

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

February 11, 2013

*Background notes for Monday, February 11th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

SNOW STORM

These notes are being finalized the day of the Commission meeting, as schedules changed rapidly last week due to the snow storm. PSAB and all Town departments were closed on Friday, February 8th, with the exception of DPW, Police, Fire and other emergency personnel, including private contractors. Needham was fortunate not to have tree damage to impede the work of the plow trucks, and despite the amount of snow, had passable – but very narrow – streets.

It is now raining and temperatures are expected to remain above freezing for a few days, so hopefully there will be a slow melt to bring down the size of the snow banks and assist with widening the roads. In 1987, when Park and Recreation held its February Vacation programs, the program was held at Pollard. I was able to bring the participants outside to sled at Pollard on one day, and on a second day, walk them over to the Reservoir to skate. Since that time, it has been a rare year when either activity could be included as a scheduled event. It will be interesting to see how much of this snow will still be on the ground next week.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

The next meeting of the Commission – on Monday, February 25th – will be held in the Selectmen's Chambers at Town Hall, due to a conflict at PSAB. Please note that on your calendar!

Commissioner Cindy Chaston has conflicts with the meetings on February 25th and March 11th and will not be available to attend either meeting. Please make sure that Chairman Mike Retzky and I know well in advance if any other Commission member might have a conflict, so that we can insure a quorum is present for business.

GREENE'S FIELD

I'll be meeting with a group of parents to review an updated playground design this week. The fundraising group has raised well above the \$50,000 commitment made to the project, more than doubling that effort, so we've been able to add some components to what we believed would be the budget. One of the fundraising ideas was to sell boards that would be inscribed and included in the layout. Currently, we are looking at an option to create a bridge with an arbor, using the boards. Over the weekend, the 100th board was sold, and there is still a month to purchase one at <http://www.greenesfield.org/> The fundraising group is planning a 5K and has submitted a special event request to use Greene's Field for the "home" location. This would be on the weekend of St. Patrick's

Day, as part of their final fundraising events, including the sold-out party at Powers Hall in Town Hall.

DPW Parks Superintendent Ed Olsen and I have met with some Warren Street neighbors about the Greene's Field project. Some had the perception that numerous trees would be removed from the site, but they now understand that only trees that are in poor condition will be taken down, and in most cases will have two large trees replace each one removed. If a healthy tree is found to conflict, it will be moved within the site. Some neighbors have also expressed a desire to have something other than a 6 foot black chain link fence between the park and their backyards. The Town has funding for the chain link fence, so private fundraising would be needed to change that concept.

CLEANING COMPANY CONTRACTS

The contract with the company hired to clean the park bathrooms expires on June 30th. Under the same contract, this firm also is contracted to clean the High School. A second company is contracted to clean the Pollard Middle School and that contract will also expire on June 30th. I'm working with the Assistant Town Manager, Public Facilities-Operations, and school personnel on updating the requirements so that a new bid for all three services can result in a contract prior to the deadline of these contracts.
