

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

December 11, 2009

*Background notes for Monday, December 14th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

BUDGETS

The date to present the Park and Recreation budget to the Finance Committee has been changed a few times, due to conflicts with my schedule and Community Preservation meetings, but it is now tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, January 6. The Town Manager has presented her recommended capital budget to the Board of Selectmen, and included some new bleachers at Memorial Park in her Tier One recommendations.

MEETINGS

The public hearing with the Zoning Board of Appeals is on Thursday, December 17th at 8 PM. The meeting is in the conference room at the Needham Public Library.

The Commission is scheduled to meet on Monday, December 28th. I have put this on the agenda to discuss whether it will be held or not.

The January meetings are still scheduled for Town Hall, though the location of one might be changed in order to include the field scheduling summit. I'm not sure where the February meetings will be held, as the packing for the move to PSAB will be well underway, and will occur during that month, so meeting locations are likely to vary for a bit. Once everything is moved into PSAB, the Commission meetings will officially move to the Charles River Room at PSAB.

FIELD SCHEDULING SUMMIT

This will be on the agenda, again. I am recommending that the summit be part of your January 11th meeting. The groups that use the multi-purpose fields in the spring are already talking, partly due to some of the groups expanding their programs. I'm not sure if the diamond groups are talking yet, but now having 2 softball programs and 2 baseball programs, with expanded programs, it will be quite a challenge. Our hope is to have everything settled prior to our move to the new building in mid-February, which will be a challenge due to the number of organizations that traditionally submit late requests.

PUBLIC SERVICES ADMINISTRATION BUILDING (PSAB)

The major construction work at PSAB should be completed next week. If you've driven by lately, you can see changes to the landscaping and the creation of the new parking area. The Commission has been invited to a tour for the boards moving into the building. The first major move into the building will be the technology equipment and center. As the hub of all Town government/School operations, this is a difficult and important move.

The clean-out will continue at Town Hall, and packing will likely start after the New Year, so that everything is ready for the big move over the Presidents' Day weekend in February. We'll do the best we can to maintain essential services, but will have to put aside extra tasks until we are back in full operation.

BIKE RACKS

The bike racks arrived this week. I'll be working with DPW on an installation plan for the 17 units that were purchased through a state grant.

PBS FILMING

I have been talking with a producer of a PBS documentary about the possibility of using Horsford Ponds in the Town Forest for the film that is set in the late 1800's. They were looking for a location that had natural outdoor skating, but wouldn't show the current world in the background. They are planning on filming later in February, which I warned might not be possible if the ponds were not frozen. They are still in the discussion stages on all of their filming options, so haven't sent in a formal request, yet.

SENIOR CENTER RE-ACCREDITATION

The Council on Aging has started the process to become re-accredited. Needham's Senior Center was the first Massachusetts center to receive national accreditation, and this will be the second time seeking re-accreditation. It's a tribute to the staff, volunteers and board that they've received their accreditation in a location that many believe to be inadequate for the needs. I worked on the original committee and Karen worked on the re-accreditation committee. I've offered to assist on one of the upcoming subcommittees. If anyone else has interest, it's not too late to join. Most subcommittees will meet 2-3 times, and will just need to do some updating to the last submission, so it's not an overwhelming commitment.

WINTER/SPRING REGISTRATION

The most recent brochure was mailed last week and registration will begin on Monday, December 14th. This will be our 3rd registration season using the on-line registration program, and we are still pleased with how it is working. We used a facility scheduling module for the fall field schedule, which worked well in the office. It is hoped that the calendar portion will be able to go live, so that anyone will have the opportunity to view what is scheduled. We are just waiting for the company to make that option available. Public Facilities just started using another program, and their calendar can be viewed from the Town's website. Karen and Nicole have been trained on inputting facility requests for all of our programs.
