

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

**DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**April 5, 2013**

*Background notes for Monday, April 8<sup>th</sup>  
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

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**MEETING LOCATION**

Weston & Sampson will be meeting with the PPBC on Monday night, to introduce the pool study project and the outline of tasks. Since the Park and Recreation Commission also needs to be included in this discussion, the Park and Recreation Commission will move its meeting to the Library's Community Room. The PPBC will be in the main room, and the Commission will be just next door in the second room.

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**FIELD MAINTENANCE FEE**

The Commission has been asked to consider raising the Field Maintenance Fee from \$5/participant/season to \$10/participant/season. The Town Manager's request was for July 1, 2013. The Commission has held discussions on this proposal, also proposing that the fee, if approved, to be set to start for registrations for Spring 2014 season. The Commission will continue discussions, and if ready, will vote on the request at the April 8<sup>th</sup> meeting.

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**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION PROPOSALS**

The CPC held a public hearing on March 13<sup>th</sup> and then voted on all proposals the following week on March 22<sup>nd</sup>. They have voted to recommend the projects related to services or facilities under Park and Recreation's jurisdiction to Town Meeting, including design funds for Newman athletic fields and Eastman Conservation are trails; consultant to work with Town to do 5-year update for Open Space and Recreation Plan; design funds for park improvements to Mills Field; design funds for trail development around the Reservoir and a loop extension at Ridge Hill; and the replacement of the playground surfacing at the Newman Preschool Playground.

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**PARKING AT DWIGHT FIELD**

In August 2011, the Commission approved the request of North Hill to use the parking lot for Dwight Field as an auxiliary lot during the initial phase of construction, expected to take about a year after permits were given. This week, I received a call from the Charles River Center. They had been using the Dwight lot, without permission, for overflow parking from their facility in the former Dwight school. Some staff members were turned away from the lot earlier this week, by a security guard from North Hill. I recommended that the Charles River Center submit a request for use of the lot, and that is now on the agenda for a discussion and a decision.

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**SAFETY**

The state approved legislation last year that will require all those who work in schools to have fingerprints on file, in addition to a criminal record background check. The

regulations haven't been put in place for implementation, so it may not be ready for September 1, 2013. At this time, we are working with contacts at the state to see if this requirement expands into Park and Recreation programs. It appears to be related to licensed programs, only, but we'll continue to seek guidance on this, and will continue with training our staff to make sure that all interactions with program participants are in public.

A second piece of legislation requires lifejackets to be made available to camp participants at lakes and ponds. This requirement does not include pools, as they are contained and typically all sections are guarded, as they are at Rosemary Pool. We'll continue to keep the rule at the pool that the flotation devices are not permitted, unless they are needed for a swimmer with challenges who does not have the ability to float.

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### **CONFLICT OF INTEREST TRAINING**

Just a reminder...the on-line test needs to be taken by board members and staff, and then a copy of the certificate of completion and a signed acknowledgement need to be submitted to the Town Clerk. Our seasonal staff is only required to acknowledge receipt of the information, but do not need to take the on-line test.

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### **NEW ACCOUNTING SYSTEM**

The Town has been preparing to convert to a new software system for payroll and accounting. Both new programs should be in place for the new fiscal year, and part of the training will begin in the next week. It will be an extra challenge as Cassandra will be going on maternity leave sometime in May and will not be here for the conversions. She is our primary staff member on the system, but even though it will be an extra challenge for the department, we wouldn't want her to be anywhere else except with the beautiful baby girl that she and her husband are expecting!

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### **YMCA**

Executive Director Kathy Lozano will be leaving the Charles River YMCA this week for a new position in Ohio. She has been great to work with, and will be missed not just by the YMCA community, but by many others in the Needham community. The Town Manager, Selectman Moe Handel and I have been asked to meet privately with each of the three finalists for the position in mid April.

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### **WALKER-GORDON**

In between snow storms, several aspects of the renovation of Walker-Gordon were completed, keeping the project on target for final steps in May.

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