

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

**Minutes of Meeting
Monday, May 17, 2010**

PRESENT: Brian S. Nadler, Chairman
Philip V. Robey, Vice Chairman
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member
Thomas M. Jacob, Member
Michael J. Retzky, Member
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

ABSENT: Patricia M. Carey, Director

GUESTS: Bob Cohen, DeFazio Neighbor

Mr. Nadler called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Park and Recreation office located at the Public Services Administration Building.

1. Action Items:

A. Special Event: YMCA- The Commissioners reviewed a request from the Charles River YMCA to host a Football Conditioning Clinic on June 21-July 2, July 5-16, and July 19-30, 2010. The clinic will be held from 4:00-5:30PM at Greene's Field. Mr. Jacob made a motion to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and the motion was approved.

B. Special Event: St. Joseph's Elementary- St. Joseph's Elementary School requested the use of Greene's Field on June 10 (rain date June 14) for a school Field Day from 9:00-12:00. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request. Mr. Jacob seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

C. Special Event: Fast Pitch Softball- Fast Pitch Softball made a request to host a Softball Clinic at Claxton Fields #1 & #2 on August 24-27, 2010 from 9:00AM-2:00PM. Mr. Jacob made a motion to approve the request with the following conditions:

- The pitching machine should be located on Field # 1.
- Signage is put up and removed daily.
- All snacks should be pre packaged.

Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

2. Director's Report: Submitted in writing prior to the meeting. The Mills Tennis Courts completion has been delayed due to the rainy cool weather. Once the temperature warms up the court painting will be completed. Mr. Robey asked

Ms. Peirce when the water bubblers will be turned on at the parks. She will find out from the Public Facilities office and let the Commissioners know the schedule tomorrow. Mr. Nadler noted another Senior Center Public Hearing will be held on May 25th. He recommended one Commissioner attend. Mr. Jacob noted he sent a letter from Needham Little League to the Needham Times indicating the uses of Greene's Field and why he thinks the Rosemary site is a better location. Neighbors will be fundraising to plant a tree in memory of a 4 year old boy at Perry Park.

Mr. Jacob shared renderings of the proposed dugouts for Asa Small Diamond previously discussed at a prior meeting. Needham Little League is preparing to donate \$50,000 to build the dugouts. The Park and Recreation Commission will need to approve the plan and then the plan will be presented to the Conservation Commission for approval. Once approvals are received the Town Engineer will have to schedule the project. The dugouts will be moved 3 feet away from the storm drain. One batting cage will be installed with 4 foot fencing paid for by the Town. Little League will contribute extra funds to pay for higher fencing. Little League would prefer a metal roof vs. a membrane roof. Mr. Jacob was unsure if the Town Engineering Department will require Little League to get a license agreement. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the conceptual design plans for Alternative #1 for a new dugout and batting cage located at the Asa Small Diamond per the plans to be donated by the Needham Little League. In addition Mrs. Chaston asked that the Commission and the Park and Recreation Director be apprised of the final plans if any modifications are required. Mr. Jacob recused himself from the vote. Mr. Robey seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Mr. Nadler asked Mr. Jacob to report to the Park and Recreation Commission after meeting with the Conservation Commission and asked him to thank the Little League members for their efforts to improve the Asa Small Diamond.

3. **Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce reported that North Hill has offered to sponsor Arts in the Parks with a \$400 donation. The Needham Exchange Club will sponsor an Arts in the Parks concert with a \$500 donation. Program registration will begin next week. Summer planning and preparation is ongoing.

4. **Discussion Items:**

- A. Town Meeting Review and Comments Raised for Discussion:** The Commissioners discussed the lack of public restrooms at fields. It should be discussed at a future meeting. Also discussed was field maintenance needs, overcrowding, overuse and budget cuts related to field maintenance are all important. Mr. Nadler noted that the purchase of 174 Charles River Street was approved at Town Meeting . He is hoping to set up a meeting with the

neighbors to discuss the plans for the property. Staff members from Park and Recreation, DPW, Board of Health, Conservation Commission and Louise Miller from Purchasing will all be involved to discuss issues regarding inspections, abatements, parking, restrooms, demolition etc.

B. Preparation for Zoning Board of Appeals Meeting: On May 20th the Zoning Board of Appeals will revisit the continuance of the December Special Permit Hearing regarding athletic field lights. The lights were adjusted and wattage reduced in February with clear improvements. On May 16, 2010 Mr. Nadler met with the DeFazio Park neighbors and they would like to see the light policy be changed to turn off at 9:00PM on Friday nights instead of 10:00PM. Mr. Nadler feels the ZBA would close out the permit if the Park and Recreation Commission agreed to a 9:00PM schedule for Friday nights. A straw vote was taken with 3 no votes, 1 yes vote and one undecided vote. Mr. Retzky suggested speaking to the High School Athletic Director before making a decision to see how it affects the High School teams.

C. Field Scheduling Policies and Fees: Mr. Nadler and Dave DiCicco, Memorial Park Trustee Chairman will have a discussion regarding field schedules and a fee policy. They will then speak to Ms. Carey and John Gallelo, Memorial Park Trustee to continue the conversation to have both policies be consistent at all fields.

D. Commission and DPW Parks and Forestry Division Collaboration: Mr. Jacob expressed that he would like to have a more formal relationship with the new Parks and Forestry Superintendent. Mr. Nadler suggested Mr. Jacob be the Park and Recreation Commission liaison to the Parks and Forestry department. Mr. Jacob will schedule a meeting with Ms. Carey to discuss how to proceed.

E. Dogs in Parks: Mr. Nadler and Mr. Robey attended a meeting with members of Town departments and Boards to discuss the upcoming Board of Selectmen Public Hearing regarding dogs in parks. The Hearing will take place on June 8, 2010. The Memorial Park Trustees are voting at their next meeting on whether to ban all dogs from Memorial Park including the hill and the fields. Mr. Nadler indicated the difficulty of enforcing the ban. Members of the School Department expressed an interest in banning dogs from school property other than drop off and pick up. Other issues include pooper scooper laws and the possibility of licensing dog walkers. Mr. Nadler noted 25% of the households in Needham have a dog and there are 700 unlicensed dogs. Mr. Jacob noted that it is important to educate the public to change behavior before closing all the parks to dogs. He also stated the need for clear, direct signage at the parks.

5. **Minutes of Meetings: April 26, 2010:** Mr. Robey made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2010 meeting. Mr. Retzky asked to spell his last name with a z not an s as stated in the minutes. Also ZBZ should be changed to ZBA. The corrections will be made. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved as amended.

Minutes of Meeting: April 26, 2010 Executive Session: Mr. Robey made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 26, 2010 Executive Session. Mr. Retzky asked to spell his last name with a z not an s as stated in the minutes. The correction will be made. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved as amended.

Mr. Robey asked that the DeFazio parking lot discussion be added to the agenda for the next meeting. Mrs. Chaston would like to add the DeFazio storage building discussion to the agenda for the next meeting.

6. **Adjournment:** Mr. Robey made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40PM. Mr. Jacob seconded the meeting adjourned at 9:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce
Assistant Director