

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

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
May 7, 2012**

**PRESENT:** Michael J. Retzky, Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Vice- Chairman  
David C. DiCicco, Member  
Thomas M. Jacob, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director

**ABSENT:** Andrea L. Shorthose, Member  
Karen A. Peirce, Assistant Director

The meeting convened at 6:50 PM in the Town Hall lunch room.

- 1. Review of Town Meeting Articles of Relevance to the Park and Recreation Commission:** Mr. Retzky opened the discussion on articles in the May 2012 Annual Town Meeting, starting with *Article 22 Citizens' Petition – Pesticide Free Zone on Land Owned or Managed by the Town of Needham*. At prior meetings, the Commission has reviewed and voted on the motion, as printed in the warrant, and as a substitute main motion. There is a newly revised substitute main motion under review, and Ms. Carey noted that it purposely does not have exemptions for care of trees. Mr. Jacob is concerned that new changes have been made, not giving Town Meeting and board members an appropriate time to review. He noted that the Commission has met numerous times with Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen and the Commission has supported his maintenance plan, which continually evolves, and rarely uses chemicals. Mrs. Chaston suggested coordinating any response with the Board of Selectmen, highlighting the Commission's jurisdiction over use of parks and fields, as well as the Town Forest. Mr. Retzky will speak on this article at Town Meeting, on behalf of the Commission. He stated the Commission's belief that the DPW not be "handcuffed" but be allowed to use the best maintenance options. Mr. DiCicco noted that the current motion is basically an IPM plan but is not written clearly. He also felt that residents shouldn't instruct professionals on how best to maintain public facilities. Mr. Jacob made a motion for the Park and Recreation Commission to not support Article 22 as written or as stated in substitute main motions. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Commission also reviewed *Article 20 Amend General By-Law*. There had been discussions about a Town Meeting member making a motion to amend the

article related to the control of bows and arrows, but that motion will not be made. On *Article 30 Cash Capital*, Mrs. Chaston has heard that the Finance Committee will not recommend funding for Greene's Field irrigation or the trail design at Rosemary Lake.

Mr. Retzky will be prepared to answer questions on any article related to Park and Recreation, including *Article 39 Establish and Appropriate to Athletic Facility Improvement Fund*.

- 2. Hillside/Mitchell Feasibility Study:** Mr. Retzky, Mr. Jacob and Ms. Carey will attend a meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup> with representatives of the Board of Selectmen, School Committee, Finance Committee, and PPBC regarding the Hillside/Mitchell Feasibility Study. Mr. Retzky will ask that Cricket Field not be included in the final report, noting that there hasn't been a full review of the costs to replace the fields, the building, or the program and storage uses. Mrs. Chaston also noted the historical significance of Cricket Field to the Town. Mr. Retzky will give the sense of the Commission, and ask how the study went as far as it did without any discussions with the Park and Recreation Commission, especially when the PPBC had a concurrent project underway with the Commission, studying the renovation/construction of the building at Cricket Field that cost the Town \$10,000. Mr. DiCicco noted that incorrect field size information had been presented before being corrected by Ms. Carey and Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen. Mr. Retzky also noted that field options showed conflicting fields, so that all new fields could not be used at the same time. Mr. Jacob stated that all possible uses of the Hillside site for the school need to be exhausted before looking for other options. The concept that using Cricket helps reduce the cost of swing space doesn't include the costs of rebuilding the field house and the fields. Mr. DiCicco has asked for information on those costs, but they have not been made available.
- 3. Adjournment of Meeting:** Mr. Jacob made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:24 PM. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 7:24 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP  
Director