

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

October 3, 2014

*Background notes for Monday, October 6th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

COMPUTER ISSUES

The RCN network connection to the PSAB building had issues last week, and on Friday was completely non-functional, so these notes were not completed until Monday, October 6th

OCTOBER MEETINGS

Due to Columbus Day and Special Town Meeting, the Commission has changed its October meeting dates to Monday, October 6 and Monday, October 20. Both meetings will start at 7 PM and will be held in the Charles River Room at PSAB.

STAFF

The new Recreation Supervisor will be Brendan Croak and he will start work on Monday, October 20th. Brendan grew up in Walpole, and started working for Walpole Recreation as a teen in seasonal positions, and then full-time as a Program Director. Brendan oversaw programs for ages 3-17 for three years, including summer programs, special events, recreation sports, a teen initiative, and helped manage 3 outdoor seasonal pools. He left full-time employment to pursue a marketing position utilizing his degree in visual communication, while continuing to work part-time handling administrative tasks for Walpole Recreation including the computerized registration program, brochures and the website. He has recently worked for Walpole Public Schools in addition to his work with Walpole Recreation, and he oversees Walpole's Babe Ruth program. Brendan is ready to bring his energy and "whatever it takes" attitude to the Needham Park and Recreation Department. I'm very excited to have Brendan join our department's team.

The new Playground Maintenance Specialist will be Tony DiCicco, a newly created part-time position for the department. As a high school student, Tony worked for Needham Park and Recreation as a summer counselor, and has continued to do occasional seasonal part-time work for the department. He shifted to Needham DPW Parks and Forestry for summer work, and is currently teaching for Wellesley Public Schools. Tony is welcomed back to Parks and Forestry each summer due to his dependability, strong work ethic, and doing a project "all of the way." He'll be visiting each playground site on a regular basis, raking the surfacing, weeding, cleaning, removing trash, and making small repairs as needed. Tony did some small playground projects for me in late summer, if you would like to see some of his handi-work...he repainted some playground lines on the asphalt area at Hillside and painted the perimeter of the Kindergarten playground at Broadmeadow for some children with vision challenges. It has been a long-time goal of mine to have this position, and I'm excited to have it start and to have Tony as the first Playground Maintenance Specialist.

The Assistant Director position has been posted, and applications will be accepted through Noon on Friday, October 10th. Hopefully the quality of candidates will be equivalent to those who applied for the Recreation Supervisor position!

SOCIAL MEDIA

The department's Administrative Specialist Kristen Wright has formally kicked off the department's Facebook page at Town of Needham – Park and Recreation. The framework had been set up by former Recreation Supervisor Nicole DiCicco last year and Kristen has been able to post regular information since mid-August. The number of "likes" has been increasing, and Kristen is keeping an activity log so we can gauge the success of what is being posted. Based on a long-time program that the department offered until recent years, Kristen is putting together a "hunt" for puzzle pieces at various parks, with weekly clues given out on Facebook for six weeks. Not only does this introduce new parks to families (*the original intent of the former program*) but it will hopefully bring new members to the Facebook page.

CHAMBER'S COVE

Two notes from an individual were received after the last meeting regarding the request to name a section of Rosemary Lake as Chamber's Cove. There were no objections to the naming, but they wanted the record to reflect that Frank Bell, Jr. was responsible for the creation of what is now Needham Youth Hockey.

DAMAGE AT DeFAZIO WETLANDS

Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen discovered damage done to the wetlands area near the DeFazio tot-lot. It appears that a large piece of machinery pushed through the area, knocking down trees and recently planted shrubs and pushing the soil to a small cliff. This was not done by DPW, but they will repair the damage under a plan being developed with the Conservation Director. Photos of the damage will be provided at the Commission meeting.
