

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

**Minutes of Meeting
April 30, 2014**

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

GUESTS: Steven Popper, Director, PPBC
Janet Jankowiak, YMCA Board Member
Connie Kaufman, YMCA Board Member
Katy Dirks, Needham Community Center
Jo-Anne Ochalla, Needham Community Center
Yasue Keyes, Needham Community Center
Gary DeMaria, Needham Community Center
Amy Hurley, Needham Community Center
Nancy Sterling, Needham Community Center

Mrs. Chaston called the meeting to order at 7:01 in the Charles River room located at the Public Services Administration Building.

1. **Minutes of Meeting: April 7, 2014:** Mr. Jacob made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 7, 2014 meeting. Mr. Toolan made two corrections: Kerry Mahoney should be listed as Karen Mahoney. He also corrected a statement made by Mr. Yasque on page 2: *He would like the pool to be built away from the lake because of the contaminates that are washing into the lake from the storm water run off.* The corrected statement is: *He would like the pool to be built away from the lake because of the airborne contaminates.* Mr. Retzky seconded the motion to approve the minutes as amended and it was passed.
2. **Director's Report:** Submitted in writing prior to the meeting. Ms. Carey reported that the fence has been removed and trees have been planted at Avery Field.
3. **Assistant Director's Report:** Ms. Peirce reported the following:
 - Town-Wide Trash Clean Up Day-17 volunteers at individual locations around Town
 - Rosemary Trail Clean Up- 23 Habitat for Humanity Club volunteers painted and cleared debris
 - Bay Colony Rail Trail Clean Up debris 17 volunteers cleared the rail trail. All took place on Saturday, April 12th.
 - The Summer Brochure is completed and is posted online. Registration will begin May 13th at 9:00AM.
 - Spring programs have begun or will begin next week including Down on the Farm, Adult and Senior golf, Tennis and Skateboard EDU.
 - April 29th the Division of Fisheries and Wildlife brought 300 rainbow trout for the Pollard 7th graders to throw into the Reservoir for the Fishing Derby which will be held Saturday, May 3rd from 9-12:00. The Fishin' Buddies Club will on hand to volunteer and will be selling donuts and coffee to raise money for the club.

- The Conservation Commission will be hosting the First Saturday walk at Ridge Hill on May 3rd at 10:00AM.
- Working with Tom Nutile to create a way to honor his father Roy Nutile one of the founders of the Arts in the Parks program this summer.
- Interviews continue for lifeguard positions.
- Family Night at the Science Center on April 16th was a big success. Approximately 40 children and their families went on owl prowls, dissected owl pellets and viewed a beautiful wildlife presentation from Trail Steward Maury Eldridge.

4. Discussion Items

- a. Future of Rosemary Pool:** Mrs. Chaston reviewed the background of the Rosemary project noting that the permit to drain Rosemary Lake expires in 2018. A feasibility study was completed by Weston and Sampson to see if a pool could be built at the current site. Three well attended public meetings were held and additional comments were submitted in writing to the Commission. . Each topic will be discussed separately and will be voted on at the conclusion. .
- The Lake- The Commission would like to see the Lake maintained, continuing to address the storm water runoff. Additional maintenance to the Lake may be necessary once draining is stopped because currently the process helps to rid the lake of invasive species. By consensus the Commission would like to continue to improve the quality of the lake water and recommend it not return to a swimming location at this time.
- The Property- By consensus the Commissioners would like to improve the Rosemary Trail and the trail connections and be able to use the area for other recreational purposes. Ms. Carey noted a capital fund request will be presented to CPC for camp property building and trail improvements once the Rosemary Pool project has been determined. Mr. Toolan would like to look at programmatic issues and expand year round Park and Recreation programming for the community at this location. Currently Needham High School uses the property for outdoor learning experiences and the High School Habitat for Humanity Club is interested in helping improve the camp property to be used for outdoor educational purposes.
- The Parking Lot- The consensus of the Commission is to provide a paved parking area with a minimum of 80 spaces that could be used for other purposes year round.
- The Building- The consensus of the Commission is to reuse and adapt the current building for year round use with pool functions located on the first floor and creating usable program space on the second floor. Exterior building beautification and relocating the pool pump facility to a separate building would also be required.

Mr. Toolan made motion that the goal of the Park and Recreation Commission is to continue to improve the quality of Rosemary Lake, and recommend that the Lake not be brought back to swimmable state, as part of this project. The Park and Recreation Commission looks to improve the trails, trail connections, and use of public land surrounding the Lake for other purposes that would expand the programming and recreation opportunities for Park and Recreation and the community as a whole.

The Park and Recreation Commission seeks a minimum of eighty (80) spaces of paved parking, or appropriate number based on the final design, that accommodates the anticipated number of visitors, but may also be converted for alternate recreational opportunities in other seasons.

The Park and Recreation Commission would reuse and adapt the existing building, maintaining the existing footprint, but with potential for expansion as needed based on design, to accommodate year round use for Park and Recreation and community programming, while separating the pump house from the existing building and improving the overall aesthetics and functionality. The Park and Recreation Commission seeks a pool that is sized approximately 16,000 square feet or larger to ensure that it maintains the ability to continue to provide non-conflicting programming and creates opportunities for increased programming.

The Park and Recreation Commission will need additional information during the design phase to determine the exact location of the new pool, whether within the current location or within the bank of the site, so that more detailed design, feasibility, aesthetics and costs can guide the decision on the final location. Mr. Jacob seconded the motion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Mrs. Chaston asked if there were any other comments. Jo-Anne Ochalla from the Community Center of Needham Committee read the following statement: "CCN would like to thank the Park and Recreation Commissioners, Staff and PPBC for your commitment to finding a solution to the swimming and recreation needs of our Town. You have successfully shepherded the Rosemary feasibility study through an extensive community process over the past year with an openness and willingness to hear the voice of the people you serve. Despite the many mandates that Park and Recreation oversees, you have completed this process in a timely and thorough manner. We appreciate your efforts. As you move to the design phase we hope to be a part of a collaborative working group (similar to the one created for the Greene's field project) with multiple stakeholders from Needham working together create a facility that will serve Needham residents for generations to come. Finally, CCN continues to be committed to finding a solution to the indoor swimming and youth needs in our community. We urge the Town to make these top priorities and explore collaborative partnerships that could facilitate the development of new facilities to meet these needs, such as the YMCA or other potential partners. Thank you again for your leadership. In our minds, this 'New Pool' will be 'So Cool!' Congratulations on completing the first phase of this exciting project!"

- b. **May Meeting Dates:** The next Commission meeting will take place on Monday, May 19, 2014 location TBD. The May 12th and 26th meetings will be cancelled due to Town Meeting and Memorial Day.

5. Action Items

- a. **Preparation for Town Meeting:** Ms. Carey indicated there was nothing major on the warrant that was directly related to Park and Recreation. A request to appropriate \$40,695 to the Athletic Facility Improvement Fund is in Article 43. The amount is equivalent to the FY' 13 field administration fee collected.
- b. **Town-Wide Facilities Study:** Mr. Toolan shared that the next Town- wide Facilities Study meeting will be held on May 14th. Ms. Carey reported the consultants are touring the properties and drawing schematics, and creating a template to help evaluate all the properties.
- c. **Letter from YMCA Board:** Mr. Kevin Washington, CEO of the Greater Boston YMCA sent a letter to the Commission asking if the Town of Needham would be willing to explore relocating

the Needham YMCA to another available and larger parcel, specifically referencing Parcel 74. Mr. Retsky noted there are other Town needs for DPW, Fire and Police that need to be a priority. Mrs. Chaston suggested a YMCA Board Member attend one of the facility study meetings. Mr. DiCicco would not be willing to give up the parcel for anything other than recreation use. Mr. Toolan noted it is difficult to discuss a specific parcel at this time but he would like to see the Town and the YMCA work together to fulfill the needs of the community. Mr. Jacob suggested waiting until the results of the facility study are completed. Ms. Carey will notify the Town Manager of the request to have the YMCA attend Facility Study meetings.

7. Topics for Future Agendas: Programming Overlaps

- 8. Adjournment:** Mr. DiCicco made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:22 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Retzky and the meeting adjourned at 9:22PM.

Respectfully Submitted

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP
Assistant Director