

SUMMARY OF OPPORTUNITIES

Monthly Parks Commission update – June 2022



Stories

I saw the crew out today doing a great job. Attached picture show an example of how many obstacles the crew has to maneuver around but also how nice it looks after they were done. Thanks!

Jason

Five Sisters Forum

Issue No. 6403 • May 1, 2022

Trees, Trees, Trees, and More Trees!

Kristin Mccole • Catherine Street, Burlington

Gratitude

As I walk and drive around the city this spring I am in awe of all the new trees that have been planted. Each one makes me incredibly happy and I can't help but point them out and tell whoever I'm with, "Look at that one!"

Thank you to VJ Comai and his crew for doing the work to make this happen and to anyone else involved. I really, really appreciate it. :)

[Email Author](#) [Reply to Forum](#)



Department accomplishments and notable staffing developments since the last report?

- June Work Anniversaries – Dan Cahill (21 years – including Americorp time) and Tess Weafer (1 year)
- Diana Wood and Cindi Wight participated in a City-wide marathon team including members from BPD, CEDO and DPW. Cool shirts designed by Diana!
- Long-time cemetery staff member, Jeff Shedd will celebrate retirement in June and a year-long trip to Uganda in July. An exciting next chapter for Jeff!
- Neil Preston and Andrew Romano join us as our first Urban Park Rangers – welcome aboard!



Major upcoming events: <http://enjoyburlington.com/events/>

- July 3!
- Leddy Beach Bites – starts July 6

Recreation Facilities Division Update

Leddy Arena

- Our summer season has not even begun but Scott Hannigan is busy scheduling ice for next hockey season. Scott has been coordinating with high school teams, Lumberjacks, youth hockey and other user groups to get our September-May season fully scheduled. In the meantime, Scott continues to support the North Beach Campground operations until they get fully staffed for the summer.
- The arena looks brand new with most of the public areas painted, dasher boards and glass cleaned, floors scrubbed and all spaces deep cleaned. We are excited to reopen on June 20 for nine weeks of camps – all of which are full with waitlists!
- Dustin Dupont, who was a shared employee between the Arena and Park Facilities, resigned in May. His position has already been posted and we hope to interview candidates and make a hiring decision in June.
- Another new member of our team that we hope to welcome in June is our new electric Zamboni – we will share photos of our newest “staff member” next month!

Miller Center

- With the exception of line dancing and table tennis, most Miller programs wind up their season in June and take the summer off. However June will see plenty of activity with summer staff training the week of June 13 and the start of our nine week day camp on June 20.
- Darlene Loyer, our Miller customer service associate, retired in May. Her job description is currently being reviewed with the hopes of posting and hiring for the position in June. This critical position serves as the main customer service contact with the public for our Department.
- June activities at the Miller Center include a graduation ceremony for Centerpoint School, a baby shower and even a wedding reception! Other activities include a Life Line health screening, youth basketball practices, an adult basketball league, weekly church services and bible study with Champlain Valley Baptist Church and monthly NPA meeting.

CORE

- BPRW staff is working with Fletcher Free Library, CEDO, and the Mayor’s Office to develop a comprehensive Extreme Heat Policy for the City, to include as many cooling centers as possible to ensure accessibility for all residents of the City.
- BPRW staff is working with CHT to implement a new parking policy, including parking passes at the CORE. This is necessary as visitation and usage of space increase throughout the ONE Center and will ensure that our full-time staff there have the ability to park on-site.
- Very Merry Theatre will begin its eight-week summer camp at the CORE in June. BPRW specialty camps will be held at the CORE as well, beginning in July, with eleven different sessions of camps

Park Division Update

Park Administration

- Skate park work is expected to begin in June.
- Murals were added to A_Dog Skate Park.
- Seeding occurred at the Moran/Frame site. Lighting and other work on the site will continue through September.
- Cemetery, conservation, and park event/buildings seasonal staff are in the onboarding process or have completed onboarding and are working! Still a few positions available for Parks and Central Facilities.

Conservation Program

- Ongoing development and rollout of the 50th anniversary of Community Gardening in Burlington. Will include season-long education opportunities, a documentary, and a harvest celebration in September; the process is led by BPRW staff and supported by a committee of gardeners and partners from various agencies.
 - 50 Years Celebration - [website](#)
 - [history blog by Jim Flint](#)
- On May 4, the Conservation Team held a culminating workday at Oakledge Park, with 80 students from UVM ENVS201 Restoration Ecology. This is the seventh consecutive spring that BPRW has collaborated with Professor Bill Keeton in this class. Each spring the class chooses a natural area within a Park setting. Over the course of the semester, students break into groups and work on specific projects related to restoration ecology for the chosen parkland. On the culminating workday, aspects of the student projects are implemented with the guidance and assistance of Park Staff and their professor.
 - Work completed at workday - invasive species removal, the closing of pirate trails on sensitive bluff areas, tree and shrub planting (250 trees total),
- Partnership Planting Projects
 - Pride Planting - On May 21, BPRW staff collaborated at Starr Farm garden with the first of many workdays with the Pride Center. Over 30 shrubs were planted, as the first part of activation of newly created open space at Starr Farm. The space is intended to increase community garden beds, increase native pollinator plants and edible berries and fruit, create community-gathering space and provide memorial space to victims of hate crimes.
 - Lakeview Cemetery Plantings – a multi-year approach to bringing trees that are more native and vegetation to the cemeteries the Conservation Team is supporting the planting of over 100 perennial plants, shrubs, and trees at Lakeview garden. This work is in partnership with [Grow Wild](#). Areas of focus are bank areas and dedicated garden bed spaces.
 - Ongoing coordination and teaching support in the re-wilding of the Champlain Elementary School campus. This work is in partnership with the [Grow Wild](#) partnership and Wildways Coalition and Burlington School District.
- Continued Park Design Planning Process with Voices of St. Joseph's Project
 - The conservation team held a community workday in May to harvest young black locust trees from Kieslich Park. These young locusts were harvested from an area of the park that will be disturbed during the future installation of a bike path connector trail. Harvested locust will be used in the development of an arbor that will be installed as part of a memorial and healing space that acknowledges the experiences and values held by the members of the [Voices of St. Joseph Project](#).
- Delivery of Amenities and Services to Community Gardening
 - May marks the time of year when we transition from the registration and planning season into the garden spaces. The Conservation Team, with the support of Grounds Maintenance, the Tree Team, and Facilities is able to activate water service, deliver amenities such as compost and hay, as well as ensure tilling and mowing services are activated and aligned.
- Marathon preparation - in the weeks prior to the Burlington City Marathon, the Conservation team dedicated a significant amount of their work plan to ensure the marathon route is cared for and ready to receive the event.



- Continued Support and Participation in the Burlington Wildways Coalition. Learn more about [Burlington Wildways here](#).

Central Facilities Program

- Continual warm weather cleanup of public buildings and exterior spaces to combat litter and graffiti.
- Successful startup of City Hall Park fountain.
- Thorough cleanup of City Hall basement to remove years of debris and equipment left behind.
- Completed air filter changes for all central City building HVAC units.
- Started chimney repair work at 339 Pine for public safety.
- Replaced uplink equipment to ensure better reception for City Hall panic buttons.
- Worked with Allegion for door hardware and reader installation education.
- Troubleshooting and scope of work for hot water challenges at Leddy Ice Arena.
- Replacement of hot water heater at 200 Church Street.
- Furniture move for Police Department.
- Replaced camera computer system at Fletcher Free Library.
- Repointing work started for ground level at the BCA to complete FEMA flood damage work.
- Exterior door repair work completed at City Hall.
- Roof repair work at Police Department.



Trees and Greenways Program

- Completed resident requests as needed.
- Completed spring cleanup and mulching of all park spaces and landscape beds.
- Planted all new trees in City Nursery in partnership with Branch out Burlington volunteer planting day.
- Planted annuals in all planters in managed park spaces and in North St. tree planters.
- Ongoing watering and maintenance of all newly planted trees throughout the City.
- Routine maintenance of all landscape beds in managed park spaces as needed.
- Began routine cyclical pruning of trees on designated streets throughout the City.
- Ongoing updates to tree inventory to include newly planted trees and ongoing pruning.

Park Facilities Program

- All dock systems are open and operating.
- All building's water systems are charged and operating- just a few drinking fountains left to do.
- All community gardens' water is on.
- All Irrigation systems are charged and running we have some repairs to do when time allows.
- City Hall fountain is up and running we still have three heads to replace when the parts come in.
- Battery Park fountain is up and running.
- We have four applicants to interview for our Events and Arena maintenance worker position.
- We have two applicants to interview for our Park Facilities position.
- Graffiti is still ongoing in the parks.
- Kurt has a full docket of special events the most recent was Vermont City Marathon.

Cemetery Program

- Providing burial service Monday – Friday. In the month of April, we performed 6 burials (3 cremations, 3 full burials).
- Caskets are being removed from vault storage by funeral homes for burial. All caskets must be removed by 7/1/2022
- Approximately 30 volunteers assisted in placing the ~1500 flags on the graves of Veterans at Lakeview, Greenmount, and Elmwood. The project was completed by 5/25/2022, well in advance of the Memorial Day Weekend deadline. A tremendous thanks goes out to our volunteers! The Cemetery Commission will be sending out thank you notes to those who assisted.
- There were 3 lot sales of various sizes over the course of the last month, resulting in \$5,500 in sales.
- The department has hired on 7 part time seasonal employees and anticipates that our staffing is complete for the summer season.
- A group of volunteers from Preservation Burlington cleaned up Elmwood Cemetery on Memorial Day between 10am and 12pm. The department provided tarps, bags, and any other equipment needed to clean the space.
- The Old East Enders held a tour and placing flags on the graves of veterans at Greenmount Cemetery on Memorial Day.
- The 1812 Veterans interment is scheduled for 6/4/2022 between 10am and 11:30am. In addition to a military honor guard, speakers from the UVM archeology department, the Agency of Commerce and Community Development, and Mayor Weinberger. Representatives from Senators Leahy and Sanders' offices will also be present.

Grounds Maintenance Program

- Successfully completed field and sports field maintenance for all school sports leagues, youth lacrosse, and GBGSL Soccer.
- Seasonal mowing and trimming crew has maintained all required areas and has limited mowing as part of our Bee City goals for the month of May.
- Seeding and feeding have occurred at all primary athletic fields.
- Conducted volunteer and staff beach cleanups at North Beach.
- Assisted trees in the coordination of a staff cleanup at the Leddy Park rain garden.
- Conducted cyclical inspections at our park playgrounds.

Planning Division Update

- Projects Progressing:
 - **Bike Path Projects:**
 - Realignment projects impacting the Greenway are completed and are completely reopened!
 - **Calahan Park Playground:** Working with vendor and internal team on coordinating old playground removal and site prep and installation estimated for August.
 - **Champlain Street Park Redesign:** Public meeting and NPA tour completed; survey live for additional input on preferred alternative.



- **Kieslich Park:** Working with consultant team at Cambrian rise on finalizing documentation needed to bid out the construction of the connection to the Greenway in 2023 (likely pushed to next year).
- **Leddy Park Comprehensive Plan:** Public meeting scheduled for June 2nd 4:30-6:30pm. All are invited! We could use help getting the word out and potentially tabling at Leddy this spring/summer!
- **Leddy Pause Place and UVM Fitness Equipment Pad:** Working with consultants on updating drawings to bid out these remaining parts of the Greenway rehabilitation and to build the second bioretention area at Leddy as part of our Greenway Phase 3 stormwater permitting with the state.
- **Oakledge for All Universal Access:** Anticipating grant agreement in-hand soon for spring bidding. Bid documents for the playground wrapped up. Working with consultant on restroom renovations. Working on finalizing details of fitness equipment installation.
- **Roosevelt Park Comprehensive Plan:** Will be requesting proposals soon for a comprehensive planning process for Roosevelt Park.
- **Schifilliti Path:** Drone survey of the project area completed. Base plans generated and design work started.
- **Wayfinding:** New signs coming soon to six parks!
- Projects supporting other divisions/ departments: (abbreviated)
 - Playground Equipment and Compliance
 - Survivors of St. Joseph Orphanage Project
 - Great Streets/Main Streets



Waterfront Division Update

Marinas, Harbor & Parking

- A parking kiosk was installed at Perkins Pier, adding another way to pay along with Parkmobile.
- DPW has 2 parking kiosks that are in current use but scheduled for removal in the next few months to be relocated to Leddy Park for the rollout of parking fees at Leddy Park. They will both be located in the large surface lot by the Arena. The current plan is to have them installed by July 1, 2022.
- Transient reservations opened on May 15th, and we look forward to welcoming back our Canadian boaters. This will be the first year we can do online reservations with the new software.
- The marina expects to install dock gate entrances to all our marina docks, in an effort to prevent break-ins and vandalism that has been occurring at higher rates.
- The Marina is adding enhanced WiFi at the Boathouse, both for seasonal boaters to use, and as a paid service for transient boaters.
- The Marina, along with Perkins Pier and Waterfront Park public restrooms are all open for the Summer.

Campground & Beaches

- Campground is in full swing & the beaches have been very busy in this early season.
- Due to staffing challenges, keeping up operations has been challenging. We've had to alter how we staff and the hours to accommodate.
- The bookings are strong this year with little availability left for the popular weekends and holidays.

- Lifeguard services will start in late June, pending the ability to hire enough Lifeguards to staff all towers. If there is not enough staff, we'll need to reduce the amount of towers staffed, and shrink the lifeguarded swim zone at North Beach to accommodate. All lifeguarded areas are having the same issue, as we connect with YMCA and Colchester.

Events

- Below is a draft schedule of Waterfront Park Events. There are many returning events, as well as some new events for 2022.

Date 2022	Waterfront Park Event
December 31 (2021)	Highlight New Year's Eve
March 12	Special Olympics VT Penguin Plunge
April 9	Half Unplugged Marathon
May 11	VIP
May 13,14,15	Kids Day
May 28,29	Vermont City
June 10, 11	Discover Jazz
June 18, 19	Juneteenth
July 3	Burlington Independence Day Celeb
July 22,23	Vermont's Brewer's Fest
July 29-30	Dealer.com Party. 2 nd day TBD
August 6,7	Dragonboat Festival
September 9-10	National Antique Boat
September 18	Pride Fest
September 24,25	Grace Potter
10/22 or 10/29	Run VT

Urban Park Rangers

- Neil Preston the new Lead Ranger Started 5/17/2022 and the Urban Ranger Andrew Romano Started 5/26/2022. The full time staff positions are now fully hired.
- The seasonal Urban Rangers (2), as well as Neil & Andrew will be out in their new summer hours starting 5/30/2022.
- Neil has been learning the parks and gathering information on them as well as figuring protocols for the Rangers. He will be connecting with local organizations to grow our network of services.

Recreation Division Update:

Summer planning and seasonal staff hiring is progressing nicely. We have four days of summer training for 60+ staff beginning June 14th. We are very happy to announce three separate grants from partners to assist with our Free Recreation & Nutrition Summer Meals Program, VT State Licensed Camp, PAL Camp Programs and two weeks of free camps and trips in August. The Burlington School District, VT Afterschool and Burlington Housing Association have combined to provide over \$160,000 in grant funds!!



Miller/CORE Programs

- Spring Programs taking place at the Miller Community & Recreation Center or the ONE Community Center include:
 - American Sign Language
 - Ethiopian Cooking with Mulu Tewelde
 - Senior Adult Tax Assistance
 - North End Yoga
 - Yoga for Adults
 - Very Merry Theatre for Youth & Adults
 - Fit Lot Exercise classes
 - Women's Self Defense
 - Out & About Trips
- We are continuing to offer for this summer a Beyond Beginner Line Dancing class thru July 25th.
- We had 10 participants in the Ethiopian/Cooking Class that prepared two vegetarian and two meat dishes.
- Our Wellness Series: Hands on Healing continues.
- American Sign Language classes continue, with summer classes starting in late June.
- Two of the 50+ Out and About trips have taken place with a trip to the Vermont Institute of Natural Science. Everyone enjoyed the walk above the tree canopy walk and seeing the birds of prey at VINS. Our 50 + Out and About Trip to the Robert Frost Trail in the Green Mountain Forest included a walk thru forests and open fields viewing Robert Frost's poems along the way.

CORE Adult Center

- The Outdoor Raised Gardens have been planted and are fragrant with flowers and full of greenery. The gardens provide daily opportunity for CORE participants to get outside and grow their own vegetables, herbs, and flowers.
- CORE Adult Center staff continue to offer a daily lunch program for Burlington seniors. Transportation to our Congregate Meal site is provided by SSTA through a statewide grant administered by Green Mountain Transit and United Way of Northwestern VT. ***Our weekly Bhutanese Community Meal at the CORE Adult Center has restarted. We have 20 to 30 Bhutanese Senior Adults attending weekly.***
- We led successful trips to the Robert Frost Trail and Vermont Institute of Natural Science in May, along with programming in Chair Yoga, Bone Builders, International Cooking and Cooking with Mulu, Acrylics, Reminiscing, Book Club, Bingo, Theatre Class, Nature Crafts, Seed Saving, and a daily social hour.

Department Events

- **Kids Weekend:** Went extremely well! Both Roosevelt and City Hall Park were very well attended (with Roosevelt being the largest day of the weekend) and while rain threatened Schmanksa, there was still a nice turnout and much fun was had.
- **July 3rd Fireworks:** Planning is still rolling along. Kat Wright will be the featured band and we are getting a good response to our RFP calling for vendors. Planning for traffic, security, transportation, and parking are all looking good. VIP party will be held once again at ECHO!
- **Beach Bites:** Weekly Wednesday night food truck events at Leddy Park begin July 6th and run for six consecutive Wednesdays. We need more food trucks. Many truck owners are having difficulty finding staff to operate at the capacity they would like. Local bands are booked for 4 of 6 dates.
-

Athletics

- Our spring athletic clinics and programs that are wrapping up or concluded recently:
 - The Burlington Youth Lacrosse season will be wrapping up soon
 - Itty Bitty Soccer ended on May 31
 - Maven After School Skate Clinic ended on May 25
 - NFL Flag Football Clinic ended on May 28
 - The Schifilliti disc golf league has been averaging about 10 people each week.
- Our summer camp season is starting soon! Here are all the camps that will be taking place in June:
 - The Edge Tennis Camps
 - Basketball Camps w/ Blueprint Basketball and Coach Sam Jackson
 - Talent & Maven Skate Camps
 - CSC Sailing Camps
 - DGVT Disc Golf Camp
 - Laura Ray Soccer Camp
 - Volleyball Camp w/ BHS Coach Spencer Avery
 - Baseball Camp w/ BHS Coach Marcel Girouard
- Other athletic programs that will be starting in mid-June:
 - Soccer Sparks soccer clinics
 - Itty Bitty Tennis
 - Itty Bitty Track & Field
 - Youth Track & Field
 - Adult Team Tennis



Admin Division Update

- Significant focus and time in May on the FY23 budgets
 - Requested \$520K of unassigned fund balance for one-time projects in FY23
 - Requested full funding of all special funds
 - Requested two FT positions, one PT to FT and one PT position for FY23
- Working with staff and partners on reducing trash expenses at the shared trash site at ECHO
- Establishing monthly meetings with IT and BPRW around public buildings

- Establishing monthly meetings with 645 Pine department heads to increase multi-department communication
- Researching and understanding the process for the dredging project at our marinas – a learning curve!
- Set kick-off date for Red Stone Cottage renovation in June

Commission notes

- No scheduled July Commission meeting