

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

**Minutes of Meeting
March 23, 2009**

PRESENT: Cynthia J. Chaston, Chairman
Brian S. Nadler, Vice Chair
William R. Dermody, Member
Christopher R. Dollase, Member
Philip V. Robey, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

GUESTS: Bob Cohen, Resident
Tom Jacob, Candidate
Bruce Herman, Needham Sports Council

The meeting convened at 7:01PM in the Selectmen's Meeting room located in the Town Hall.

1. **Minutes of Meeting March 9, 2009:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2009 meeting. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Minutes of Executive Session March 9, 2009: Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2009 Executive Session. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

2. **Financial Report – February 2009:** Ms. Carey presented the February 2009 financial report. There was a question about the payment for the lights at DeFazio and Memorial Parks. Ms. Carey stated the user groups will be paying up front for lights prior to them being turned on. Anyone with an outstanding light balance will not have use of the lights until the balance is paid.

3. **Correspondence**

A. Senior Center Exploratory Committee: Ms. Carey shared a memo from the Co-Chairs of the Senior Center Exploratory Committee Selectmen Jim Healy and Denise Garlick regarding a public hearing on March 23, 2009. Mr. Dollase attended the meeting and will report back to the Commission. Sites evaluated for this project include: DeFazio Park parking lot, Emery Grover, Greendale Ave (Parcel 74), Greene's Field, Needham Golf Club land, Nike Site, Perry Park, Ridge Hill and Rosemary Hill. At this time the sites that have generated the most positive comment are DeFazio Park, Greene's Field, Ridge Hill and Rosemary Hill.

- 4. Assistant Director Report:** Ms. Peirce presented the new Summer Volunteer application packet. The new design and streamlined approach should make for a smoother registration process for the volunteers. Volunteer application information will be available to download on the website beginning on April 1 and can be picked up at the office. Information will also be listed in the High School daily bulletin and will be submitted to the school weekly newsletters. A post card is being sent to all of the 2008 volunteers announcing the new packet and registration information.

5. Discussion Items:

A. Director's Report: A written report was submitted prior to the meeting. Mr. Dermody asked about the Citizens Petition listed in the report. Ms. Carey indicated Susan Abbott will come to the first meeting in April to discuss the article and what she hopes to achieve. It appears she is looking to create an exploratory committee to look at Wellesley's Natural Resource committee and determine if something similar should be set up in Needham.

B. Operating and Capital Budget Update: Ms. Carey and Mr. Nadler attended the Finance Committee meeting on March 18th to discuss improvements for the Asa Small Diamond at DeFazio Park. Ms. Carey gave a brief history of the diamond and presented some photos to the Finance Committee. Currently the diamond is in need of new fencing, irrigation and player benches. The original facilities were installed in 1969 and are in need of repair or replacement. Fencing cement posts have been uprooted and are presenting a safety hazard, the benches are splintering and the irrigation system has not worked properly in many years. This project has been listed on the Capital Project list for a few years but if approved this project could be funded through money that has been left over from other town projects. The Commission would like to speak on behalf of the article at Town Meeting.

C. Gold Star Award Project at Camp Property: Ms. Carey presented a memo sent to the Conservation Commission on behalf of Gold Star Award Project to be completed by Adel Heumiller at the Camp Property. Adel proposes to:

- Mark the trails, temporarily using spray paint until the official markers are ready to be installed.
- Remove some of the growth along the trails utilizing the maintenance plan
- Remove Buckthorn growing in the field area following up on a project she did in recent years.

The project will be led by Adel and volunteers and it will be supervised by Kristen Phelps from the Conservation Commission.

D. Field Naming Proposals: At the March 9, 2009 Commission meeting members of the Needham Sports Council and individuals presented names to be considered for field naming at DeFazio Park. The decision will require discussion and approval from the Park and Recreation Commission, School Committee and

Board of Selectmen. Ms. Carey suggested one of the Commissioners meet with a member of the Board of Selectmen and a member of the School Committee to discuss the nominees. Mrs. Chaston will contact the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee. The Field Naming Proposal will be listed on the agenda as an action item at a future Park and Recreation Commission meeting. Mr. Robey suggested unifying the proposals by submitting the packet of proposals on Sports Council letterhead. Mr. Herman will take care of it and deliver a more uniform packet to Ms. Carey.

E. Field Construction Update: The final tasks are being completed at Memorial Park. Work continues on the 90 foot diamond at Memorial Park but is going slowly as the diamond is still very wet from the weather conditions. The natural turf fields have been fertilized. The Track Club asked to have additional lines installed on the track. Ms. Carey indicated there are many permanent lines on the track. Ms. Carey recommended that the Commission walk the track and view the lines, but stated it was her opinion that no additional lines should be added. Putting marks on the side of the track will help with the Track Club meets. The Track Club also noted that it could be a problem not having jump boards for the long jump, but Ms. Carey notified them that the painted jump lines were now a standard in the Northeast and would not preclude the High School having official meets. Ms. Carey reported the construction equipment at the DeFazio parking lot should be cleared out by late April and the Carleton Pavilion will open sometime in May. Mr. Nadler suggested placing a portable toilet at the site until the Carleton Pavilion is open. Ms. Carey stated she only had funds to pay for a few weeks of a portable toilet but Mr. Nadler stated he would check with the Booster Club to see if they could fund it.

F. Field Scheduling Update: Ms. Carey announced the field scheduling is complete with only two out-of-town groups not being given any time. Field scheduling continues to be difficult because all the natural turf fields at DeFazio will not be ready for the spring season. Ms. Carey stated that Parks and Forestry will be installing fencing at Claxton Field to protect the athletes from foul balls.

G. Field Maintenance Update: Ms. Carey stated that the Parks and Forestry staff are gearing up for the spring season by putting out trash barrels and nets at the parks. Parks and Forestry Superintendent Lance Remsen will be meeting with representatives from Little League to discuss fencing at Dwight, Greene's, Cusack, Mills and Broadmeadow fields. He is also meeting with a private contractor to discuss work on the baseball diamonds that would be funded by Little League. Mr. Robey asked about the fencing and bubblers funded through the CPC. Ms. Carey noted that due to the current procurement practices it is taking longer than expected to bid the work.

H. Other Business: Mr. Dollase reported on the Senior Center Exploratory Committee meeting. Tonight's meeting was the first of many public hearings regarding a new senior center. The proposed timeline is:

- Submit site recommendations to the Board of Selectmen in September 2009
- Submit a request for a multiple facilities study at the November 2009 Special Town Meeting
- Submit a proposal for design funding at the May 2010 Town Meeting
- Submit a request for construction funds May 2011
- Doors open 2012

Sites that have been evaluated are DeFazio Park parking lot, Emery Grover, Greendale Ave., Greene's Field, Needham Golf Club land, Nike Site, Perry Park, Ridge Hill and Rosemary Hill. Each site presents pros and cons but the four sites that have generated the most positive comment are:

- DeFazio Park parking lot
- Greene's Field
- Ridge Hill
- Rosemary Hill

Mr. Dollase indicated the Park and Recreation Commission is conflicted in wanting to preserve open space and fields but also wanting to see indoor space for senior citizen programming. Mrs. Chaston will contact the co-chairs of the Senior Center Exploratory Committee to have a Park and Recreation Commissioner appointed to the committee. Mr. Dollase volunteered to be the liaison to the Senior Center Exploratory Committee. Mr. Dollase also announced he has joined the Town Bicycle Committee and will report on those meetings at the Commission meetings.

6. Action Items:

A. Special Events Requests: The Needham Soccer Club submitted a request for a Pre-Season Soccer Clinic to be held at DeFazio Park August 10-14, 2009. Mr. Robey made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion for the Pre-Season Soccer Clinic and the motion was approved.

The Needham Cub Scouts submitted a request for Rocket Day on March 28, 2009 at Claxton Field. Mr. Dollase made a motion to approve the request for Rocket Day from the Needham Cub Scouts. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion and the motion was approved. The Needham Women's Club made a request for a Dog Show to be held at Claxton Field on May 17, 2009. Mr. Dollase made a motion to approve the request for the Dog Show. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion and the motion was approved. The Charles River ARC made a request to host the Ellie Bloom Olympics at the DeFazio Park on September 12, 2009. Mr. Dollase made a motion to approve the request for the Ellie Bloom Olympics. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

B. Signs at DeFazio: Ms. Carey presented draft copies of informational signage for parks. She will send a PDF version of the signs to all the user groups so they can share with the parents, players and coaches. Mr. Nadler stated that he thought the agenda item "Signs at DeFazio" was in reference to the scoreboard design proposed by the Needham Soccer Club at the last Commission meeting. Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the installation of the sign presented at the March 9, 2009 Commission meeting. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion. There was discussion regarding the corporate sponsorship from Middlesex Bank being listed on the sign. Mr. Cohen indicated he was not in favor of commercialized signs at fields. Mrs. Chaston called for the vote and the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the granite recognition benches to be located in the donor area at DeFazio Park as presented at the March 9, 2009 Commission meeting. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion. Mr. Dollase made a motion to defer voting on the donor granite benches to the April 13, 2009 Commission meeting listing it as an Action Item on the agenda. Mr. Robey seconded the motion and the motion was approved with 4 votes in favor and one opposed.

C. Set Summer 2009 Pool and Program Fees: The Director and Assistant Director presented the recommended fees for the Summer 2009. Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the Summer 2009 fees as recommended by the Director and Assistant Director and has listed on Appendix A. Mr. Dollase seconded the motion and the motion was approved with four votes in favor and one opposed. The vote includes sending two complimentary guest passes to all 2008 season pass holders.

D. Second April Meeting Date: The second Commission meeting will be held on Monday, April 27, 2009 at 6:30PM.

7. **Adjournment:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to adjourn the meeting 9:50 PM. Mr. Dollase seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP, CTRS
Assistant Director