

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

January 9, 2015

*Background notes for Monday, January 12th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

MEETING TIME

As the Commission will be hosting the annual field scheduling summit at 7:30 PM, the Commission meeting on January 12th will begin at 6:30 PM so that other business items can be handled prior to the summit.

OFFICE STAFF

The new Assistant Director Robyn Fink and Recreation Supervisor Brendan Croak will come to the beginning of the meeting at 6:30 PM to meet the Commission. They will then be leaving to attend a meeting with the Needham Special Education Advisory Council to meet with parents about summer opportunities. Park and Recreation staff have attended this meeting in the past, and work closely with parents and the School Department to create successful opportunities during the summer months.

It is exciting to have a full staff in the office! Robyn moved here from Georgia at the start of the New Year, and began work this week, on January 5th. She is quickly acclimating herself to the office – and to the weather – despite the fact that the moving company hasn't delivered her furniture and other items for her new home! She is quickly learning about the Nashoba program that starts over the weekend, and Senior Billiards that begins next week.

Brendan began in mid-October and had the opportunity to learn and help with most of the programs. He will also be working on the field schedule, so has begun that process. As the back-up to Administrative Specialist Kristen Wright, he has also had to learn many of her regular tasks, and successfully covered for her on her long-overdue vacation in December. Brendan has kept many successful programs moving forward, and has some new offerings for the spring.

Being short-staffed for six months was a challenge, but most work was accomplished. Our program staff has been fabulous, working with Kristen and me, and later with Brendan, to make sure no details were missed and that programs occurred without issues. Kristen has dealt with serious family illness and the death of three close family members, plus moved during all of this – yet, gave more than 100% at work each day. Park and Recreation has been fortunate to have great teams in the past, and this new team will keep that spirit continuing!

SPECIAL EVENTS LIGHTS REQUEST

The Soccer Club will be requesting a waiver for an additional hour of lights on the Friday night of the Memorial Day Soccer Tournament at the two fields at DeFazio. Under the regulations, the Commission can consider a waiver for a special event. It must be

discussed on two meeting agendas before a vote is taken. A copy of the request is in the packet, but the first discussion will be placed on the 1/26/15 agenda. It will then be on the 2/9/15 agenda, and if ready, the Commission can vote at the 2/9/15 meeting or choose to move it to the 2/25/15 meeting. The request for the Tournament is on the 1/12/15 meeting agenda.

NEEDHAM HIGH ATHLETICS

The initial request for spring/summer field space has been submitted. The High School is given after-school time until 6 PM, so this information is for the evening games, the days where they need to extend beyond 6 PM, and weekend games. It also lists some requests for practices, but all of those need to be coordinated with the youth programs who have priority on the weekends.

STATE HOUSE

In December, I had the opportunity to join a few of my colleagues for a meeting at the State House with Rep. Matt Beaton from Shrewsbury who will be the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs in Governor Baker's Administration. He asked some of us to come and meet with him to give him a better understanding of municipal recreation and parks. We look forward to working with him as he takes on his new role.

OVERHEAD DOORS

In December, the four overhead garage doors at Ridge Hill were replaced through Public Facilities funding. That department is also making some repairs in the garage to make it easier for our Outdoor Living program's use in the summer. This week, the overhead doors at the Cricket building are being replaced from a small capital budget account. We will make a few additional small repairs, in addition to the deck work done last summer, to keep the building in safe condition for our use until it is renovated.

BUDGET DOCUMENTS

The Town Manager has posted the capital budget information on the Town's website at <http://www.needhamma.gov/index.aspx?nid=3747>. I've given the Commission a copy of the executive summary in the meeting packet. The operating budget recommendation is being finalized and will be published by the end of January. The Finance Committee is currently reviewing the individual department requests, and Chairman Cindy Chaston and I met with them on January 7th and will update the Commission.
