

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

**Minutes of Meeting  
April 13, 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  
Tom Jacob, Candidate  
Susan Abbott, Resident

The meeting convened at 7:02PM in the Selectmen's Meeting room located in the Town Hall.

1. **Minutes of Meeting March 23, 2009:** Mr. Nadler made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2009 meeting. Mr. Dermody seconded the motion and the motion was approved.
2. **Financial Report:** None Presented.
3. **Correspondence**
  - A. **Healthy Needham 2011 Spring Forum:** Ms. Carey shared a flyer from the Healthy Needham Committee announcing the Healthy Needham 2011 Spring Forum which will be held on Thursday, April 29, 2009.
4. **Assistant Director Report:** Ms. Peirce announced the Healthy Needham Forum will be held on April 29<sup>th</sup> to bring together people in the town who can share resources that the town has to offer and identify areas for improvement to make Needham a healthier community. The Eat Well/Be Fit Committee is scheduling *Needham Springs into Action Week* from May 11-15<sup>th</sup>. Activities will include a senior walk at Ridge Hill, a youth and family walk to Volante Farms, a Town leader walk from the Town Common to Trader Joe's and an all town "walk to school" day. The Park and Recreation sponsored event will be a youth/family Nature Walk/Trash Clean up day on May 13<sup>th</sup> at the Needham Town Forest. Summer program staff positions are almost filled. A few lifeguard positions remain unfilled but interviews have been scheduled. The summer brochure will go to the printers after the election and registration for summer programs will begin on May 26<sup>th</sup>. There are a few plots available for people on the Community Garden waiting list. There are two Eagle Scout projects in the works. One Eagle Scout has proposed cleaning up the Community Garden area on Tillotson Road

and building a small shed and a bench. Another Eagle Scout is proposing trail clean up in the Newman woods. Ms. Peirce will be meeting both scouts at the sites to review the proposals. Kristen Phelps from the Conservation Commission will accompany Ms. Peirce on the Newman trails visit.

**5. Discussion Items:**

**A. Director's Report:** A written report was submitted prior to the meeting. Mrs. Chaston thanked Ms. Carey for the written tribute to Mr. Dermody and Mr. Nadler for their contributions to the Park and Recreation Commission.

**B. Citizen's Petition at Town Meeting: Susan Abbott:** Ms. Carey expects that Susan Abbott will attend later in the meeting. In her absence Ms. Carey gave an overview of her understanding of the Citizens Petition being submitted to Town Meeting by Susan Abbott and others but more clarification is needed as it is unclear if Mrs. Abbott would like to create a study committee or a natural resources committee. Ms. Carey suggested to Mrs. Abbott that she might want to consider speaking to the Board of Selectmen about appointing a study committee.

**C. Skate Park Study:** Ms. Carey recently received an email from a resident inquiring about developing a skate park. In the late 1990's a group of youths submitted a signed petition for a skate park. Parents attended Park and Recreation Commission meetings and 3 sub-committees of parents and students were formed to research funding, skate park locations, rules and regulations and skate park equipment and components. After about 6 months the interest diminished and the sub-committees stopped meeting. Mr. Nadler asked about the interest in skate boarding today and suggested a way to gauge interest would be to offer some type of skate boarding lessons or a field trip. Ms. Carey indicated she is not ready to meet in the near future but she would contact the resident and ask if she had any information regarding one day skate boarding events we could either host or offer as a field trip. Ms. Peirce will research local skate park areas that offer programs.

**D. Operating and Capital Budget Update:** Ms. Carey announced that the Finance Committee voted to support funding for renovations at the Asa Small baseball diamond. One of the Commissioners will be assigned to speak at Town Meeting in support of the project. Ms. Carey stated the Town Manager is contacting all the Town unions to offer a new Rate Saver Medical insurance plan. Currently the non-represented staff and department managers will be offered the Rate Saver plan.

**E. Field Construction Update:** Ms. Carey announced that the 90 foot diamond at DeFazio Park has been seeded and the multipurpose field will be seeded by the end of the week. The Memorial Park diamond is scheduled to open this week. The Carleton Pavilion is scheduled to be opened by May 1. The RAD portable toilet is available for use by the public. Mr. Nadler contacted the Booster Club about funding a temporary portable toilet at DeFazio Park but they have not

responded. DPW will be connecting the water to Park and Recreation buildings and a private plumber will be hired to turn on the water and install bubblers. The park signs Ms. Carey presented at the last Commission meeting are currently being produced by the sign company..

**F. Athletic Field Lights Update:** Ms. Carey updated the Commissioners on the current athletic field light schedule and she shared the sunset calendar. During light testing at Memorial Park MUSCO shut off all the lights at both parks when the Soccer Club called in to cancel the lights on the fields they use. Once the lights are electronically turned off they go off immediately but they take up to 20 minutes to turn back on. Ms. Carey recommended the Commissioners try and walk the DeFazio surrounding neighborhoods to see if the lights are affecting the houses. She will suggest a similar walk to the Memorial Park Trustees.

**B. Citizen's Petition at Town Meeting: Susan Abbott- Continued from earlier on the agenda:** Susan Abbott arrived at the meeting and stated she is proposing to establish a study committee to see if there is an interest in creating a Natural Resources Committee to address water, vegetation, and wildlife. The Committee would consider the protection and maintenance of these natural resources and would also compare how other Towns inventory, protect and maintain their natural resources. The sum of \$400 is being requested to create and disseminate a survey and a report. Ms. Carey indicated that there are other ways of forming committees other than Town Meeting appointed committees. The Commissioners suggested Mrs. Abbott contact the Board of Selectmen about appointing a committee. After some discussion Mrs. Abbot was considering withdrawing the warrant article and approaching the Board of Selectmen but no final decision was made.

**G. Canada Geese Update:** Ms. Carey announced that St. Sebastian's hired a company to bring a trained dog to help remove the Canada Gees from their property. The Town has decided to hire the company to locate the nests and addle Canada Geese eggs. Addling requires the eggs to be coated with oil within the first two weeks of the eggs being laid. Ms. Carey has filed the permit for permission to have the company addle the eggs. The \$30.00 per hour fee will be paid for out of the Field Maintenance fees.

**H. Other Business:** Mr. Jacob asked if anyone on the Commission was serving on the Athletic Director search committee. Ms. Carey is serving on the search committee and the Town Manager is recommending that a representative from the Sports Council be involved in the search for a new High School Athletic Director. Mr. Dermody thanked the Commissioners for the past 5 years he has served on the Park and Recreation Commission. Mrs. Chaston thanked Mr. Dermody for his contributions to the Commission and Ms. Carey presented him with a frame of photos from some of the activities he took part in while serving on the Commission.

**6. Action Items:**

**A. Sports Council: Donor Recognition Area:** Ms. Carey shared a diagram and photos of the proposed donor recognition area at DeFazio Park. Mr. Dermody made a motion to approve the submitted donor recognition area design as presented by the Sports Council. Mr. Dollase seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

**B. Sports Council: Field Naming Proposals:** Mr. Dermody made a motion to approve the Field Naming requests as submitted by the Sports Council. Mr. Dollase seconded the motion and the motion was approved. The Sports Council will be presenting the Field Naming requests to the Board of Selectmen and the School Committee for approval.

**C. Special Events Requests: Little League, Girls Softball and Smileboston:** Mr. Dermody made a motion to approve the special event request from Smileboston, Needham Little League and Girls softball to host a Pitch, Hit and Run Competition on April 19<sup>th</sup> at Claxton Field. Mr. Nadler seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

- 7. Adjournment:** Mr. Dermody made a motion to adjourn the meeting 9:25 PM. Mr. Dollase seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 9:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen A. Peirce, CPRP, CTRS  
Assistant Director