

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

**Minutes of Meeting
October 28, 2013**

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

GUESTS: See Appendix A.

The meeting convened at 7:06PM in the Charles River Room located in the Public Services Administration Building.

1. Minutes of Meeting of October 7, 2013 and October 21, 2013: Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 7, 2013 and October 21, 2013 meetings. Mr. Toolan seconded the motion and the meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

2. Director's Report: Submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Ms. Carey reminded the group there is a Board of Selectmen meeting scheduled for October 29th to prepare for the up coming Special Town Meeting.

- 3. Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce reported the following:
- Trail Clean-Up Day and Town wide Clean-Up Day was held on Saturday October 26th. Mrs. Chaston helped to organize a group of 16 Exchange Club members and 8 additional volunteers cleared the new Ridge Hill Esker Trail Loop and installed trail signs. Assistance from Mike Logan from Parks and Forestry was instrumental in completing this very successful event. Fifteen volunteers collected a total of 787 lbs of trash at the Town Forest, Reservoir, DeFazio Park, Needham High School, Mills Field, Hersey Train Station, Thorpe Park and the Needham Heights Common.
 - Saturday October 19th was the Spooky Walk in Needham Center. Over 200 children Trick or Treated at over 80 Needham businesses.
 - The Turkey Hunt is scheduled for Saturday, November 23rd.
 - Currently working on the Winter/Spring Brochure.

Mrs. Chaston asked if mailing the brochure had been considered to increase participation numbers. Ms. Carey indicated funds are not budgeted for a brochure mailing. She did note that more effort needs to be focused on marketing the programs. Mr. Toolan suggested linking with all of the youth sports groups and either have a link on their website or email directly to their distribution lists. He will contact Ms. Peirce to discuss further.

4. Action Items:

A. Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles:

-Article 1 – Mitchell Modulars: Mr. Retzky welcomed School Committee Chairman Joe Barnes, School Committee member Michael Greis and School Superintendent Dan Gutekanst to the table to discuss the first two articles. Ms. Carey shared a map of the Mitchell School where the modulars would be placed. They are not directly connected to the school building and will not impact the playground area or the athletic fields. The basketball court will be relocated as part of this project. Mr. Toolan made a motion to support the plan for the Mitchell School Modular classrooms as presented on the Special Town Meeting Warrant. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

-Article 2 – Hillside Feasibility: Dr. Barnes noted the recent meeting with the Selectmen and School Committee, and the Selectmen’s vote to support Article 2 but to limit the parcels to those under the jurisdiction of the School Committee, or those approved by the jurisdictional board. The School Committee would like to include Cricket Field in the study to insure that a comprehensive report can be written. Dr. Barnes noted that the School Committee would abide by the decision of the Park and Recreation Commission. Each member of the Commission noted the importance of renovating or rebuilding the Hillside School, but that Cricket Field had value as open space and an active recreation site, and the loss of that space would not benefit the Needham community. It should not be included in the study if it is not available for use as a school site.

Mr. Jacob made a motion to acknowledge receipt of a letter from the School Committee requesting permission to include Cricket Field in the study and, given that no new information is contained in the letter, reaffirm the Park and Recreation Commission’s vote from one week ago, Monday, October 21, 2013, that: 1) Town properties under the jurisdiction of the Needham Park and Recreation Commission including Cricket Field are not available for study or use by other Town boards or committees without the expressed written permission of the Park and Recreation Commission. 2) To maintain and preserve Cricket Field in its current use as a park under the sole jurisdiction of the Park and Recreation Commission and to inform the School Committee that Cricket Field is not available for inclusion in the Hillside School Feasibility Study. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Jacob made a motion to support Warrant Article 2 Appropriate for Feasibility Study/Hillside School. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

-Article 12 – Rail Trail Lease: Mrs. Chaston made a motion to support Article 12 on the Special Town Meeting Warrant to Authorize Lease of MBTA Property for Shared Use Recreational Trail. Ms. Carey indicated the MBTA has told Dover that it will put up safety fences on either side of the Charles River Bridge. The Board of Selectmen approval of the Rail Trail Lease is based on the fundraising efforts currently at \$85,000. Ms. Carey also noted that Representative Garlick has earmarked a portion of State funds for the three communities that would be part of the Bay Colony Rail Trail and will request that some funds be authorized for the Needham portion. Mr. Jacob seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

-Article 13 – Rail Trail Insurance: Mr. Jacob made a motion to support Article 13 to Appropriate Rail Trail Insurance at Special Town Meeting. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

-Article 23 – Athletic Field Fund: Ms. Carey reported that the Town free cash collected was higher than anticipated, and it has been recommended that \$566,530 be put towards the Athletic Facility Improvement Fund at Special Town Meeting. Having this increase will help with future athletic facility projects. Mr. Jacob made a motion to support Article 23, Athletic Facility Improvement Fund. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

-Other – The Commission chose not to take a vote to support any other articles on the warrant.

5. **Discussion Items:**

A. Rosemary Pool Study: Ms. Carey reported that Weston and Sampson met with Rachel Freid from DEP and she expressed unofficial support for all of the options that will be presented in the report. The Park and Recreation Commission was planning to have a public meeting on

November 18th to present the Rosemary Pool Study but the PPBC has asked to change the date as they have a scheduling conflict that night. Ms. Carey will see if November 19th or 20th would be available for the public meeting. The draft report is still being written. Ms. Carey will work with the Needham Community Center Committee and other media to inform the public once a date is chosen for the meeting. A condensed version of the study options will also be posted for those unable to attend the public meeting, so that others may give feedback.

B. Town-wide Facilities Study: The PPBC is currently accepting bids for the Town-wide Facilities Study. Interviews of those that bid will be held on November 18th.

C. Newman/Eastman Conservation Project: The creation of the RFP is progressing. Ms. Carey indicated there is a question on the level of accessibility of the Eastman Conservation area required by the School Committee that needs to be determined prior to moving forward. Ms. Carey suggested meeting with all the Newman/Eastman Conservation area user groups in December. The project will include basic renovations but private groups may offer to support additional amenities such as lights and dugouts.

D. Fall Fields: Ms. Carey reported the dry fall has been very helpful to the fields and the groups using the fields. The High School is entering post season play which could affect youth sports schedules. Under new post-season scheduling, Needham High will host a post-season football game this week. Field Hockey and Boy's and Girl's Soccer will likely be in post season play. DPW has started the process of getting fields ready for the winter.

E. Trail Projects: Discussed earlier in the meeting.

F. Project Updates: Greene's Field, Walker-Gordon, Claxton Fencing, DeFazio Parking Lot:

Greene's Field: 90% of the project is completed. There will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for the playground structure on November 3rd. The field will be fenced to keep the public off the new sod for a few more weeks. The shade structure, donated by the Exchange Club, is finished. Future projects include indenting the parking along Pickering Street to allow for two-way traffic on the street. Additional trees will be planted, and picnic tables and trash receptacles need to be purchased.

Walker-Gordon: The damaged area has been sodded and access to the parking lot, pond and playground area should be available soon. Ms. Carey shared an aerial photo in an email showing the beautifully renovated park .

Claxton Fencing: Ms. Carey reported the fence contractor is scheduled to begin the project this week.

DeFazio Parking Lot: Ms. Carey reported the asphalt pads have been installed at 4 of the handicapped parking spaces, and two additional spaces will be added in the future. Ms. Peirce is working with the Disability Commission to begin using a new more action-oriented handicapped parking icon. Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick would like to see the signs with the new icon installed at DeFazio and other parks.

- G. FY'15 Operating/Capital Budgets:** Ms. Carey has submitted the capital and operating FY15 budgets. She will have copies for the Commissioners at the next meeting. The Park and Recreation Commission budget hearing will be held on November 2nd at 8:30AM. Mrs. Chaston, Mr. Retzky and Ms. Carey will attend.
 - H. Greendale Avenue Chapter 40B Project:** Ms. Carey reported that at this time the Zoning Board of Appeals is proposing a reduced number of units. No other information is available at this time.
 - I. Encroachment Update:** Ms. Carey reported that the contractor for the Nehoiden Street property has been asked to install something to delineate the private and public parcels. Ms. Carey has not heard if the final work on Armen way is complete.
 - J. Harold J.A. Street III Trust:** Ms. Carey will create a priority list of the kiosks and the locations and determine the length of time for Public Facilities to build them. The cost is \$518 for each kiosk. Recently, Eagle Scout candidate Jack Gallagher donated a check for \$518 to purchase a kiosk for the Mitchell Woods as part of his project.
- 6. Topics for Future Agendas:** The Commission will meet on November 4th prior to Special Town Meeting at 7:00PM at the Committee Table located in Powers Hall. Dog Park- To be discussed at a meeting in December.
 - 7. Adjournment:** Mr. Jacob made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:24PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:24PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP
Assistant Director

APPENDIX A

Attendance Park and Recreation Commission Meeting October 28, 2013

Janet Jankowiak	YMCA Board
Connie Kaufman	YMCA Board
Dan Shapiro	Cricket Neighbor
Jeff Ogilive	Resident
Bob Conley	Cricket Neighbor
Carl Walker	Cricket Neighbor
Joan Feeney	Cricket Neighbor
Darlene DioDato	Cricket Neighbor
Carolyn Spiros	Cricket Neighbor
John DioDato	Cricket Neighbor
Van Spiros	Cricket Neighbor
Brad Fernandez	Cricket Neighbor
Fran Hollender	Cricket Neighbor
Howard Furman	Cricket Neighbor
Diane Shapiro	Cricket Neighbor
Rachel Miller	Cricket Neighbor
Michael Miller	Cricket Neighbor
Pat Day	Needham Community Center
Dan Gutekanst	Needham Public Schools, Superintendent
Michael Greis	Needham School Committee, Member
Joe Barnes	Needham School Committee, Chairman