

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

**Minutes of Meeting
August 8, 2016**

PRESENT: Matthew M. Toolan, Chairman
Christopher J. Gerstel, Vice Chairman
Cynthia J. Chaston, Member
Michelle S. Geddes, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director

ABSENT: David C. DiCicco, Member
Robyn G. Fink, Assistant Director

GUESTS: *BH+A:* Joel Bargmann
Public Facilities-Construction: Mike Retzky
Parks and Forestry: Ed Olsen
Rosemary Pool Design Advisory: Don Leathe, Andy Allen, Deb Whitney
Needham Baseball and Softball: Rick Tacelli, Paul Siegenthaler
YMCA Board Members: Janet Jankowiak, Connie Kaufman

Mr. Toolan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Charles River Room of the Public Services Administration Building.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting of July 25, 2016:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 25, 2016. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel. The minutes of July 25, 2016 were approved unanimously.

- 2. Rosemary Pool Recreation Complex Project:** Mr. Toolan welcomed Joel Bargmann from BH+A. Mr. Bargmann reviewed color samples for the stone and for the boards along the body of the building. He also recommended a coordinated colored concrete base for easier maintenance in the winter months. The stone is real but in thinner layers, similar to what is at CATH. Mrs. Chaston asked how often the boards would need to be painted, and Mr. Bargmann suggested it would be 15-20 years. It can be power washed, but gently so as not to remove the surface. Mr. Bargmann provided an update concept for the boardwalks below the tiers, also showing the extended concrete first tier for accessibility. Railing would remain at the stairways. Andy Allen from the Rosemary Design Advisory Committee suggested more shade for the tiers. Mr. Bargmann noted it would include some natural shade with existing trees, as well as some umbrellas. Mr. Gerstel asked what the material would be for the boardwalk decks. Mr. Bargmann said that they were looking at a Trex type material. Ms. Geddes noted that it could get hot so asked that it be light colored. Mrs. Chaston asked about the fencing around the pool. Mr. Bargmann noted that the code requires a 6 foot fence that cannot be climbed, so they are looking at options. Mr. Toolan noted the information regarding the cost to install and operate a pool heating system. For partial heating in June and August, the operating costs

could be in the \$50,000 range. Ms. Carey said that information is being compiled but Rosemary is averaging in the high 70's to low 80's. Mr. Allen noted that children do not often like swimming in colder water. He asked if a possible solar feature on the roof could be for pool solar water as opposed to solar for electrical needs. Mr. Bargmann said it could be possible, but that there would be more cost savings if the solar could provide 12 months of energy savings as opposed to a small part of the summer months. Ms. Geddes asked how the season might be expanded. Ms. Carey said that starting earlier was much easier, though even if it was just opened on weekends, the pool would need to be operated 7 days a week. Trying to go beyond the end of August would be challenging, as it is at other pools, with the staff returning to both college and high school. Mr. Toolan noted the size of the heater which is 9 feet by 3 feet wide by 3 feet high. That would take up substantial storage space or outdoor space. Don Leathe from Rosemary Pool Design Advisory Committee suggested the cost of heating for a short period of time seemed expensive. *Mr. Toolan, Ms. Carey, Mr. Bargmann and Mr. Retzky left the meeting to attend the Design Advisory Committee meeting on a review of the exterior design features.* Mr. Gerstel continued the discussion with members of the Design Advisory Committee. Mr. Leathe suggested shuffleboard court, place for tai chi, a playground for children. Mrs. Chaston suggested basketball. Mr. Allen suggested a place that could be rotated for a variety of programming options, with a board at the entrance noting the variety of options. Mr. Gerstel stated that a multi-purpose surface could be used for a variety of activities, including when the pool isn't open. He also noted that the major project needed to be fully funded before amenities could be added. The Commission and Advisory Committee returned to the discussion about heating the pools. Deb Whitney spoke in support of the heating system, in particular if hours are extended earlier in the day and season, and the additional hours might help cover the increased costs. Mrs. Chaston was concerned about the operating costs and gaining the support of Town Meeting. The two committees discussed options for heating, and preferable temperatures for the recreation pool and the lap pool. Mr. Gerstel noted that Ms. Carey is preparing information about the end of the pool season party and will have it out this week. *Mr. Toolan and Ms. Carey returned to the meeting.* Mr. Toolan will review the upcoming tasks and then make a recommendation on next steps for the Advisory Committee. Mr. Gerstel thanked the members of the Rosemary Pool Design Advisory Committee for joining the Commission at their meeting.

3. **Director's Report:** Discussed later in meeting.
4. **Program Report:** Discussed later in meeting.
5. **Discussion Items:**
 - A. **Eversource Request for Easement:** Discussed later in meeting.

B. Needham Baseball and Softball: Mr. Toolan welcomed Needham Baseball and Softball President Rick Tacelli and Vice President and Scheduler Paul Siegenthaler to the meeting. Mr. Tacelli outlined the current status of the program, with 1,200-1,400 participants involved in a variety of levels of baseball and softball over three seasons, with about 350 volunteer coaches. Mr. Toolan noted that the majority of participants utilized 60' diamonds. Mr. Siegenthaler outlined the maintenance projects the program has coordinated with DPW Parks and Forestry. Mr. Tacelli stated that the renovation at Newman allows for those two diamonds to have regular use, and helps provide enough space for their program. The one type of field they don't have is a 60' diamond with lights. They would like to have a marquis 60' diamond with lights, bleachers, scoreboard, batting cages and warm-up areas, with a preference to have Asa Small at DeFazio upgraded for that purpose. The diamond can't currently be used for district games. Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen noted the five year capital requests that are currently being updated, with improvements to the two fields at Cricket, replacement of lights at Claxton, replacement of synthetic turf fields, and then some field improvements to Claxton with grading and skin replacements, and improved player benches with overhangs. Mr. Olsen reviewed a new product he will be trying on the skin of some diamonds to see if the weeds can be better controlled. It is called Adios, and primarily is table salt with some inert ingredients. Mr. Tacelli noted that Needham Baseball and Softball would be able to raise funds for additional components at Asa Small diamond, if the Town was able to fund the field renovation. Mr. Toolan stated that a designer would need to be hired to provide a plan, and Ms. Carey agreed as the field encroaches into wetlands. Any work that is done will not be impacted by the possible addition of a new school in the future. For lights to be added to Asa Small diamond, there will need to be a public effort, and when there is an official plan, it will need a special permit with rules for the lights. Mr. Olsen will develop estimated costs for the project, including design/engineering and permitting. Ms. Carey commended the work of Parks and Forestry and the recent renovations for the condition of the fields during the drought conditions. Mr. Siegenthaler agreed, having seen conditions in other towns that Needham fields are held up well. Mr. Siegenthaler asked about the possibility of having a storage building at Newman for lining equipment. Ms. Carey stated that nothing new had been added to the school site, as the school adjusted to the new fields and additional outside use. They will need to have input on any additional items, and the location may determine the need for approval of the Conservation Commission. She suggested something as small as possible that could be tucked up behind the backstop. Mr. Toolan asked Needham Baseball and Softball to continue their research and have a suggestion by the January field scheduling summit. Regarding scheduling, Mr. Siegenthaler asked if information could be provided earlier, but Mr. Toolan noted the conflicts with having to have Needham High schedule all set. Ms. Carey said that it is rare for the fields to change, so they can plan ahead and then adjust to the special events. Mr. Toolan thanked Mr. Tacelli and Mr. Siegenthaler for the discussion. Mr. Olsen gave a brief update on projects. The Memorial Park drainage project is still on schedule to be

completed before school starts. The Pollard project is primarily done, though he anticipates some loss of sod without having a full irrigation plan in place due to the current restrictions. Soccer Club clinics started this week, and Bay State Football is next week, followed by the start of Needham High pre-season. Mr. Olsen and Ms. Carey are working on a plan to quickly implement to help with the geese at Memorial Park and Walker-Gordon. The Commission thanked Mr. Olsen for all the work that is done to keep the fields in safe condition.

3. Director's Report: The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Carey outlined the Rosemary Pool party on August 17th, with a DJ that specializes in children's activities, pool staff providing fun activities, cakes from Hazel's, and photography from local photographer Diane Hughes. Information has already gone to the papers for the party and the additional tour on Saturday, and will be sent to season badge holders, daily admission, Town Meeting, Facebook, and Community Center of Needham. The Pool will close on August 26th.

4. Program Report: The Commission reviewed photos from the first five weeks of programs and from Rosemary Pool. The fall brochure should be finished next week and posted on-line and sent to the printers. Ms. Geddes has heard lots of positive comments about the Summer Playground program.

5. Discussion Items:

A. Eversource Request for Easement: Ms. Carey expects the formal request to be at the next Commission meeting. Town Counsel will provide wording for the motion. Originally, Eversource was asking for a 20' permanent easement but because design will not be complete prior to Special Town Meeting, they will ask for 30' to insure they have the space to adjust the installation if needed.

6. Action Items:

A. Special Event Request – Jog Your Memory: This is a road event that will be approved by the Board of Selectmen, but includes uses of the outdoor areas at Mitchell. Mrs. Chaston is concerned about the parking, but Ms. Geddes explained how the Police Department works with groups for posting no parking and where to allow for side street parking. Mr. Toolan was concerned about noise from the sound system. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request of Jog Your Memory for use of the outdoor areas at the Mitchell School on Sunday, September 18 from 7 AM – 11:30 AM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel. The Commission would like the group to be reminded to have a full parking plan approved with the Police Department and to suggest that music not be played until after the actual road event. The motion was unanimously approved.

- B. Cricket Memorial Tree – John Stefanoni:** Ms. Carey explained that this would be a brief ceremony to honor the memory of Cricket neighbor John Stefanoni. There are no extra activities planned, and most attendees will walk. Mrs. Chaston would like to have the wording on the plaque reviewed prior to installation. Mr. Gerstel made a motion to approve the request of the Cricket neighbors to place a plaque at one of the new trees in memory of John Stefanoni and to honor him at a brief ceremony on October 2nd at 10 AM with an unveiling of the plaque. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.
- C. Parking Request – Camporee:** Ms. Carey noted that this request comes once or twice a year from Boy Scout troops holding camporees on their property adjacent to the Town Forest. The number of cars is small, and signs are placed in the windshields indicating why they are parking overnight. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request of Troop 13 Boy Scouts to use the Claxton parking lot overnight on September 24-25 for their camporee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel and approved unanimously.
- D. Commission Roles and Goals:** The Commission will move this discussion to the next meeting. Ms. Carey will have additional information on the capital five year for the department and for Parks and Forestry.
- 7. Topics for Future Agendas:** Five Year Capital
- 8. Adjournment:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel and the meeting adjourned at 9:58 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP
Director