

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

**Minutes of Meeting
September 13, 2021**

PRESENT: Cynthia J. Chaston, Christopher J. Gerstel, Michelle S. Geddes, Dina Hannigan

ABSENT: Bruce Williams

STAFF: Stacey Mulroy, Fabien Desrouleaux, Kristen Wright

GUESTS: Paul Pasquarosa, Saa Federow, H. George Hallet, Lindsay Page, Lynn Bowen, Steven Skorce, Josh Conon, E Haller, Jill Oetheimir, Caroline Kelly, Edward Olsen, Gene Bolinger, Tina Soo Hoo, Joe Lovett, David Moskowitz, Sam Miller, Henry Ching, Steve Deroian, Andrew Baker

Ms. Chaston called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

1. Open Forum – Public Comment

Paul Pasquarosa discussed implementing pickleball in the Town and discussed some concerns for using Perry Park. Mr. Pasquarosa suggested using tennis courts and creating a schedule to promote play of both sports. Ms. Chaston discussed the locations and the concerns about utilizing the tennis courts especially with the increase of tennis throughout the pandemic.

Josh Colton discussed his appreciation of the skate park pieces that were added to the Pollard courts and expressed the interest of building a full skatepark in Town. Ms. Chaston discussed how the pop-up skatepark was implement and the fact that in the past there was generally one person that came to the Commission to ask for skatepark features. Ms. Chaston asked what other skateparks in the area the Commission could look at. Mr. Colton recommended Framingham or Sherborn. Lindsay Page stated that she did some research and that there may be grant opportunities for this type of project and that she would be interested in helping. Youth residents Sydney and Greyson shared their experience and appreciated the additional space to hangout in with their friends. Evan Haller shared that a skatepark would support a diverse user and present an inclusive area especially for youth not interested in traditional sports.

Ms. Chaston thanked everyone for their input and time.

2. Chair's Update

Ms. Chaston stated that she emailed Select Board Chairman Matt Borrelli to see how the Select Board could help with the trash issue that we have throughout town.

3. Trash Discussion

This agenda item was passed over. Mr. Gerstel shared his frustration that this is the second time this item has been passed over as the topic is important to the Commission.

4. Claxton Field Renovation

Ms. Chaston invited Parks and Forestry Superintendent Edward Olsen and Gene Bolinger from Weston & Sampson to present. Mr. Olsen thanked the Commission for their time and presented information about the project at Claxton Field and what has been accomplished so far. Mr. Olsen stated that Weston & Sampson had been selected as the designer for this project and that they would be working on the design of the field. Ms. Chaston stated that the current state of the field has limitations and maintenance should continue to be performed so the fields can be used to the best of their ability until the construction has been completed. Mr. Olsen stated that maintenance has continued to be an issue and misuse of the field, including unleashed dogs, golf, and other uses contribute to additional maintenance work to be required to prepare the fields throughout the season. Mr. Bolinger stated that the next steps would be to survey the space and get a geotechnical evaluation of the site which will take approximately 4-6 weeks to complete. Mr. Bolinger shared that they would be soliciting feedback from the community to produce the final design that would be presented to the Commission and then be prepared to put the project to bid for construction. Mr. Olsen stated that the estimated cost would be \$1,000,000 or more depending on the design features. Ms. Chaston asked about the timing. Mr. Olsen shared that the designer would work on the design through this Spring and Summer to prepare to submit for construction funding at the Annual Town Meeting in May 2023. Henry Ching asked why the project was delayed. Mr. Olsen stated that there were many factors, but this is the current timeline for the project. Members of the public were disappointed in hearing about the delay as they were still under the impression that this project's construction would be completed for the Spring of 2023. Mr. Bolinger asked for feedback so the design process could begin. Ideas that were shared included fence improvements, a scoreboard, lighting improvements, up to 4 batting cages, a bull pen, parking improvements, covered dug out, storage, and access to a larger capacity of water.

Ms. Chaston thanked Mr. Olsen and Mr. Bolinger for their presentation as well as the members of the public for their feedback.

5. Director's Report

Ms. Mulroy reviewed the Director's Report.

Ms. Chaston suggested ordering more supplies to attempt a pilot pickleball site at Perry Park, or other site soon. Ms. Chaston stated that utilizing a tennis court for this purpose should be investigated.

When discussing the building at Cricket Field Ms. Chaston stated that she may have the original feasibility study and she would bring to the office to help the process.

Ms. Hannigan shared that the parking lot at DeFazio on Tuesday nights may need to be addressed as there were large back ups due to people utilizing it in a 'drop off' line fashion.

6B. Playgrounds & Facilities

Bake Sales

This item was taken out of order due to interest from the public in attendance. The first request was to put a table at Greene's field on a Saturday morning in October. Ms. Wright shared that she did

speak with the YMCA, the permit holder for the day and time requested, and they did not feel that it fit well with the activities that they were holding at the field. Ms. Wright stated that the YMCA did express interest in helping the group fundraise in different ways.

The second was a request to hold a bake sale at fields and parks around Town. The Commission discussed it and wanted to keep the focus on the fields with the permit holders, **Mr. Gerstel made a motion to deny the permitting of bake sales at fields and parks in the Town. Ms. Hannigan seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.**

6A. CPC

Mr. Gerstel stated that the CPC will meet again this Wednesday, September 15.

4B. Playgrounds & Facilities

Bocce Courts

The Commission discussed the potential of adding bocce courts to a facility.

6C. Porta Potties

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

6D. Capital Projects

Ms. Mulroy provide updates for the current capital projects.

7A. Special Event Requests

YMCA – By-Law Waiver

Mr. Gerstel made a motion to waive the restrictions of Town of Needham by-law 3.1.9 and allow for the consumption of alcohol on Greene's field during the YMCA Gratitude Gala to be held on Saturday, September 25, 2021, from 6:30pm – 10:00pm. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously 4-0.

Temple Beth Shalom – Various Programs

Mr. Gerstel made a motion to approve the 4 programs to be held by Temple Beth Shalom at the Green space at Mills Field. The fee for this use will be \$10 per participant. Ms. Hannigan seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

Eliot PTC – Welcome Back Popsicle event

Mr. Gerstel made a motion to approve the welcome back popsicle event to be held by Eliot PTC at the Eliot Playground from 3:00pm – 5:00pm on Sunday, September 26. The fee has been waived for this event. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

Youth Field Hockey – Fundraising Event

Ms. Hannigan abstained from the conversation regarding this event, and the vote.

Mr. Gerstel made a motion to approve the fundraiser event to be held by Needham Youth Field Hockey at DeFazio Founders field from 12:30pm – 2:45pm on Wednesday, October 20. The fee for this event will be \$500.00. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed 3-0-1

Eliot PTC – Pumpkin Run

Ms. Hannigan made a motion to approve the pumpkin run to be held by Eliot PTC at the Eliot Playground from 9:00am – 11:30am on Saturday, October 23. The fee has been waived for this event. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

Broadmeadow PTC – Kindergarten Pumpkin Patch

Ms. Hannigan made a motion to approve the kindergarten pumpkin patch event to be held by Broadmeadow PTC at the Broadmeadow Playgrounds from 12:00pm – 5:30pm on Saturday, October 23. The fee has been waived for this event. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

Needham Soccer Club – Permit a Food Truck during the Tournament on October 11

The Commission discussed this event as the overall event will be hosted by the Natick Soccer Club. The Commission discussed supporting the event as long as Needham teams were using Needham fields and a member of the Needham Soccer Club was on site during the entire event.

Ms. Hannigan made a motion to approve the addition of a food truck for the previously approved event to be held by the Needham Soccer Club at DeFazio field on Monday, October 11, 2021. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

7B. Meeting Minutes

Mr. Gerstel made a motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 23, 2021. Ms. Hannigan seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

8. Topics for Future Meetings

- Pickleball
- Skateboard Park

9. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair within 48 Hours

None presented.

10. Next Meetings

The Commission reviewed the next meeting dates. The decided to hold there October meetings on October 4th and October 18th due to the Indigenous Peoples' Day and Special Town Meeting. The Field summit will be held on October 18th.

11. Adjournment of Business Meeting

Mr. Gerstel moved to adjourn the September 13, 2021, Park and Recreation Commission meeting at 10:05pm. Ms. Hannigan seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 10:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Wright
Administrative Specialist