

Article 11: Appropriate for Park & Recreation Pool Staffing

NEEDHAM PARK AND RECREATION - ANNUAL TOWN MEETING 2019

Needham Park and Recreation is requesting the appropriation of \$69,419 for the purpose of funding Rosemary Pool staffing, for 3 purposes:

- Add 4 additional lifeguard positions to summer staff; and increase the hours for the slide monitors (\$31,339)
- Add a part-time Pool Specialist, to work with full-time department staff throughout the year, with the most hours in spring pre-season and the summer season (\$28,000)
- Add a financial bonus program for pool staff, to help retain staff through late August and Labor Day weekend (\$10,080)



August 25, 2018

Photo courtesy of Gary DeMaria—Community Center of Needham

The construction of the Rosemary Recreation Complex started in June 2017 and worked extended into mid-August 2018. With punch list work still underway, the Pools and Spray Deck opened for a few weeks in August to give Needham a chance to try it all out—especially the slides that people had driven by and seen for a few months! Over the 15 days (several of them cold and rainy) of the “soft opening,” the number of check-ins was **7,175**. In addition to the visitors, a sample session of swim lessons was offered with 182 children participating in the daily classes. Early adult swim classes were also offered. The “Needham Sharks” swim team, with 74 participants, practiced at the Charles River YMCA and the Evelyn Kirrane Pool in Brookline and the other communities hosted their meets.

Memberships:

In February 2018, still not knowing the official date of opening, the Park and Recreation Commission began sales at “Super Early Bird” rates for Needham residents, and regular rates for non-residents. By late April, it was known that the pools would not be ready to open in early July, so the sale of memberships was halted. Those who had purchased memberships were given the option of keeping their membership for the short 2018 season and extending into 2019 season. They could also get a full refund. The majority chose to keep their memberships. In November 2018, sales began at “Early Bird” rates for Needham residents and regular rates for non-residents. The “Early Bird” rates ended on April 12th, and the regular season rates are in force now, and through the summer.

<i>Through 4/12/19</i>	2018 Super Early Bird	2019 Early Bird	2018/2019 TOTALS	2016 Comparison
Needham Family	425	307	732	261
Needham Individual	25	15	40	57
Needham Senior Adult	67	18	85	42
Nanny Pass	20	17	37	4
Non-Resident Family		4 (full rate)	4	5

Season and Hours:

- **Early Season:** The pools will open *weekends*, starting Memorial Day Weekend through June 15-16, from 12 Noon—6 PM.
- **Regular Season:** From Monday, June 17 through Sunday, August 18, the pools will be open 7 days a week.

	Weekday Mornings	Weekday Afternoons/Evenings	Weekends
3-4 Lap Lanes for Adult Swim	7:00 AM—10:00 AM	12:30 PM—7:45 PM <i>Except during Swim Meets</i>	10:00 AM—7:45 PM
Tot-Time/ Recreation Pool	10:30 AM—12 Noon	12:30 PM—7:45 PM	10:00 AM—7:45 PM
Slides	Closed due to swim lessons	12:30 PM—7:45 PM	10:00 AM—7:45 PM
Diving Board	Closed due to swim lessons	12:30 PM—7:45 PM	10:00 AM—7:45 PM

- **Late Season:** From Monday, August 19 through Labor Day, the hours will be shortened based on the number of staff available.
- **Spray Deck:** Open 9 AM—7:45 PM, or during pool hours. Pre-season times will be announced.

Staffing:

The Pools operate under a MA Department of Public Health permit, which has requirements for staffing the pools. Sections of the pools can only be opened for use if the appropriate number of staff is on duty.

- There must be one (1) lifeguard on duty per 25 swimmers in the pool;
- A lifeguard must be stationed in high risk areas, so that all sections of the pool have a lifeguard's attention—for the Pools, a minimum of 8 lifeguards are needed in order to open the facility;
- The slides must have a slide monitor at the top of each slide, and a guard for the splash down area;
- In order to open, the staff must also include at least one each: Supervisor, Maintenance, Booth Attendant

In 2018, the budget included the equivalent of 16 lifeguards, and increase of 6 from the prior pool. Because some were part-time, there were actually 20 individuals hired. The Pool Supervisor, 3 Assistant Pool Supervisors, and 4 Swim Lesson instructors are also certified as lifeguards, so assist with coverage. The former pool had a 10 week season, plus pre-season training. The new Pools have a 14 week season plus training, and some vacation time will need to be incorporated into the schedule for the staff. In order to provide a five day vacation break for full-time staff, the additional staff are needed to insure there is enough coverage to keep the pools fully open.

This request would add the equivalent of 4 full-time lifeguards onto the staff, plus increase the hours for the slide monitors so that the slides can be open afternoons and evenings during the week, and during all open hours on the weekends.

The estimated cost to add four lifeguards is \$27,064, based on \$14 - \$14.50/hour. To increase the hours of the slide monitor, the estimated cost is \$4,275, based on \$12-\$12.50/hour.

In addition to this staff, Park and Recreation has submitted a request to have some Senior Corps participants assist in the Pool office with some customer service tasks. Our hope is that the Senior Corp participants will stay to swim or water walk after helping in the Pool office, to benefit their personal health and wellness.

Pool Specialist:

The Park and Recreation Department has four full-time staff, and if approved in the Operating Budget, will add a 5th staff member, shared as front-desk staff with the Health Division. The Pools are just part of the annual operation, which also includes year-round programs (expanded with the addition of the programming space at RRC); athletic field permitting; playground maintenance; trail stewards and maintenance; and other park facilities, including tennis courts and restrooms. Most preparation is done at least one season in advance, so while people are enjoying their summer recreation, the office is working on fall tasks.

The Assistant Director of Park and Recreation is a Certified Pool Manager and will be the primary staff person working year-round on pool staffing, programs and operations. The addition of a part-time Pool Specialist, who only works on tasks related to the pools will allow the other office staff to continue to work on all of the other day-to-day projects as well as long-term planning. The Pools are a 7 day a week operation, with more than 100 hours of the week needing staff coverage.

The Pool Specialist will assist over the fall/winter/spring with planning tasks, including staff recruitment, and interviewing, and then work directly at the pools for spring pre-season staff training and providing guidance, maintenance oversight, and assisting with staff scheduling and in-season training throughout the summer. He/She will hold American Red Cross certifications, and have experience in pool management. The estimated cost is \$28,000.

Late Season Staff Retention:

The major requirement for lifeguard positions at the Pools is that the person be certified by the American Red Cross (or equivalent) and have the physical ability to act in the event of an emergency. Because of the level of responsibility, the youngest staff can be 16 years of age. There is no upper age limit—only a person’s willingness to be outside for a number of hours each day and have the strength to perform the lifesaving tasks. In 2018, a retiree was hired as a swim instructor/lifeguard, but is not able to return in 2019 due to having a year-round part-time office position. Qualified staff of all ages are welcome to apply!

Because of the type of job, most of the applicants are college or high school students, and typically, most, but not all, are from Needham. Recruitment goes out to all area colleges, in the event that any of the students live in the Needham area over the summer. Recruitment is done through Needham High School, with assistance from coaches or club leaders, and also through area swim teams. Current staff members have also recruited friends to apply. About half of the lifeguards will return from Summer 2018, and there have been more applications submitted than open positions. Staff are reimbursed for certification classes if they work the majority of the summer.

The staffing concerns begin in mid-August...and is common at all outdoor aquatic facilities in New England. Staff, in all positions, begin returning to college. Some leave earlier due to their school’s schedules, some due to freshman year requirements, and others for leadership positions at their schools. At the high school level, a number of staff members participate in fall sports or have other leadership roles. Some staff members have school-year employment, and need to leave to return to work. Anyone new looking for a position in late August would need to apply in early August, to provide time for all the personnel paperwork and training to be done.

In order to open the Pools for one shift (12:30 PM—7:45 PM), a minimum of 10 lifeguards, 1 maintenance, 2 booth attendants, and 1 supervisor are needed. This would allow for the scheduling of lunch breaks. The open hours would need to be 6 hours or less without lunch breaks.

The proposal is to offer a daily financial bonus to staff who continue to work after mid-August. If the 14 minimally required staff members work through Labor Day, and all started in May, the full cost for this retention program would be \$10,080.

	Start Working Prior to July 1	Start Working July 1 or later
Work August 19-25	Receive \$35 bonus for each day worked	Receive \$15 bonus for each day worked
Work August 26—September 2	Receive \$50 bonus for each day worked	Receive \$30 bonus for each day worked
Started work in May and worked through Labor Day	\$75 bonus for working “full” summer	

Time to Celebrate!! It’s a Rosemary Luau!



The Park and Recreation Commission is planning a “luau” of a celebration over the first weekend in June, to celebrate the grand opening of the Pools at the Rosemary Recreation Complex...and to thank the many individuals, boards and organizations that made this dream a reality. Watch for exciting details at www.needhamma.gov/parkandrecreation or on social media (www.facebook.com/NeedhamRecreation or www.facebook.com/RosemaryPool).