

City of Somerville, Massachusetts
Job Description

Position Title:	Director of Parks and Recreation	Grade Level:	V
Department:	Parks & Recreation	Date:	8/8/2025
Reports to:	Mayor	FLSA Status:	Exempt

Statement of Duties

The Director plans, organizes, coordinates, and supervises a comprehensive community recreation program of seasonal and year-round recreational activities for persons of all age groups to include (but not limited to) cultural arts, physical activities, special interest classes and summer programs. The Director of Parks and Recreation also works closely with other City departments to adequately maintain recreational spaces and facilities and advise on physical facility improvements for community programming.

Essential Functions:

The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various type of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related, or a logical assignment to the position.

- Plan and direct the selection, training, supervision and evaluation of department staff.
- Administer, operate and maintain existing athletic fields and recreation areas and facilities.
- In partnership with Department of Public Works, the Division of Public Spaces and Urban Forestry, and other departments, plan for the acquisition, development and operation of proposed facilities.
- Plan, promote, organize and supervise comprehensive and diversified community recreation, cultural, athletic, and social programs and administer these programs in the best interest of the entire community.
- Directs, interprets, and ensures compliance with Memorandum Of Understandings (MOUs) and State contracts.
- Supervise recreation areas, athletic fields, and the operation of facilities throughout the City that are required to meet the needs of the community's recreation, athletic, and community services activities. Conduct activities, events and programs that will engage citizens in a wholesome, constructive, and equitable manner.
- Coordinate parks and recreation programs and plans for facilities with other City and Somerville Public Schools departments and divisions, community groups, and others as required.
- Direct staff in establishing and maintaining procedures for tasks such as:
 - maintenance of files and records
 - the collection of fees and charges; preparation of forecasts of fees and charges
 - management of recreation program registration, activity and facility scheduling
 - management of maintenance records, contract administration, permitting, and other similar responsibilities as required and in partnership with the Department of Public Works
- Develops and implements policies related to athletic and recreational activities.
- Interacts constantly with the general public in a diplomatic manner.
- Develops innovative cost-effective programs to meet community needs in an equitable manner.
- Oversees and arranges use of facilities for various athletic and recreational programs; including but not limited to City athletic field/court surfaces, Dilboy Stadium, Founders Rink, Veterans Memorial Rink, Blessing of the Bay Boat House, etc.
- Oversees Enterprise funds related facilities under the Recreation Department purview.
- Oversees municipal pool, boathouse, and aquatics programs.
- Ensures proper use of athletic and recreational facilities by Parks and Rec staff and guests through education and management.

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- Coordinates parks and recreation staff development and implementation of community athletic and recreation programs.
- Prepares the annual Parks and Recreation Department budget for review by the Mayor and Finance Director, then for approval by the City Council.
- Effectively administers the annual budget as directed by the Finance Director and Executive Office.
- Performs cost control activities.
- Monitors revenues and expenditures; responsible for approval of all requisitions for departmental supplies and materials.
- Prepares reports, provides staff support and/or attends meetings of the City Council, City committees, and commissions; and other agencies and community groups as required.
- Responds to the most complex citizen service and facility use related complaints and requests.
- Maintain liaison with various private and public agencies and communicate successfully with the public and with interested groups.

Supervision Required

Under administrative direction for a major department, working from municipal policies and objectives; individual establishes short-range plans and objectives, own performance standards and assumes direct accountability for department results; and may act as an independently elected official over a department. Consults with supervisor only where clarification, interpretation, or exception to municipal policy may be required. The employee is responsible for the development and implementation of departmental policies, goals, objectives and budgets. The employee is also expected to attempt to resolve conflicts which arise and coordinate with others as necessary.

Supervisory Responsibility

Employee is accountable for the direction and success of all department programs accomplished through others. The director is responsible for analyzing program objectives, determining the various work operations needed to achieve them, estimating the financial and staff resources required, allocating the available funds and staff, reporting periodically on the achievement and status of the program objective; and recommending new goals. The director typically formulates or recommends program goals and develops plans for achieving short and long-range objectives; determines organizational structure operating guidelines and work operations; formulates, prepares and defends budget and manpower requests and accounts for effective use of funds and staff provided; coordinates program efforts within the unit and with other departments; delegates authority to subordinate supervisors and holds them responsible for the performance of their unit's work; reviews work in terms of accomplishment of program objectives and progress reports, approves standards establishing quality and quantity of work; and assists or oversees the personnel function, including or effectively recommending hiring, training, and disciplining of employees.

Accountability

Duties include department level responsibility for technical processes, service delivery, and contribution to municipal wide plans and objectives and fiscal responsibility for the department including buildings, equipment and staffing utilization. Consequences of errors, missed deadlines or poor judgment could severely jeopardize department operations or have extensive financial and/or legal repercussions to the municipality and/or loss of life to the public or employee.

Judgment

Guidelines only provide limited guidance for performing the work. They may be in the form of administrative or organizational policies, general principals, legislation or directives that pertain to a specific department or functional area. Extensive Judgment and ingenuity are required to develop new or

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adapt existing methods and approaches for accomplishing objectives or to deal with new or unusual requirements within the limits of the guidelines or policies. The employee is recognized as the department or functional area's authority in interpreting the guidelines, in determining how they should be applied, and in developing operating policies and practices.

Complexity

The work consists of managerial functions and processes such as planning, organizing, controlling, coordinating, evaluating, integrating activities and programs for multiple divisions or more than one department within the municipality.

Nature and Purpose of Personal Contacts

Relationships are constantly with co-workers, the public, groups and/or individuals such as civic leaders, peers from other organizations, and representatives of professional organizations. The employee serves as a spokesperson or recognized authority of the organization in matters of substance or considerable importance, including departmental practices, procedures, regulations or guidelines. May be required to discuss controversial matters where tact is required to avoid friction and obtain cooperation.

Confidentiality

Regular access at the departmental level to a variety of confidential information, including personnel records.

Recommended Minimum Qualifications

Education and Experience: Master's Degree and five (5) to seven (7) years' experience in recreation (preferably municipal parks and recreation) including two (2) years' management experience; or any equivalent combination of education, training and experience which provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the essential functions of the job.

Special Requirements

Valid Driver's License.

Knowledge, Abilities and Skill

Knowledge: Principles, practices and methods used in parks and recreation administration; in the management of programs and activities; and in facility acquisition and maintenance. Strategic athletic field development, park athletic facility design and use. Recreation, cultural, athletic, and social needs of all age groups. Record keeping and reporting procedures. Organizational principles and techniques of administration, budgeting and personnel management. Thorough knowledge of principles and practices of community athletic and recreation management and program evaluation and development. General knowledge of maintenance plans in collaboration with Parks and Recreation Operations Director, foreman, and Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development (OSPCD). The collaboratively direction and coordination of the grounds maintenance, horticultural, arboricultural, landscape and turf maintenance, and custodial activities within multiple City fields/facilities.

Abilities: Develop and direct athletic and recreational programs tailored to the City's needs. Develop, motivate, manage and provide guidance to personnel; foster teamwork within the department. Advise on the acquisition, design, construction and maintenance of athletic parks, recreation areas, buildings and facilities as it directly relates to the department. Properly interpret and make decisions in accordance with appropriate laws, regulations and policies. Prepare detailed reports, plans and specifications and do reliable study and research as needed. Maintain liaison with various private and public agencies and deal successfully with the public and with interested groups.

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Ability to process financial information; and ability to develop and adapt innovative cost effective programs to meet community needs.

Skill: High level of communication skills, both oral and written, required.

Work Environment

Working conditions involve occasional exposure to intermittent machine or related noise or a combination of unpleasant elements such as odors, chemical fumes, dust, smoke, heat, cold, oil, dirt or grease. Occasional exposure to outside elements. The work environment involves everyday discomforts typical of offices. However, work in the field involves regular exposure to outside elements. Work may involve general cleaning, occasional work at heights or in confined or cramped quarters, or work around machinery and its moving parts. Work may also involve completing several unrelated tasks within a relatively short period of time.

Physical and Mental Requirements

The physical demands described here are representative of those that must be met by an employee to successfully perform the essential functions of this job. Reasonable accommodations may be made to enable individuals with disabilities to perform the position's essential functions.

Physical Demands

Few physical demands are required to perform the work. Work effort principally involves sitting to perform work tasks, with intermittent periods of stooping, walking, and standing. May also be some occasional lifting of objects such as office equipment and computer paper (up to 30 lbs.). Occasional physical skills tasks may be required in the performance of the job, such as climbing ladders and moving and operating recreational equipment.

Motor Skills

Duties are largely mental rather than physical, but the job may occasionally require minimal motor skills for activities such as moving objects, operating a telephone, personal computer and/or most other office equipment including word processing, filing and sorting of papers.

Visual/Auditory Skills

Visual demands require constantly reading documents for general understanding and analytical purposes.

Mental Demands

Athletics and recreation are very important to the residents. The Director of Park & Recreation will have to manage a number of requests and projects at one time. He/she must be aware of all recreation programs in the community and any and all relevant legislation, policies and procedures. He/she may have to complete a number of tasks and responsibilities at one time and must be prepared to deal with emergencies and stressful situations at any time.

Sensory Demands

Sensory demands can include reading and use of the computer, which may cause eye strain and occasional headaches. The situations and programs may be noisy and busy making it difficult for the Park & Recreation Director to concentrate.

This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and employee, and is subject to change by the employer, as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.