

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

**Minutes of Meeting
February 26, 2018**

PRESENT: Matthew M. Toolan, Chairman
Christopher J. Gerstel, Vice Chairman
David C. DiCicco, Member
Michelle S. Geddes, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director

ABSENT: Cynthia J. Chaston, Member
Robyn G. Fink, Assistant Director

GUESTS: Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick

Mr. Toolan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in the Charles River Room at PSAB.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting – February 12, 2018:** Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the minutes of February 12, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel and was passed unanimously.
- 2. Director's Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Carey noted that the Exchange Club is looking to make a donation in honor of their 70th anniversary, possibly to the Rosemary Recreation Complex. She is developing a list of possible ideas, in a range of estimates. The Commission suggested portable basketball hoops, outdoor ping pong, picnic tables, small tables and chairs for indoor toddler programs. Mr. Gerstel asked about the issue with fish at Cutler Pond. Ms. Carey noted that the state park had a natural occurring condition that caused the death of small fish as the freezing layer on the pond melted. Ms. Carey noted that she had heard from the Eliot 5K planners that they had invited Mix 104.1 to play music at their St. Patrick's Day event. They have notified all neighbors of the event. Mr. Toolan suggested they also post on social media, so people are aware of this event. Mr. DiCicco was concerned about music at an early hour in the neighborhood. The Commission agreed that the Mix 104.1 addition was beyond what they had approved, and requested that music only be after the event, and if possible, locate at Eliot rather than Cricket. Mr. DiCicco discussed the process for inviting state representatives to come to Needham to see the recreation projects completed with CPA funds after the revision to the legislation. Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick asked that he submit his request through Rep. Denise Garlick. Ms. Carey asked Mr. Gerstel to participate in 2nd round interviews with the Recreation Supervisor candidates.
- 3. Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Carey noted that super early bird pool pass sales are going well. A weekly report will be sent to the Commission.
- 4. Discussion Items:**

A. Rosemary Recreation Complex: Mr. Toolan welcomed Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick, as part of the discussion on the use policy for the multi-purpose room at Rosemary Recreation Complex. Ms. Fitzpatrick thanked the Commission for coordinating their policy with other facilities, and for Mr. DiCicco assisting the Trustees of Memorial Park as they developed their policy. Ms. Fitzpatrick suggested that private celebrations not be scheduled in Town facilities, at least at this time. Mr. Toolan noted that the Commission had several conversations, and were trying to balance having a “business” with providing space for community activities. Ms. Fitzpatrick supports having non-profit, but also some “non-incorporated” activities, with the latter signing an insurance waiver, and remaining low on the priority list. Mr. Toolan noted that unusual requests will come to the Commission for review as a special event request. Ms. Fitzpatrick noted the Planning permit’s notation that the multi-purpose room not be scheduled while the pool is open. Mr. Toolan acknowledged that the requirement was based on parking, but that it is likely Park and Recreation would use the room for drop-off activities that didn’t generate additional parking. Ms. Fitzpatrick asked for support for the building to be a possible emergency shelter, particularly when school was in session and the shelter wasn’t available at Needham High. Ms. Fitzpatrick held a meeting earlier in the day with possible food truck vendors. The permitting between different Town departments has been streamlined. Ms. Carey has provided block-out dates for weekend events at DeFazio to the Town Manager’s Office, as requested by the special event holders. Mr. DiCicco discussed the possibility of a food truck event in the Rosemary Recreation Complex parking lot in the fall. Ms. Carey has reached out to the Newton-Needham Chamber to see if something can be coordinated with local restaurants for meal packages for those visiting Rosemary Recreation Complex. Mr. DiCicco asked Ms. Fitzpatrick for assistance in the department while it is short-staffed, particularly as there is extra work to be done in preparation for opening the new pools. Ms. Fitzpatrick pledged assistance in working on ways to back-fill full-time staff in the interim.

The Commission reviewed the written construction report. Ms. Carey met with Kindergarten students at the Carter School who have been following the project. The Commission discussed the possibilities for the opening celebration, and will start putting together ideas, despite not having a specific date. Ms. Carey provided the outline of requirements that the Planning Board needs to have in place in order to notify the Building Inspector that the occupancy permit can be given for the building. Mr. Toolan will reach out to the Planning Board Chair to review.

B. Fee Assistance Policy: The Commission continued their discussion about the current policy for offering fee assistance to Needham residents. Mrs. Geddes asked if fee assistance should be restricted to programs that are operated by Park and Recreation as opposed to companies hired by Park and Recreation. If there are restrictions, she noted that they needed to be easy to administer. Mr. DiCicco asked if the Nashoba ski program was ever “break-even.” Ms. Carey said that it often was, and at times, donations were made by Needham groups to help defray the cost of scholarships, so she often put those funds towards Nashoba, which is typically the most expensive program offered. He noted that the draft explanation outlined clearly who could submit letters on behalf of individuals or families. Mr. DiCicco suggested using the school lunch information, as it

is comprehensive and assures those most in need are able to receive it, but Mr. Toolan noted that it didn't cover families and individuals not in the public school system. Ms. Carey noted that the school staff who write letters, primarily the guidance counselors, use the information collected for school lunches as a guide. Mr. Toolan asked Ms. Carey to provide information on fees, and how many programs would be impacted if a partial payment was required for programs with fees more than \$200, \$250, or \$300. Mr. DiCicco would also like to educate residents on the ability to donate for scholarships to the gift fund to help defray costs.

C. Fee Discussion: Swim Lessons, Swim Team, Multi-Purpose Room: Ms. Carey asked for input on how the Commission would like to see fees charged for youth swim lessons. The Commission viewed fees charged by nearby municipalities. Mr. Toolan asked that the practice of offering one fee for season pass holders and a second fee for those that were not season pass holders continue. The consensus was to recommend \$45 for a two week session, and \$75 for a two week session without a pool pass. For the Swim Team, the Commission required members to have pool passes when it was privately run. That practice continued when the program returned to Park and Recreation. The consensus was to continue to require participants to have season passes, and to recommend a fee in the \$175 range. The Commission will discuss the possible rates for the multi-purpose room at an upcoming meeting.

D. FY'19 Operating and Capital Budgets: No new information available.

E. CPC Proposals: Mr. DiCicco presented the proposal to the CPC, and there were no follow-up questions. Mr. DiCicco noted that the CPC public hearing will be on Wednesday, March 14th.

5. Action Items:

A. Lights Request – Needham Soccer Club: Mr. Toolan stated that the Soccer Club's request to have lights on until 10 PM on Friday, May 25 and Saturday, May 26 at DeFazio for the annual tournament was discussed at the prior meeting and no concerns were raised. No additional comments were discussed. Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the request from the Needham Soccer Club to have the lights on until 10 PM at DeFazio Brock and Founders on Friday, May 25 and Saturday, May 26 for the Memorial Day Weekend Soccer Tournament. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel and approved.

B. Special Event Request – Jog Your Memory: The Commission reviewed the request to have the start/finish for the Jog Your Memory road race at Mitchell on September 16th. Ms. Carey noted this has been approved in the past and there haven't been any concerns. Mr. Toolan asked if there was sufficient parking. Ms. Carey stated that part of the road race approval process was getting an approved route and parking plan through the Needham Police Department, and that has been completed. Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the request from the Needham Jog Your Memory group to host the start and

finish for the road race at Mitchell School on September 16, 2018. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel and approved unanimously.

6. **Topics for Future Agendas:** Discussion will continue on the policy and fees for use of the new multi-purpose room. Mrs. Geddes asked the Commission to brainstorm ideas for the opening celebration at Rosemary Recreation Complex. Mr. Toolan asked Mr. DiCicco to keep the Commission informed of any expected legislator visitors to see the Needham CPC recreation projects that are complete. Mr. Gerstel asked for an update on the DeFazio parking lot set up for spring.
7. **Adjournment of meeting:** Mr. Gerstel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:02 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and the meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP
Director