

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

**Minutes of Meeting
January 12, 2009**

PRESENT: Cynthia J. Chaston, Chairman
Brian S. Nadler, Vice Chair
William R. Dermody, Member
Christopher R. Dollase, Member
Philip V. Robey, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

GUESTS: Bob Cohen, Resident

The meeting convened at 7:00PM at the Board of Selectmen's meeting room located in the Town Hall.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting November 24, 2008:** Mr. Dermody made a motion to accept the minutes of the November 24, 2008 meeting. Mr. Nadler seconded the motion and the minutes from the November 24, 2008 meeting were approved.
- 2. Financial Report:** Ms. Carey presented the financial reports for October and November 2008. Mr. Robey asked about the higher expenditures in comparison to the 2007 time frame. Ms. Carey indicated that purchase orders have been submitted for the park bathroom cleaning contract and the park maintenance contract which has encumbered the money to be spent throughout the year. This is a new process that is required for spending, and will make it appear that the department is overspending during this year of transition, but in reality, it is just putting the needed funds aside earlier in the year.
- 3. Correspondence**
 - A.** None Presented.
- 4. Assistant Director Report:** Ms. Peirce is working on summer staff hiring and has a few scheduled interviews for counselors and lifeguards. At this time 2 of the summer supervisors are not returning. She is also working on the summer scheduling and program development as well as Arts in the Parks and Children's Theatre bookings. She met with a college student who would like to run an Ultimate Frisbee program with Park and Recreation this summer. Former assistant summer recreation supervisor Jeff Rudberg is helping to create a new summer staff evaluation form for summer programs. The Nashoba Valley Ski/Snowboard Program is full with 40 children registered. Many of the winter

programs have begun or will begin this week. Ms. Peirce is working with a few students on Eagle Scout and Girls Scout projects.

5. Discussion Items:

A. Director's Report: A written report was submitted prior to the meeting. Ms. Carey has begun meeting with the Newman School Playground Committee. At this time the planning for the Grades 1-5 structure is dependent on the future of the school's renovation plan. Ms. Carey is working on scouting projects and promoting safe sledding and skating. New fencing has been installed at Cricket Field and Greene's Field.

B. Newman School Feasibility Study: A few concepts are being considered for the needed construction work including installing modular classrooms in the parking lot and moving parking into the playground or tennis court area, or a second alternative that would possibly move students offsite during the renovation. At this time no decisions have been made. Mr. Dermody suggested that a letter be sent to the PPBC noting the volume of scheduling at the Newman fields and tennis courts. It was also suggested that a copy of the letter be sent to the Chairman of the School Committee, School Superintendent and the School Committee liaison to the PPBC.

C. Operating and Capital Budget Update: Ms. Carey, Mr. Dermody, Mr. Robey and Mr. Nadler attended the Finance Committee Meeting. Prior to the meeting Mrs. Chaston, Mr. Dermody and Ms. Carey met with Scott Brightman, the Finance Committee Liaison to the Park and Recreation Commission. Ms. Carey shared the Town Manager's Executive summary with the Commissioners. If there is any money left over after the field renovation project, the funds will be used to provide a storage building located between the Asa Small diamond and the Carleton Pavilion at DeFazio Park for track and field equipment. Mr. Nadler asked if the Park and Recreation Commission should be lobbying for irrigation and fencing at the Asa Small baseball diamond. Ms. Carey will speak to the Town Manager regarding the improvements request. Ms. Carey noted the Primary Cash Capital projects are more likely to move forward than the Secondary Cash Capital projects. Mr. Dermody indicated he would prefer the funding go towards athletic facility improvements first and the Cricket Building renovation second. Mrs. Chaston will call the Town Manager and indicate the Park and Recreation Commission would prefer the funding go towards athletic facility improvements first and the Cricket Building renovation second. Mrs. Chaston announced that she received a reminder from the Town Manager that warrant articles for spring Town Meeting are due February 2, 2009.

D. Field Scheduling Update: The Field Scheduling packets are currently available in the Park and Recreation office and online. Ms. Carey is waiting for

the High School field schedule from Athletic Director John Palmer. Mr. Dermody asked about using the synthetic turf fields in the summer. Ms. Carey indicated there is no problem scheduling synthetic turf fields in the summer. Mr. Dermody asked to put summer synthetic turf field use on a future meeting agenda for discussion. Mr. Nadler suggested running adult Park and Recreation programs and teen programs on the turf fields in the evenings during the summer. Ms. Carey announced that St. Bart's Soccer Program will be requesting field space in the fall of 2009 or spring of 2010 as the current soccer play area at St. Bart's Church will be used by St. Sebastian's School for a new building. The Field Summit will be scheduled on January 26, 2009. The Park and Recreation Commission will meet at 6PM and the Field Summit will meet at 7:00 PM at a location to be determined. Ms. Carey also announced that the Needham Sports Council's initial mission is coming to an end but they would like to continue as an advocacy group to work with the Town. Mrs. Chaston and Ms. Carey will meet with the Sports Council President Bruce Herman to discuss the concept. The Sports Council will also be coming to an upcoming Commission meeting to propose the naming of some of the new fields.

E. Access to Camp Property: The Chapter 40B project located on Nehoiden Street has been reduced to developing 3 housing lots. Surveyor George Guinta is working with the developers and has requested that the project include a four foot wide access path to the camp property that was agreed upon during the Chapter 40 B discussions on the property. Ms. Carey will do some more research regarding the project and then send a letter to the Planning Board supporting the project.

F. Future of Greene's Field: Ms. Carey was recently informed that Greene's Field is on the list as a potential site for a new Senior Center. She would prefer that Greene's Field remain as one of the few green spaces in the downtown area. Ms. Carey will get a list of who is on the Senior Center Committee and find out more about the proposal. She also suggested that the Park and Recreation Commission should have jurisdiction over some of the other field parcels in Town. Those areas include, Avery Field, Greene's Field, Dwight Field and Perry Park, which are all currently under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen.. In order to be put under Park and Recreation jurisdiction there would need to be a vote at Town Meeting. Ms. Carey and Mrs. Chaston will speak to the Town Manager about the possibility of changing the jurisdiction of those parcels.

G. Commission Important Issues: Mr. Nadler asked Ms. Carey if having the list of important issues is helpful. Ms. Carey indicated the new format is very helpful. She stated she has met with Mr. Nadler on field scheduling and looks forward to scheduling a time to meet with the other Commissioners to discuss their designated important issues. Mr. Nadler suggested that each Commissioner highlight and discuss the important issues they are working on at the Commission meetings. Ms. Carey will begin adding Commissioners Important Issues to the meeting agendas. Due to the extra involvement of the Chairman of the

Commission as a liaison to other boards and committees Mr. Nadler proposed the Chairman's important issues be shared by the other four Commissioners. Ms. Carey suggested consolidating operations, communications and funding as one category. The other three categories are Open Space, Fields and Facilities and Recreation. Ms. Carey asked the Commissioners to send her comments about the categories and she will re-draft the important issues list for the next meeting. The Open Space category will have to be delegated to one of the Commissioners.

H. Other Business: Mr. Nadler asked Ms. Carey if any signs had been created for the new synthetic turf fields. Ms. Carey noted that there is a committee of Town staff working on the wording that would then be presented for the Commission's review and input. . They will resume meeting and the signs will be ready for the field openings in the spring. Mr. Dermody also asked about the athletic field lights being left on when user groups had left the fields. Ms. Carey explained that each group is given the contact information for turning the lights off when not in use, and would be charged for the use even if they weren't there. Mr. Dermody suggested Park and Recreation host a sledding event at Memorial Park. Ms. Carey indicated the lights on the field may not provide enough light on the hill and permission would be needed to have the lights on during the winter.

6. Action Items:

A. Request: Sign at Claxton for Solomon Schechter Day School: Ms. Carey shared a request made by Solomon Schechter Day School Board Member David Goodtree to hang a banner advertising the school on the fence at Claxton Field. Mr. Dermody made a motion to reject the request from the Solomon Schechter Day School to post a banner on the fence at Claxton Field. Mr. Dollase seconded the motion to reject the request and the motion was approved. Mr. Nadler noted that there is an unwritten policy that the signs on the fence can be for events with a designated beginning and ending date. He requested the Commissioners develop a sign policy for the Claxton Field fence at a future meeting.

7. Adjournment: Mr. Dollase made a motion to adjourn the meeting 9:10 PM. Mr. Nadler seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:10PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP, CTRS
Assistant Director