

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

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
November 14, 2011**

**PRESENT:** Thomas M. Jacob, Chairman  
Michael J. Retzky, Vice Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member  
Brian S. Nadler, Member  
Andrea L. Shorthose, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director  
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

**GUESTS:** Bob Cohen, Resident  
Melissa Padeni, American Cancer Society, Relay for Life  
Penny Gordon, American Cancer Society, Relay for Life, Volunteer

The meeting convened at 7:00 PM in the Charles River Room located at the Public Services Administration Building

1. **Minutes of Meeting of October 24, 2011:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 11, 2011 meeting. Ms. Peirce corrected the spelling of Ms. Padeni's name. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and the motion was approved with the spelling correction.
2. **Director's Report:** Submitted in writing prior to the meeting.
3. **Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce reported that Park and Recreation provided staff to assist with the Needham 300 La Carnivale held on the afternoon of November 5<sup>th</sup> at the Town Common. This event was a culmination of weekend events ending a year long celebration of Needham 300 activities. The Senior Walking Club Program Leader Ken Lorey turned 90 on October 31<sup>st</sup> making him one of the oldest Needham Town employees. The Ice Skating program ended on November 10<sup>th</sup>. The Turkey Hunt will be held on November 19<sup>th</sup> at the Broadmeadow School and volunteers are needed to help.
4. **Discussion Items:**
  - A. **Special Events Discussion:** Ms Carey noted that a request for a summer football special event has already been submitted. Mr. Jacob reviewed the list of special events and suggested refining the list to include different categories. Mr. Nadler broke down the types of requests as semi special events which would include clinics for current permit holders, individual one day events and multiple day events from non permit holders. Ms. Carey is trying to create a balance between the special event approvals and the needs of the permitted groups. One suggestion is to create a timeline for submitting special event requests, but Ms. Carey noted that timeline was already in place. More discussion is needed on this topic.
  - B. **Rail Trail Feasibility Study:** Ms. Carey, Ms. Peirce, Mr. Jacob, Tad Staley, Bay Colony Rail Trail Committee, Bob Rooney, City of Newton, Carol Lisbon, Dover Selectman and Rail Trail Committee, Pete Peterson, Medfield Selectman,

and Christian Donner, Medfield Rail Trail representative met to discuss the Rail Trail project and how it affects all of the towns. At the next meeting a representative from the Bay Colony Railroad and one from the MBTA will be invited to attend to inform the group on the next steps in the process. Dover has appointed a Rail Trails Committee and Medfield is in the process of recruiting committee members. Mr. Jacob indicated there is support from Representative Denise Garlick for this project. Ms. Peirce noted at the November 1, 2011 Needham Rail Trails meeting, students from Needham High School attended along with their teacher Mr. Baker. Mr. Baker is encouraging students to get involved in this project as a learning experience and for school credit.

- C. **Dog Park Discussion:** Mr. Nadler asked for clarification as to why the Park and Recreation Commission is involved in creating a dog park. Ms. Carey noted the Board of Selectmen have asked the Park and Recreation Commission to oversee the discussion to help answer some of the citizen requests to have a dog park. At this time there is no direction given on how a committee will be chosen but Mr. Nadler recommended that a representative from the Park and Recreation Commission be on the committee. Different dog park models have been adopted in surrounding towns. The Park and Recreation Commission will investigate the Community Farm license to operate on Town land as a model to be used for a dog park.
  - D. **Greene's Field Playground Update:** Ms. Carey reported that 3 playground vendors have made presentations to the Greene's Field Committee. Some of the committee members are taking field trips to nearby playgrounds to get ideas on different varieties of equipment. A nature theme seems to be a popular concept for the playground structure. Ms. Carey noted that capital funding will support the irrigation and fencing on the field. A local basketball group may be able to fund an overlay for the basketball court. Some type of stone dust path around the park and amenities such as a gazebo, picnic tables and a swinging bench have been suggested. Ms. Carey indicated the committee could be ready to present their recommendations to the Board of Selectmen in January and possibly begin fundraising in the spring of 2012.
  - E. **Cricket Building Study Update:** Discussed later in the meeting
  - F. **Trails Update:** Discussed later in the meeting
  - G. **Operating and Capital Budget Review:** Discussed later in the meeting.
  - H. **Community Center Concept:** Discussed later in the meeting.
  - I. **Draft Policies:** Discussed later in the meeting.
5. **Action Items:**
- A. **Special Event Request: Needham Junior Football: Turkey Bowl:** Discussed later in the meeting.
  - B. **Coulton Park Outdoor Skating Rink Request:** Discussed later in the meeting
  - C. **Special Event Request: Relay for Life:** Melissa Padeni and Penny Gordon attended the meeting to represent the Relay for Life Committee. Mr. Jacob suggested the event be moved to June 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> instead of in May to alleviate displacing permit holders from DeFazio Park.. The layout of the event and

equipment needed including a generator, lights and amplification were discussed. Ms. Carey will talk to the Police Chief, Town Manager and DPW Superintendent regarding the lights available and the timing of the lights. Mr. Jacob recommended Ms. Padeni create a layout of the field, mapping where the events will take place, tents will be located and where lights and amplification will be placed. Ms. Carey suggested Ms. Padeni contact the Track Club to see how they manage their special events. Mr. Retzky noted there are outlets on the field for lighting purposes. Ms. Carey also suggested Ms. Padeni contact the Needham Soccer Club to look at the parking plan they use for the Memorial Day Tournament. Ms. Padeni noted that the Relay for Life volunteers met and would be willing to change the date if they were able to keep the event in Needham. The first choice would be to have the event May 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>, second choice June 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>, third choice June 16<sup>th</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>. In their opinion, moving the event to another town would be more detrimental than changing the date. Ms. Padeni noted the Relay for Life is held rain or shine so there would be no need for a rain date. Ms. Padeni will come to the next meeting with a layout of the field for the Commissioners to review. The Commission chose to wait for additional information before voting on the request.

**4. Discussion Items:**

- E. Cricket Building Study Update:** Ms. Carey shared the draft Cricket Building Study project schedule indicating the final report will be ready to be presented in February 2012.
- F. Trails Projects:** Ms. Peirce reported that the second draft of the Trail Steward Manual will be reviewed on November 18<sup>th</sup> at the Trails Advisory Group meeting. Sue Barber, a resident with a background in environmental resources, has volunteered to write up information on the reverse side of the trail maps identifying information specific to that particular area. She and Ms. Peirce have walked some of the trails at Ridge Hill and are scheduled to walk some of the trails at the Town Forest on November 17<sup>th</sup>. The November Eco Explorer meeting was held at the Newman School Eastman Conservation Area. New signs designed and installed by Needham Girl Scouts depicting nature observations were observed. A bridge and a dock along the trail in need of repair will be added to the list of potential scout projects. The Needham Science Center is starting an afterschool Junior Ranger Program that Ms. Peirce is interested in learning more about to possibly create a Park and Recreation Junior Ranger Program in the future.
- G. Operating and Capital Budget Review:** Ms. Carey and Mr. Jacob will present the budget request on November 16, 2011. The only increases listed are step increases for the Administrative Specialist and Recreation Supervisor. Playground surfacing and emergency repairs will be done by DPW. Scheduled repairs will be contracted. Procurement will be discussed at the November 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. Ms. Carey will review the Operating and Capital Budget meeting at the next Park and Recreation Commission meeting. Mrs. Chaston noted she approved of the capital projects that are being recommended and would like to have a summary page of the capital requests.

- H. Community Center Concept:** Ms. Carey and Mr. Jacob met with members of the Community Center Concept Committee Round Table discussion on October 28, 2011. Town departments, agencies and religious groups were represented at the meeting. The purpose of the meeting was to help identify current services and where there are gaps in services. On November 10<sup>th</sup> representatives from the Community Center Concept Committee met with Ms. Carey to clarify town services and facility needs.
- I. Draft Policies:** Mr. Nadler and Mr. Jacob met with the High School Athletic Director Micah Hauben, Principal Jonathan Pizzi and Memorial Park Trustee Dave DiCicco to review the draft policies for scheduling fields. The updated draft includes comments from the Principal and Athletic Director. The Memorial Park Trustees have reviewed the draft policies and are in agreement with the recommendations. The next step is to distribute the draft policies to the user groups and to let them know about the public meeting to be held on Monday, November 28, 2011. Mr. Jacob thanked Mr. Nadler for the great work on the draft revisions to the joint policy.
- 5. Action Items:**
- A. Special Event Request: Needham Junior Football: Turkey Bowl:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the request from Junior Football to host a Turkey Bowl on Wednesday, November 23, 2011 at Claxton Field from 12:45-4:00. Mr. Retzky seconded the motion and the motion was approved.
- B. Coulton Park Outdoor Skating Rink Request:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the request from the Coulton Park Neighborhood to construct a temporary skating rink. Mr. Retzky seconded the motion and the motion was approved. Ms. Carey will re-state the rules for set-up and maintenance in their approval.
- C. Special Event Request: Relay for Life:** Discussed earlier in the meeting
- 6. Topics for Future Agendas:**
- DeFazio Storage Unit Update
  - List of Park and Recreation appointees to other Town committees
  - Status of Field Improvement Fund
  - Trash Summit
  - Rosemary Pool
- 7. Adjournment of Meeting:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:50PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and the meeting adjourned at 9:50PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP  
Assistant Director