

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

April 22, 2016

*Background notes for Monday, April 25th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

COMMISSION MEETING

The Park and Recreation Commission will be attending the League of Women Voters Warrant Meeting on Monday, April 25th at 7:30 PM at Center at the Heights. Their regular meeting will be held at 6:15 PM at Center at the Heights.

The Monday, May 23rd meeting will be held as scheduled. The Monday, May 9th meeting conflicts with Town Meeting, so an alternate time and/or date needs to be chosen.

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS

Welcome back to the Commissioner Cynthia Chaston. First elected in 2004, Commissioner Chaston has just completed 12 years and will be the next name to be posted on the honorary plaque of Commission members serving 12 or more years. The name gets added at the conclusion of service, so hopefully it will be many years before that happens!

Welcome to the Commissioner Michelle Geddes! Growing up in Needham and raising her family here, Commissioner Geddes has a great background on the services and facilities provided by Park and Recreation, and her enthusiasm and interest will be a great benefit to the Commission and Department moving forward with many great projects!

Thank you to Commissioner and Chairman David DiCicco. What a challenging year it has been, moving the Rosemary Recreation Complex project forward while trying to balance many other projects on the Commission's agenda. Chairman DiCicco made sure questions were asked, and if not answered fully, were vetted further until the information was available...and WOW did he attend a lot of meetings and reach out to many residents and members of other boards!! Thank you! Best wishes to the new (or returning) Chairman, to be chosen at the conclusion on Monday's business meeting.

RAIL TRAIL

The opening celebration is scheduled for **Sunday, May 1st at 2 PM**. The celebration will be held in the area between Fisher Street and Charles River Street. There will be some parking in that area, accessed from Charles River Street. Additional parking is off Fisher Street at DCR's Red Wing Bay or at the intersection of South Street and Fisher Street. Parking will be limited! There will be light refreshments and activities for children.

Thank you to members of the Bay Colony Rail Trail Association for last week's clean-up of the ceremony area, and the assistance from DPW Parks and Forestry to remove the brush pile this week. This weekend, we anticipate having the Needham High Rail Trail

Committee out painting the original fencing on Fisher Street and attempting to remove some graffiti on the new fencing.

ROSEMARY RECREATION COMPLEX TOUR/TAKE A HIKE

Saturday, April 30th will be a busy morning. At **10 AM**, we'll do the Take a Hike of Rosemary Trails. At **11 AM**, we'll meet at the Rosemary building and provide information on the Rosemary Recreation Complex project. Invitations have been sent to Town Meeting members, and through various Needham organizations including but not limited to Community Center of Needham, Needham League of Women Voters, and Needham Heights Association.

NEEDHAM BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

Opening Day is scheduled for Sunday, May 1st. The parade will begin at Greene's Field and once they are at DeFazio Asa Small Diamond at about 11:30 AM, the ceremonies will begin to officially open the season.

MILLS FIELD

The contractor has been back on site for the finish projects. Most of the planting has been done and the new bubblers are being installed. The restroom project has gone out to bid. The new sod, put down last fall, weathered the winter very well.

OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN

Conservation Director Matt Varrell and I are in the process of choosing the consultant from the on-call engineer services contract put in place last month. I will have additional information at an upcoming meeting, including needing representation from the Commission on a small working group. This will be a project that will need attention over the next few months!

RESTROOMS AND BUBBLERS

Public Facilities is working on activating the restrooms over the next week, starting with the Carleton Pavilion at DeFazio. Once that is done, the cleaners will start their regular schedules. Bubblers will be next on the schedule. Public Facilities will be working to replace some of the older bubblers over the next few months.

ELECTRIC AND NATURAL GAS

The celebration for the opening of the new solar farm at the RTS will be on Monday, April 25th at 1 PM at the RTS. Commissioner Chaston and I are planning on attending. With the system in place, the Town will now begin to have savings on the cost of electricity. In preparation, all electrical and natural gas bills will now be paid from one account rather than by different departments. The funding in Park and Recreation's original budget request has been removed from our budget and placed in the new energy account.