

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

**Minutes of Meeting
April 8, 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: Bob Cohen, Resident
Lynn Palmatier, Needham Junior Football
Janet Jankowiak, Resident
Connie Kaufman, Resident

The meeting convened at 7:05PM in the Needham Public Library Community Room.

1. **Minutes of Meeting:** Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 11, 2013 meeting. Mr. Jacob seconded the motion and the March 11, 2013 meeting minutes were approved unanimously.
2. **Director's Report:** Submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Ms. Carey reminded the Commissioners to complete the Conflict of Interest training information.
3. **Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce reported the following:
 - The goal is to get the Summer Brochure to the printers by April 12th.
 - Finalizing hiring for summer positions. More lifeguards are needed.
 - Attended the MRPA State Conference with Recreation Supervisor Nicole DiCicco and Director Patty Carey.
 - Attended the icanhelp 4 hour training with Recreation supervisor Nicole Diccio. which will be shared with the summer staff.
 - Attended the NCYSAP meeting. (please spell out what NCYSAP stands for)
 - Attended the Youth Resource Network meeting.
 - The Community Garden information has been sent out and there will be a few new gardeners this season.
 - Working with Ben Kerrigan on starting skateboard program for children. More details to follow at a future meeting.
4. **Discussion Items:**
 - A. **Camp Property Building:** Ms. Carey reported that DPW will remove the collapsed patio roof from the camp building. Questions about the building remaining and being renovated or building a replacement building will need to be discussed at a future meeting.
 - B. **FY'14 Operating and Capital Budgets:** Ms. Carey shared the warrant for the May Town Meeting.

C. Rosemary Pool: The Permanent Public Building Committee (PPBC) will be meeting this evening in the next room at the Library. When Rosemary Pool comes up on the agenda the Park and Recreation Commissioners will step out to attend that meeting to hear the presentation from Weston and Sampson. Ms. Carey has a meeting scheduled with Weston and Sampson to tour the Rosemary Pool facility. Ms. Carey and Mr. Jacob will be meeting with the working group to review the progress of the project. The feasibility project completion is slated for September 2013. Ms. Carey shared a letter from a student at the Mitchell School regarding Rosemary Pool. The Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick responded to the student.

D. Off-Leash Dog Park: Ms. Carey reported the Town Manager has requested the School Committee and Superintendent consider a pilot program for an off-leash dog park at the Nike Site.

E. Community Preservation Proposals: The Community Preservation Committee voted to move all the projects presented forward. The housing specialist project is proposed to be funded at \$70,000. The projects are now before the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee for discussion, and will all move forward to Town Meeting for the requests for appropriation.

F. MWRA- Sudbury Aqueduct: Ms. Carey shared the map of the Sudbury Aqueduct section that runs through Needham. The MWRA will work with the Town of Needham to open the Aqueduct Trails to pedestrians adding 2.5 miles to the Needham Trails. The MWRA will continue to maintain the area and will allow signage and benches along the trail. The MWRA has access easements but Needham will need to get access agreements with the land owners for pedestrian trail use. Aqueduct abutters will be involved throughout the process. There are 2 road crossings along the aqueduct at Cedar Street and Wellesley Avenue.

G. Proposed Rail Trail: Mr. Retzky clarified that the Rail Trail discussion concerns the south section of the trail. Fay, Spofford and Thorndike are underway on the feasibility study and will have draft information ready to share at an April 24th public meeting. Initial conversations with the MBTA indicate that the lease will not include the section between Needham Junction and High Rock Street. The Charles River Bridge report indicates it is not salvageable and a new bridge would be necessary. Having the trail begin at High Rock Street and ending at the Charles River limits the length of trail originally proposed. The article to allow the Board of Selectmen to enter a lease with the MBTA is currently on the May Town Meeting warrant. If Bay Colony and/or the Board of Selectmen are not ready this article, it could be tabled until the fall Special Town Meeting. The next public meeting will be held on April 24, 2013.

H. Greendale Avenue Trail: Ms. Carey reported there are two proposed 40B projects looking to build on Greendale Avenue under discussion. The Conservation Director has reviewed the smaller proposal, and recommended that the developer be asked to do some trail improvements on the adjacent Park and Recreation land.

I. Greene's Field Project: Mrs. Chaston asked what size the basketball court would be. Ms. Carey stated the basketball court at Greene's Field will be a high school regulation court. No permits will be given for organized use, and it will remain open for "sandlot" play. Arborvitae will be used to buffer the courts and deflect noise from the abutters. \$180,000 has been raised for the playground structure. Details are being finalized and installation should begin this summer. Ms. Carey is working with the Exchange Club who will build or install some type of shade structure at the park.

J. Trail Projects: The first annual Trail Steward meeting will be held on April 9th. More trail signs will be ordered soon. CPC funding for the Ridge Hill Loop is on the Town Meeting warrant. The Spring Trail Clean up is scheduled for Saturday, April 27th at the Greendale Trail. The Conservation Commission is scheduling a clean up at Ridge Hill on April 13th. The Town Wide trash Clean up will also be held on April 27th. A meeting is scheduled on April 17th with the Public Facilities Department carpenter and Conservation Director Patty Barry to discuss building kiosks for the different trails. The Disability Commission will be reviewing the Other Power Driven Mobility Device (OPDMD) policy at the April 16th NCOD meeting. The next Trails Advisory Group meeting will be held on May 6th.

K. Spring/Summer Field Scheduling: Ms. Carey reported receiving the first parking complaint today from DeFazio Park neighbors on George Aggott. The grass fields opened for spring use on April 6th. She shared new program forms received from Needham Softball. When reviewing the field scheduling for Needham Baseball and Softball she had to work on assigning them the correct amount of fields because they were requesting more fields than they actually needed for the number of teams submitted. She noted the baseball/softball and soccer programs have been good at sharing space this season. Ms. Carey reported damage from the High School Ultimate Frisbee Club at Perry Park estimated at \$1,100 to repair. The High School Principal has required the team to sign a contract about behavior and use of fields, and is working with them to provide funds to pay for the restoration. Ms. Carey reported the Parks and Forestry Superintendent used turf blankets on some of the goal mouth areas with significant success. Mr. DiCicco was concerned that Needham Baseball and Softball had been given a permit to use the 60' diamond at Memorial Park this summer. Ms. Carey said that no group has been displaced on the synthetic multi-purpose field.

L. BUCC Cricket Club: Ms. Carey received a request from BUCC to use the DeFazio Park synthetic turf fields for an adult Cricket program. With only one Needham resident on the roster the Commissioners suggested the club look elsewhere.

M. Harold J. A. Street, III Trust: Ms. Carey shared a Declaration of Trust from Harold J.A. Street indicating that \$22,000 has been left to the Needham Park and Recreation Commission. The Commissioners will think about how to best spend this significant donation that will help the department and honor Mr. Street.

5. Action Items

A. Hillside/Mitchell Pre-Feasibility Study (Cricket): Ms. Carey indicated she has not heard anything new regarding the Hillside/Mitchell Pre-Feasibility Study. Mr. Retzky attended the School Committee Open House at the Mitchell School. It was noted that neighbors have begun to place “Save Cricket Field” signs back on lawns around town.

B. Field Maintenance Fee: The Commissioners are in agreement with a slight increase for the 2014 sports season. Mr. DiCicco made a motion to raise the field maintenance fee by \$5.00 to be implemented for the 2014 sports season. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. DiCicco noted he is in favor of the fee to help the field maintenance fund but would not want to see any cuts in the Parks and Forestry budget. Ms. Carey indicated the only way to lower the cost of maintaining the fields is to decrease the amount of use of the fields. Mr. Retzky reiterated that the sports groups were supportive of the fee increase as long as they are able to inform the group members before the next registration cycle. The Commissioners commented favorably on the amount of money the Town has actively sought for synthetic turf field future maintenance.

Mr. Retzky suspended the meeting at 8:32 so the Commissioners could attend the PPBC meeting to hear the report on Rosemary Pool from Weston and Sampson.

Mr. Retzky resumed the meeting at 9:26PM

C. Request Charles River Center: The Charles River Center has requested the use of 10 parking spaces in the Dwight Field parking lot. There are a total of 62 spots in the parking lot which North Hill is currently using for parking during construction of their facility. Mr. DiCicco made a motion to provide 10 parking spaces at the Dwight Field parking lot for the Charles River Center. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously. Ms. Carey will notify North Hill that they will be allowed 52 spots and the Charles River Center will be allowed 10 parking spots to be used during business hours.

D. Request: NHS Athletics- Portable Restrooms: Ms. Carey received a request from the High School Athletic Director to place a portable restroom at Cricket Field to be used for spring sports. Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the request of the Needham High Athletic Director to place a portable restroom at Cricket Field for the spring season, until the restrooms are available to the High School. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

E. Request Needham Summer Swim Team: Ms. Carey shared a request from the Needham Summer Swim Team to use Rosemary Pool for the summer of 2013 waiving the \$5 participant fee or the pool pass requirement. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the use of Rosemary Pool for the Needham Summer Swim Team for 2013 with

the requirement that the participants purchase season pool passes but not be required to pay the \$5 participant fee. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

F. Special Event Request: Needham Baseball and Softball: Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the Special Event request from Needham Baseball and Softball to have clinics at Claxton Field from 1-3:00PM on Sunday afternoons within their spring season permit. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

G. Special Event Request: Community Center of Needham: The Community Center of Needham requested Greene's Field for a Luminary Stroll to be held on November 3, 2013 from 4:00-6:30PM. The rain date will be either November 10th or 17th. The Commissioners expressed some concern that the Greene's Field renovation may not be completed at that time. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the use of Greene's Field for the Luminary Stroll on November 3, 2013 as long as the field renovation is completed. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

6. **Topics for Future Agendas:** Proposed Rail Trail South Section
Camp Property
7. **Adjournment:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:40PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:40PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP
Assistant Director