

**PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TOWN OF NEEDHAM, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Minutes of Meeting
May 23, 2022**

PRESENT: Christopher Gerstel, Cynthia Chaston, Michelle Geddes, Dina Hannigan

STAFF: Stacey Mulroy, Fabien Desrouleaux, Kristen Wright

Mr. Gerstel called the meeting to order at 7:00PM in the Multipurpose room at the Rosemary Recreation Complex.

1. Open Forum – Public Comment

Mr. Paul Siegenthaler, a Town Meeting member and NHS Tennis coach, talked to the Commission about the Tennis Court project at the High School. The Commission and Mr. Siegenthaler discussed the procurement of the project and the project scope for the design funding. Mr. Gerstel stated that the various user groups would be engaged during the design process and that this topic will be added to the July 11th agenda for further discussion and thanked Mr. Siegenthaler for coming to speak to the Commission.

2. Chair's Update

None presented

3. NHS Senior Project Group

An action group from NHS including Copper, Hannah, Kira, Mica and Alberto presented their senior project to the Commission. Hannah stated that their project aimed to make information about Youth Sports more accessible to low-income families, specifically regarding financial aid. Kira discussed a fee waiver system to allow for families to receive either a full or half scholarship and also allow for more low-income families to potentially participate in sports for all three seasons of the school year and camps in the summer. Kira stated that the objective would be to have another organization, like Park and Recreation, manage this system for all of the Youth Sports organizations in Town. Hannah stated that a large challenge they faced was that each Youth Sports league had separate rules and presented the information very differently. Hannah continued by saying that some had requirements like volunteer requirements, and this calls even more for a centralized system for parents to understand the obligations. Ms. Hannigan asked if this project is focused on the High School Athletics teams or specifically Youth Sports team. Kira stated that the Booster Club helps support low-income families with High School Athletics. The Commission and the HS Group discussed the current processes of Youth Sport organizations, a 1 application process, and the various Youth Sports organizations that have already helped them with information: Youth Track, Needham Baseball & Softball, Flag Football, Youth Field Hockey, and the YMCA Swim program. Alberto discussed how the current process is difficult to work through and can actually discourage families due to the lack of consistency and available information. The Commission asked for the group to submit their project and request in writing and also thanked them for their presentation.

4. Director's Report

Ms. Mulroy reviewed the Director's Report.

The Commission discussed the Touch the Trucks/Fishing Derby events, summer programming registration, summer staffing levels, and storage containers at DeFazio.

5A. Town Meeting Update

Mr. Gerstel reviewed Town Meeting and the additional \$25,000 for playground maintenance that was added to the expense budget for FY23. The Commission further discussed the Tennis Court project that was discussed earlier in the meeting and the Park Ranger position that has been funded within the DPW-Parks and Forestry budget.

5B. New Commissioner Updates

Mr. Gerstel stated that they are still determining dates to interview the applicants interested in the open Commissioner position.

5C. Outdoor Bathrooms & Porta-potties

The Commission discussed the various outstanding issues with the current outdoor bathrooms and the location that need porta-potties.

5D. Capital Projects

The Commission reviewed the Greene's Resurfacing project.

5H. Pop-Up Skate Park

The Commission discussed various location for the pop-up skate park including the basketball courts at Mills. Ms. Geddes stated that the preference is a more centralized location. The Commission stated that they will look at placing it at Pollard over the summer.

5I. Facilities

The Commission discussed the addition of more Pickleball courts and discussed creating rules for courts at Pollard.

5E. CPC

Mr. Gerstel stated that as he has completed his second three-year term representing Park and Recreation on the Community Preservation Committee and discussed that a new member of the Park and Recreation Commission will need to be appointed.

Ms. Chaston made a motion to appoint Dina Hannigan to as the Park and Recreation representative on the Community Preservation Committee. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

5F. Storage Containers

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

5G. Playground Priorities

The Commission stated that they would reach out to the Conservation Committee about updates to the DeFazio playground. The Commission discussed gaining a consensus at the next meeting and devising the Commissions goals for the next year.

6A. Special Event Approvals

Norfolk Lodge AF&AM

Ms. Chaston made a motion to approve the Family BBQ be held by the Norfolk Lodge AF&AM on Saturday, August 6 from 11:00am – 5:00pm at Mills Multipurpose Field with a Special Event Fee of \$500. Ms. Hannigan seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

NPS – Eliot Elementary School

The Commission deferred this approval to the next meeting requesting information about why the event would not be held at Eliot.

Newman PTC

Ms. Chaston made a motion to approve the Movin' On Up event be held by the Newman PTC on Saturday, June 18 from 12:00pm – 9:00pm at the Newman Multipurpose Field, and both Newman Playground with no fee. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed 4-0

Needham Soccer Club

Ms. Hannigan made a motion to approve the Boys HS Prep Clinics, Girls HS Prep Clinics, Youth Camp, and Pre-season conditioning events be held by the Needham Soccer Club. The Boys HS Prep Clinics will be held Wednesday, August 10 – Friday, August 12 from 3:30pm – 8:00pm at various DeFazio fields with a fee of \$5/participant/day. The Girls HS Prep Clinics will be held Monday, August 15 – Wednesday, August 17 from 3:30pm – 8:00pm at various DeFazio fields with a fee of \$5/participant/day. The Youth Camp will be held Monday August 8 – Thursday, August 11 from 8:00am – 3:30pm at various DeFazio fields with a fee of \$5/participant/day. The Pre-Season Condition will be held Thursday, August 18 – Saturday, August 20 from 8:30am – 11:00am at various DeFazio fields with a fee of \$5/participant/day. Ms. Chaston seconded the motion and it passed 4-0

The Commission also discussed voting on special events remotely in the future.

6B. Meeting Minutes

Ms. Chaston made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 27, 2022. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

7. Topics for Future Meetings

- Boat Launch
- Pickleball

8. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair within 48 hours

Ms. Geddes discussed being approached by Needham Soccer coaches about the size of the 9v9 fields. The Commission stated that those concerns should be directed to Mr. Miskin.

The Commission discussed the storybook walks at all parks at the request of the Library. The Commission asked for a written proposal but does not like the idea of hanging things on fences that are generally reserved for rules and regulations or short-term notices for the Community.

The Commission discussed the rules about metal detectors.

Ms. Mulroy stated that they have hired a PT member of the team to help with various office work.

9. Next Meetings

The Commission reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule.

11. Adjournment of Business Meeting

Ms. Chaston moved to adjourn the May 23, 2022, Park and Recreation Commission meeting at 9:14pm. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:14pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Wright
Recording Secretary