

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

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
September 21, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Brian S. Nadler, Chairman  
Philip V. Robey, Vice-Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member  
Christopher R. Dollase, Member  
Thomas M. Jacob, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director  
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

**GUESTS:** Bob Cohen, Resident  
Mike Retzky, Project Coordinator, Needham Sports Council  
Sheila Pransky, Needham Opportunities Inc.  
Tim McCleary, Needham Opportunities Inc.

The meeting convened at 7:00 PM in the Newman School Conference Room.

1. **Minutes of Meeting of July 17, 2009 Public Hearing:** Mr. Robey made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 17, 2009 Public Hearing. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Mr. Robey noted that sound amplification was used at DeFazio Park on September 6<sup>th</sup> during the time the Braunstein Family had the permit for a party and also for the Temple Aliyah event on Sunday, September 13<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Carey noted the Braunstein permit indicated sound amplification was not allowed and there was no request from Temple Aliyah. She has already spoken to Temple Aliyah about that complaint, and will contact Mr. Braunstein. The Commissioners will pay close attention to future requests for sound amplification.

**Minutes of Meeting August 24, 2009:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 24, 2009 meeting. Mr. Robey seconded the motion and the motion was approved

2. **Financial Report:** None Presented.

3. **Correspondence:**

**A. Invitation to the Board of Selectmen's Community Preservation Summit:** Mr. Nadler and Mr. Robey will attend the Summit Meeting on October 21, 2009.

**B. CPC Letter to Senate Subcommittee re: Senate Bill 90:** Ms. Carey shared a letter to Senator Michael O. Moore at the State House in support of SB990.

The letter was written by the Chairperson of the Needham Community Preservation Committee Jane Howard requesting the Community Development and Small Business Committee to retain the provision for rehabilitation of recreation land.

**C. Board of Selectmen's Goals:** Mr. Nadler spoke to the Chairman of the Board of Selectmen Dan Matthews to offer the assistance of the Park and Recreation Commission to help realize the Board of Selectmen's FY 2010-2011 goals.

- 4. Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce stated she attended a Tennis Summit at Babson College today to learn more about the Quick Start Tennis Program and how to promote tennis programs for all ages. She continues to work with Eagle Scout Alex Osborn on the schedule for the Pollard court cleaned up and lining for quick start tennis lessons. Hopefully classes can begin in the spring of 2010. Ms. Peirce is working with Sue Bonaiuto from the Community Education Department along with other groups in town that utilize public building after school hours to develop protocols for emergency situations. She is attending a meeting tomorrow with the Local Emergency Planning Committee to inform them of the after school building use and to enlist their help in developing protocols. The Senior Walking Program will begin tomorrow and Ms. Peirce will be meeting with the program leader and participants to introducing them to the new High School Principal Jonathan Pizzi. Ms. Peirce attended the MRPA Metrowest meeting to review summer programs, what worked and what did not. The Beth Israel Deaconess Hospital has agreed to give the Healthy Needham Committee \$10,000 to assist with the calendar being designed for the Tercentennial. Ms. Peirce is trying to partner with Parent Talk to create some programs for young children using the Parent Talk Family Room located in Dover. Fall golf and tennis programs that have started are going very well.

**5. Discussion Items:**

**A. Director's Report:** Written report submitted prior to the meeting. Mr. Jacob and Mr. Robey will be attending the Board of Selectmen public hearing on the renovation of the Newman Fields to be held on September 22, 2009. Ms. Carey reported she has requested but not yet received an inventory from Tad Staley of all the current bicycle rack locations in Needham. Ms. Carey will purchase the bicycle racks with the grant money but will have to develop a plan and funding for installation. Ms. Carey gave an update on the progress of the Mills field Tennis court renovation project.

**B. Field Construction Update:** Mr. Retsky attended a DeFazio Park renovation meeting with Ms. Carey, Assistant Town Manager Chris Coleman, Dave Kelly from the Engineering Department, Parks and Forestry Superintendent Lance Remsen, and representatives from Gale and RAD to review the list of tasks that need to be completed on the project. DeFazio South was reseeded and fertilized and new grass is growing. The fence opening at McLeod Field is completed. Mr. Retsky was at Memorial Park and found some irrigation issues that are causing

wetness near the dugout on the first base side. The irrigation contractor will repair next week. A letter has been received from the Building Department Inspector allowing the lights to be used at DeFazio Park and Memorial Park. The Sports Council will meet with Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, Ms. Carey, Mr. Remsen and others on October 1, 2009. He is hoping to have all the data collected from the November MUSCO light testing available for the December ZBA meeting.

**C. Field Scheduling Priorities:** Discussed later in the meeting.

**D. Newman Renovations:** Discussed later in the meeting.

**E. Athletic field Lights Advisory Committee:** Discussed later in the meeting.

**F. Operating Budget FY 2011:** Discussed later in the meeting.

**G. Senior Center Update/Greene's Field:** Discussed later in the meeting.

**H. Community Preservation Update:** Sheila Pransky and Tim McCleary from Needham Opportunities Inc. attended the meeting to discuss the proposed purchase of property known as Nehoiden Knoll. NOI is hoping to construct 6-8 homes at Nehoiden Knoll with two of the houses listed as affordable housing. NOI is planning to submit an application for Community Preservation funding totaling \$500,000. If 6 units were built, there would be space for a parking area for a few cars to be able to access the Camp Property. Ms. Pransky suggested Park and Recreation partner with NOI to submit the application to the CPC as a co-applicant for the May Town Meeting. Further discussion is necessary regarding this project. Mr. Nadler thanked Ms. Pransky and Mr. McCleary for attending the meeting.

**C. Field Scheduling Priorities:** Mr. Jacob and Ms. Carey reviewed the Priorities for Scheduling Fields memo. Twenty three questions were listed to be considered for field scheduling priorities, which Ms. Carey noted had been compiled through the years from questions raised by individuals and organizations. Mr. Dollase indicated he would like the groups to make the decisions within their organization. Mr. Robey noted it has almost been a full year of using synthetic turf fields and he is looking towards the renovation of the Newman fields to help ease field space for ultimate Frisbee, rugby etc. Mr. Jacob suggested the Sports Council take a look at the scheduling questions and try to work out a fair system with the groups. Mrs. Chaston would prefer parents, coaches, and sports organizations make those decisions, not the Park and Recreation Commission. Ms. Carey noted that Little League Baseball, boys and girl's lacrosse, fast pitch softball and St. Bart's soccer will all be looking for more field space in the spring. Mr. Jacob suggested waiting a year to see how scheduling is going with the High School teams and other groups. Mr. Nadler suggested asking the user groups for game and practice schedules. Mr. Nadler recommended Ms. Carey send the

Priorities for Scheduling Fields memo to the Commissioners electronically so the Commissioners can respond to the questions and return to Ms. Carey or Mr. Jacob by next week. Mr. Nadler asked to add a by law vote to the agenda of a future meeting to officially open synthetic turf fields in the summer. Mr. Nadler and Ms. Carey will meet to review the other policies to see if any modifications are needed.

**D. Newman Renovations:** Ms. Carey was recently informed by the Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick that the MSBA does not support the addition of projects to the debt exclusion question for the project they have supported for state reimbursement. The Commissioners discussed the pros and cons of whether it was the right time to be asking for money to renovate the Newman fields. They all noted their support, but will seek funding alternatives.

**E. Athletic field Lights Advisory Committee:** The following people have expressed interest in serving on the Athletic Field Lights Advisory Committee: Mark Miskin for the Needham Sports Council, Paul Kelly for the DeFazio neighborhood and Scott Brightman as the Needham resident representative. Dave DiCicco will discuss who will represent the Trustees of Memorial Park, and the Trustees will choose a neighbor. Mr. Nadler will re-contact the School Committee liaison to determine a representative for them. Mr. Dollase made a motion to appoint Mr. Jacob as the Park and Recreation liaison to the Field Lights Advisory Committee along with Mark Miskin for the Sports Council, Paul Kelly for the DeFazio neighborhood and Scott Brightman as a resident representative. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Ms. Carey will ask the Trustees to make their appointments. Mr. Nadler and Mr. Jacob will develop an agenda for the first meeting.

**F. Operating Budget FY 2011:** Ms. Carey indicated there will be a 3 million dollar gap in the budget due to drops in state aid and revenue collection. In order to avoid layoff and cuts in services the Town Manager indicated there will be very few capital projects funded and non represented employees have already been informed there will be no cost of living increase. Fees may also need to be increased in 2011.

**G. Senior Center Update/Greene's Field:** The Senior Center Advisory Committee has announced the top 3 sites under consideration for a new Senior Center are the Presbyterian Church on Great Plain Ave., Rosemary Lake property, and Greene's Field. There was discussion on whether or not the Commissioners should or should not take a public position to protect Greene's Field from development. Mr. Nadler expressed concern about taking a public position. Ms. Carey noted the Commission will likely be asked to state a position at Town Meeting. Mr. Dollase suggested sending a letter to the Needham Times noting the Greene's Field land is not big enough to build a field, a senior center and a parking area. He would like to see the space protected from development so it may continue to be used by the community as green space. Mr. Robey made a

motion to draft a letter to the Needham Times indicating the Park and Recreation Commission's support of a senior center in another location and Greene's Field remaining as green space in the downtown area. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

**H. Community Preservation Update:** Discussed earlier in the meeting.

**I. Needham Energy Challenge:** Ms. Carey shared the memo from the Town Manager on ways the Town is committed to reduce energy consumption.

**J. Commission Important Issues:** None reported. Mr. Robey will review his role as liaison to the Finance Committee at the next meeting.

**K. Other Business:** Mr. Jacob requested adding the topic of improved signage at parks and fields on the agenda for the next meeting.

**6. Action Items:**

**A. Request: Needham Scouters Club:** Mr. Dollase made a motion to approve the request from the Needham Scouters Club to host an overnight Camporee on September 26 and 27, 2009 at Camp Nehoiden located in the Town Forest. Mr. Jacob seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

**Request: Needham Junior Football:** Mr. Jacob made a motion to approve the request from Needham junior Football to place a temporary storage trailer at Claxton field for storage of practice equipment. Mr. Robey seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

**C. Appointments to Lights Advisory Committee:** Discussed earlier in the meeting.

**7. Adjournment:** Mr. Dollase made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:05PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jacob and the meeting adjourned at 10:05PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP, CTRS  
Assistant Director