

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

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

April 10, 2009

*Background notes for Monday, April 13th
Park and Recreation Commission Agenda*

THANK YOU

The local election is now just days away and there will be at least one new member of the Park and Recreation Commission and possibly two. Very special thanks to Bill Dermody for not only his years of service on the Commission but all the prior years of support for the department. When we were young taking the bus to elementary school neither of us knew how many committees we would serve on together, or that we would both be contributors to the history of Park and Recreation in Needham. Though he will no longer be on the board, I know that Bill is just across the street and that he will be ready to lend a hand when needed. Brian Nadler is completing his first term and has certainly learned that a Commissioner ends up putting much more time into the position than just twice a month meetings. His outreach to individuals in the community is important as he helps answer questions from residents and bring people on opposite sides of issues together to find a solution. Each time someone decides to go through the challenge of being elected to the Commission, he/she has a personal interest that they hope to impact during their time on the board. Both Brian and Bill had their own reasons for initially getting involved, but during their tenures on the board, they took on a great span of projects extending way beyond their original interests and put their full efforts behind them.

On behalf of all of the staff of the Park and Recreation Commission, I thank the two of you for all your support!

CITIZENS' PETITION

I have approached Susan Abbott, one of the proponents of a citizens' petition on the May Town Meeting warrant, and requested she attend the upcoming Commission meeting. She has another meeting to attend, but hopes to be able to come and meet with the Commission. Though the petition was filed months ago, there has not been any information provided to the Park and Recreation Commission, but the article requests that a Park and Recreation Commission member participate on the requested study committee. It appears that the warrant article is asking Town Meeting to create an exploratory committee to look at Wellesley's Natural Resources Committee and determine if something similar should be set up in Needham. In addition to a member of the Park and Recreation Commission the recommended study committee would have a member of the Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission and four people appointed by the Moderator. The article also requests some funding for the exploratory committee.

CERTIFIED POOL OPERATOR

I've just completed the recertification class to continue as a Certified Pool Operator. It is a five year certification, and this is my third time through the class. Massachusetts has required this certification for at least one pool manager at each site for about ten years and both Assistant Director Karen Peirce and I hold the certification.

ON-LINE REGISTRATION

Two proposals were submitted for the RFP for a new system for our program registrations that includes a module for on-line registration. The Youth Commission will also utilize the programming aspect. The system has modules for permitting which we will use for field permitting and Public Facilities will use for permitting school facilities. We are hoping to have the registration module up and running for the summer program registrations that begin in late May.

OFFICE STAFF

We are now close to temporarily shifting into a 3 person office for a few months as Nikki goes on maternity leave for the birth of her son. We are all very excited to meet the new little Witham, and watch his big sister Abby start Kindergarten in the fall. Nicole will take on Nikki's major tasks, with some of her registration work being shifted to some temporary help in the office from some summer staff members before the programs open. Nicole and I will handle as much of the office work as possible, so that Karen can concentrate on training the five supervisors who are all new to their positions, and then with their help get everyone trained and started on a successful summer! Nicole is also representing our department on the transition committee for the Public Services Administration Building. Both Park and Recreation and Planning will move permanently to the new building next winter. If Town Meeting approves the renovation of Town Hall, we will move over with all of our Town Hall colleagues and then 18 months later be joined by our colleagues currently in the DPW Administration building.

UPCOMING SCHEDULE

The next Commission meeting will be held on Monday, April 27 at 6:30 PM in the "Inner Meeting Space" located off the Pollard Middle School Media Center. This will be followed by the League of Women Voters Warrant Meeting at Pollard. Town Meeting will begin on Monday, May 4th. It is anticipated that this year's Town Meeting will last about five nights.

NEEDHAM SPORTS COUNCIL

The Sports Council is preparing to transition to their long-term community role. They now have representation from all youth sports that use outdoor space and are inviting the programs that utilize indoor spaces and organizations that support Needham High School sports so that all youth sports can work together on educational programs and advocacy efforts for Needham's youth. The Commission has worked hard to bring the groups together over the past eight years, with success, but this effort will bring it to the next level and help resolve problems and concerns.