department is committed to this grant writing effort.

The Town of Meredith is fortunate to have so many generous individuals, civic groups, merchants, and organizations within the community. The Parks and Recreation Department has received generous support over the years and it looks forward to fostering a continued cooperative effort to help complete future projects.

Public Input

The Parks and Recreation Department worked for several months to collect public input by the following means:

A town-wide electronic and paper survey was open from July 13, 2016 to September 30, 2016. The survey was posted on the Town Website, via Facebook, sent twice to 4500 household email contacts, advertised in local newspapers, made available at the Meredith Public Library, Town Hall, and Community Center. Program staff and receptionists

promoted the survey daily. The Parks and Recreation Department received a total of 141 respondents from the general public via paper surveys and electronic surveys combined.

The department hosted two public forums held at the Community Center on Thursday, July 28, 2016 and Saturday, July 30, 2016.

The Parks and Recreation Director met with a group of seniors who regularly visit the Community Center to collect their input. The Director also worked with the Inter-Lakes School District Superintendent and school principals to survey students in grades 3-12 and received a total of 545 completed surveys.



Parks and Recreation Adult Volleyball

Master Plan Recommendations Support Survey Requests

Survey respondents, both students and members of the community, strongly support the recommendations being made in this Master Plan. Strongest support from both survey groups is for the replacement or improvement of the Leavitt Beach Bathhouse, Prescott Park Playground, and Lower Prescott Park Restroom Building. The top request for adding a