

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

**Minutes of Meeting
February 11, 2013**

PRESENT: Michael J. Retzky, Chairman
Cynthia J. Chaston, Vice Chairman
Thomas M. Jacob, Member
David C. DiCicco, Member
Andrea L. Shorthose, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

GUESTS: Mary MacMahon, Resident
Andrew McCollum, Resident
Roy Schifilliti, Resident
Larry Cohen, Resident
John Kirk, Resident
Rochelle Goldin, Resident
Dan Shapiro, Cricket Neighbor

The meeting convened at 7:05PM in the Park and Recreation Office at the Public Services Administration Building.

1. **Minutes of Meeting:** None Presented.
2. **Director's Report:** Submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Ms. Carey mentioned that Mrs. Chaston is unable to attend the next two meetings so if any of the other members cannot attend please let Ms. Carey know in advance to be sure to have a quorum.
3. **Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce reported the following:
 - Ms. Peirce and Administrative Specialist Cassandra Halloran were certified in CPR.
 - Senior Walking Program Leader Ken Lorey resigned due to health issues. Kalpana Shah will take over the leadership position and a volunteer Rachel Mahar will assist when Kalpana cannot be there.
 - Preparing to send out contracts to returning summer employees.
 - The Camp Fair sponsored by Parent Talk was a huge success. 26 camps participated and over 200 people attended. The Park and Recreation display, digital photographs, sneak peak materials and prizes all added up to a well received event.
 - The Needham Coalition for Youth Substance Abuse Prevention is bringing a new program to Needham called icanhelp. It is a community-wide training program to support youth in need. Ms. Peirce and Recreation Supervisor Nicole DiCicco will attend the training and share the information with summer staff.
 - Ms. Peirce and Ms. DiCicco met with members of the Needham Community Farm to discuss a teen garden program for spring 2014 and how to collaborate on programming for the participants at Outdoor Living Adventure this summer.

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- Ms. Peirce and Ms. DiCicco met with staff from the Walker School to talk about programming opportunities for the school residents and how the two organizations can collaborate and share resources.
- February Vacation Week Programs are filling up and it is anticipated that most programs will be full by the end of the week.

4. Discussion Items:

A. FY 14 Operating and Capital Budgets: Ms. Carey reported that the Town Manager indicated that funds requested through the DSR4 will be not available for playground/field maintenance.

B. Field Maintenance Fee: Ms. Carey reported the Town Manager is preparing a letter to the Commission requesting a discussion about increasing the field maintenance fee. The Commissioners will continue to review information related to the costs of providing maintenance.

C. Rosemary Pool: Ms. Carey announced the Public Facilities Department received three proposals for the Rosemary Pool Feasibility Study. A subcommittee, including Ms. Carey, will interview the three companies and will make a recommendation to the PPBC. Ms. Carey indicated the chosen company should be in place to begin the study in March.

D. Community Preservation Proposals: Ms. Carey reported the Community Preservation Committee has scheduled a public hearing in March to review the CPC proposals which include projects at Mills Field, Newman School Field and Eastman Conservation Area, the Needham Reservoir and surfacing at the Newman Preschool Playground.

E. Proposed Rail Trail: Ms. Carey shared Rail Trail information that she presented at the Planning Board meeting on February 5th. Fay, Spofford and Thorndike was chosen for the feasibility study of the southern portion of the Bay Colony Rail Trail. A public meeting will be held in March.

F. Greene's Field Project: Ms. Carey reported that she has been meeting with a small group on finalizing the design of the playground. The fundraising committee sold 100 boards, to date. Some residents have approached the Selectmen asking if the basketball court could be rebuilt to a standard size. About \$10,000 is budgeted for renovation and an additional \$15,000-16,000 would be needed to rebuild it. Ms. Carey indicated that she and Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen met with some of the Warren Street neighbors to talk about the project. She indicated that most tree work is trimming, but trees needing to be removed due to the integrity of the tree will be replaced with two trees following the Parks and Forestry policy of 2 for 1. The direct abutters have asked for other options for new fencing between the properties. Funding is available for black chain link fencing. Mrs. Chaston asked what the impact would be if a full size basketball court were installed. Ms. Carey stated that a small area would be taken from the multi-purpose field to increase the width, but that the length would be decreased. The current budget does not include funds for rebuilding the court. The Selectmen are reviewing the options. Warren Street abutter noted that there is some resistance to increase the size of the court from the neighbors. Warren Street neighbor John Kirk commented that the

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Greene's Field Committee focused exclusively on the playground and not the impact of the activity on the basketball court and the field. He was very interested in the process and would like to have a dialogue about the other specific interests not just the playground structure. He suggested a series of meetings to voice concerns. Ms. Carey reminded the Commission that the playground study group had spent the first few meetings discussing the full park, and that the concepts had been discussed and approved at a Selectmen's meeting and then reviewed and discussed during the funding request to the CPC and Special Town Meeting. The CPC funding was not a possibility when the study committee began, but became a possibility in July 2012. Mary MacMahon stated if the court is improved and enlarged the YMCA will be using the courts and others will be there more often playing basketball. She wished there was a process so they knew this was part of the plan. She also asked about the different fundraising groups and why they need to fundraise for fences and basketball extensions. Ms. Carey indicated the court will be used for people to use independently and will not be permitted. Mr. DiCicco reminded the neighbors that the Selectmen would make any final decisions, so their thoughts should be shared with them. Mr. Cohen stated the neighbors want to have park improvements but they want to be involved in the process. Ms. Carey has already reported the neighbors' concerns to the Town Manager, and will add any additional from the Commission's meeting to the Town Manager's list.

G. Trail Projects: Ms. Peirce reported the Trail Advisory Group met on January 30th. The draft rules and regulations for the use of other power driven mobility devices (OPDMD) on the Town of Needham Trails has been completed and will be available to the Commissioners for review and approval at a future meeting. This joint policy will also be reviewed and approved by the School Committee, Conservation Commission, Disability Commission and the Board of Selectmen. Ms. Peirce is working with Parks and Forestry to track maintenance work being completed on the trails. New trail markers need to be ordered due to the removal of some orange markers in the Town Forest and a need for more markers at other locations.

H. Spring Summer Field Scheduling: Ms. Carey reported that she met with Mr. DiCicco and Mr. Jacob on the field scheduling information. There are no major conflicts with the multi-purpose fields, but with changes with groups using diamonds, there is more work to be done.

5. Action Items

A. Special Event Request: Greene's Field Fundraising Committee: Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the special event request from the Greene's Field Fundraising Committee to start and finish a 5K Road Race at Greene's Field on March 16, 2013. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

B. Special Event Request: Cub Scout Pack 4: Mr. Jacob made a motion to approve the special event request from Cub Scout Pack 4 to host Rocket Day on March 16, 2013 at Claxton Field. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

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- C. Special Event Request: NHS French Club:** Mr. Jacob made a motion to approve the special event request from the Needham High School French Club to host a Paper Shredding Fundraiser on March 16, 2013 in the Claxton Field parking lot. Ms. Carey will inform the group of the Rocket Day activity taking place on the same day and will instruct the French Club to hold the event in the quarry area and have the attendees use the circular area of the parking lot to drop off papers and exit. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.
- D. Special Event Request: Walker School:** Ms. Shorthose made a motion to approve the special event request from the Walker School to host the “Walk for Walker” on September 29, 2013 at DeFazio Park. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.
- E. Hillside/Mitchell Pre-Feasibility Study (Cricket):** Ms. Carey noted the Board of Selectmen will be discussing the DeFazio Park Site Development Prefeasibility Study and the Hillside/Mitchell School Renovation – Statement of Interest at the February 12th meeting. Mr. Diccio will try and attend the Board of Selectmen’s meeting. Ms. Carey and Mrs. Chaston will be meeting with the School Committee’s facilities subcommittee to review the Statement of Interest drafts for Hillside and Mitchell. Cricket neighbor Dan Shapiro mentioned that he was informed that School Committee Chairwoman Heidi Black recently stated at a PPBC meeting that there is not support to build a permanent school at the DeFazio site. Mr. Shapiro also reported there is graffiti on the field side of the Cricket building.

6. Topics for Future Agendas: Resident Questionnaire

7. Adjournment: Ms. Carey reminded the Commissioners the next meeting 2/25/13 will be held at Town Hall in the Selectmen’s Meeting Room. Mr. Jacob made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:15PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco, approved unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP
Assistant Director

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