

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

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
August 23, 2010**

- Present:** Philip V. Robey, Chairman  
Thomas M. Jacob, Vice Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member  
Brian S. Nadler, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director
- Absent:** Michael J. Retzky, Member  
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director
- Guests:** Edward Olsen, Superintendent of Parks and Forestry  
Bob Cohen, Resident

Mr. Robey called the meeting to order in the Charles River Room at the Public Services Administration Building at 7:05 PM.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting – August 9, 2010:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 9, 2010 meeting. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and it was approved.
- 2. Director’s Report:** Mrs. Chaston asked for an update on the dismantling of the Greene’s Field playground structure. Ms. Carey reported that the removal process was just about complete. She also noted that the soil sampling done prior to removal indicated that there were no concerns with the soil. The staff removing the structure found a time capsule that wasn’t preserved correctly. She’ll give it to one of the co-chairs of the original committee. Mr. Robey suggested setting new dates/times for fall meetings that are a conflict. The Commission agreed to hold the meeting that would normally be held on Columbus Day on Tuesday, October 12, 2010. The November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting conflicts with Special Town Meeting, so it will still be held that evening but will start at 6:30 PM. Mr. Robey noted the concern of Greendale Avenue neighbors about dirt bikes using the walking trails. Ms. Carey will do more research on the issue and have it placed on an upcoming agenda.
- 3. Assistant Director’s Report:** none presented.
- 4. Discussion Items:**
  - A. Introduction: Edward Olsen, Superintendent of Parks and Forestry:** Mr. Robey welcomed Edward Olsen and noted how his background and experience would be an asset to the community. Mrs. Chaston offered the

support of the Commission to help him reach the goals that he sets for the parks and fields. Mr. Jacob noted that the new Athletic Director had reached out to the community groups and established a better relationship, and that the Commission would support Mr. Olsen's communication efforts. Mr. Jacob stated that the more that the groups understand, the more patient they are with the work that is done. Mr. Nadler cautioned that some individuals might try to offer information that wasn't accurate, but that the Commission and Ms. Carey would assist with re-direction to the accurate information. Mr. Olsen thanked the Commission. He mentioned the support he had already received from the Town, including former Superintendents Lance Remsen and John Cusick. His budget is primarily salary, and he'll work on some new training efforts to make the work that is done most effective. He is also searching for opportunities to stretch his expense funds so that he can have a solid maintenance program.

- B. Rosemary Pool Update:** Ms. Carey reported that the pool was in its final week of the season, and was ready to close at 5:30 PM on Friday, August 27. One question raised in the appeal was the need to have a special permit from MA Environmental Protection, but Ms. Carey was contacted that there was no indication that this permit was needed for what is an annual maintenance project. She'll get official word in mid-September. Mr. Nadler noted that the Commission will need to make decisions in early winter about the status of the pool next summer.
- C. Senior Center Feasibility Study Update:** Ms. Carey reported that the study committee would hold a public meeting on September 7<sup>th</sup> to get input from the public on the options for locating the Senior Center at Emery Grover or at the Heights MBTA parking lot. The Commission raised concerns on the schedule, noting that the plan had been to present a final location to Town Meeting at the November Special Town Meeting.
- D. Needham 300: Update on Field Day Events:** Mr. Robey gave an update on the events planned for the weekend of November 5-7<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Carey noted that the committee was looking to add a hot air balloon event to the activities at Greene's Field on November 6<sup>th</sup>. She is working on putting together a meeting of the Needham 300 committee and Town staff to review this weekend of events, and other events that might require permits or assistance from Town staff.
- E. Parking Issues at Parks: Traffic Management Advisory Committee:** Ms. Carey recently attended a meeting of the Traffic Management Advisory Committee to discuss neighborhood parking issues in areas adjacent to parks. The committee did not have a solution that could be legally binding, but would be sending an advisory letter to Ms. Carey

suggesting that the sports groups be involved in educating parents and coaches. Mr. Jacob asked if “Resident Parking only” signs could be an option. Ms. Carey said they would not be legally binding, but that she would get an opinion from the Police Department. The immediate neighbors adjacent to any park with the possibility of signs would need to be involved in the discussions.

- F. Future Community Center Concept:** A group of Needham residents has been talking about the possibility of a community center, including a senior center and year-round pool. Two Selectmen referred them to Ms. Carey. Mr. Nadler noted that this was a larger discussion than one just for the Commission and that the Selectmen should be involved. Rosemary and Ridge Hill were discussed as two site options.

## **5. Action Items**

- A. Appointment to the Youth Commission: Jessica Hoguet:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to appoint Jessica Hoguet as the Park and Recreation representative to the Needham Youth Commission, to serve through June 2013. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.
- B. Request: Needham High Athletics and Booster Club – Claxton Field Batting Cage:** Mr. Jacob made a motion to approve the addition of a batting cage at Claxton Field, to be donated by the Needham Booster Club on behalf of Needham High Athletics. Mr. Nadler seconded the motion. Mr. Nadler asked if the location interfered with other uses at the park, but Ms. Carey said the proposed location off the 3<sup>rd</sup> base side of Claxton # 1 would not be close to other uses. The alternate location is far in the outfield of Claxton # 1 which is not as easy for the softball players to access, and might also interfere with adult softball plays in the outfield. The vote was taken and the motion was approved unanimously.

- 6. Topics for Future Agendas:** Mrs. Chaston has spoken to resident Joan Kelly who had written personal notes to members of the Commission and Selectmen with a request not to adopt a “no dog” policy at DeFazio. She asked Mrs. Chaston to have the Commission consider adding a walking path around the park for dog walkers. Ms. Carey will forward her question to the Town Manager and have additional information for the Commission at a later meeting. Mr. Nadler noted that a DeFazio neighbor from the Plymouth Road area raised a concern a few months ago about some dead trees in the Town’s easement along her property. Ms. Carey will need to ask for DPW input on who has responsibility. He also noted that another DeFazio neighbor had sent him a complaint about the use of air horns at the recent football camp at DeFazio. Mr. Robey asked that guidelines for all clinics be discussed at an upcoming meeting. The input from the Commission

can then be utilized by Mr. Nadler and Memorial Park Trustee Chairman Dave DiCicco who are trying to develop some updated permitting rules for both boards. Mr. Robey will also discuss project assignments for each Commissioner at the next meeting.

7. **Adjournment:** Mr. Jacob made a motion at 8:25 PM to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Nadler and approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP  
Director