

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

**Minutes of Meeting
January 14, 2019**

PRESENT: Christopher J. Gerstel, Chairman
Cynthia J. Chaston, Vice Chairman
David C. DiCicco, Member
Michelle S. Geddes, Member
Matthew M. Toolan, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director

GUESTS: Ed Olsen, DPW Superintendent of Parks and Forestry

Mr. Gerstel called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the Rosemary Recreation Complex.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting – December 10, 2018:** Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2018 meeting and Field Scheduling Summit. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and was approved unanimously.
- 2. Director’s Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Mr. Gerstel thanked Mr. DiCicco for the synthetic turf photos and information from Daly Field in Brighton. Mr. DiCicco noted the firmness of the Brighton fields, but it isn’t clear whether it was the addition of the pad, or the type of infill. He also noted that he liked the sign that used at the fields. Mr. DiCicco will also visit fields in Weston and Westwood. Mr. Toolan suggested that sign replacement be on an upcoming agenda. He noted that at DeFazio and Memorial, some signs are faded, and that there doesn’t appear to be enough signs providing information. He also recommended “mileage” signs at the Newman walkway. Mr. Gerstel noted the change in date for budget review with the Finance Committee, now scheduled for January 30th. Mr. Toolan suggested getting information out on summer programs. Ms. Carey noted that the January Sneak Peek is being finalized for use at next week’s Camp Fair.
- 3. Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the report submitted by the Recreation Supervisor. Mr. Toolan asked about recruitment of summer staff. Ms. Carey noted that reminders to last year’s staff were sent out with re-applications, and reach out to college and high school swim teams, in the area, has begun.
- 4. Discussion Items:**
 - A. Dwight Field Project:** Discussed later in the meeting.
 - B. Rosemary Recreation Complex:** Mr. Gerstel asked about the current contingency. Ms. Carey noted that it is about \$30,000 at this time. Mrs. Chaston asked if the Town Manager had stated whether she supports the additional funding requests for the pools. Ms. Carey noted that the Town Manager’s budget will be finalized this month. Unofficially, she has heard that the Select Board and Town Manager support the seasonal

funding requests for the pools, but possibly not the full-time staff member requested. The Commission reviewed the Town Engineer's proposal for parking lot signs. Mrs. Geddes recommended something additional for vehicles that are already parked, to remind them of the traffic flow. Mr. Toolan noted his concern that there might be too many signs, or at least have the pole style changed so they fit more into the natural setting. Mr. Gerstel asked about the status of the punch list. Ms. Carey said the two major projects are the railing installation and landscaping. The railings are about 75% complete, and landscaping needs to wait until the spring. Mrs. Chaston asked about the Commission's request on the punch list to have the lights and speakers adjusted in the multi-purpose room. Ms. Carey noted that they were installed according to specifications so are not on the punch list. The request needs to go through the project manager. Mr. Toolan suggested that some of the contingency could be used for the change. Mrs. Geddes provided an outline of the RRC opening celebrations that she worked on with Mr. Gerstel and Recreation Supervisor Angela O'Connor. They suggested hosting an open house in the multi-purpose room on Friday, May 31st to say thank you to many who had helped the project become a reality. Appetizers and beverages would be served. On Saturday, June 1st, activities would be set-up in the morning and the pools would open to the public at noon time at no charge. Luau themed activities would occur throughout the day, and a grill with food to be sold would be set up at the beach area. It is hoped that a local organization could take on the food component. In the evening, an outdoor movie would be set-up, and people could sit in the recreation pool with pool noodles or sit on the tiers to watch the movie. Mr. Toolan suggested having a process available to insure anyone who wants to pick up or purchase season passes would not have to stand in a long line. Mrs. Chaston asked who the invited group on Friday night might be. Mr. Gerstel noted the Select Board, Community Preservation Committee, PPBC, Finance Committee, Pool Advisory Committee, Community Center of Needham, and Board of Health would be some of the invitees. Mr. Toolan suggested finding out from other boards how "ribbon cutting" ceremonies are handled.

- C. CPC Proposals:** Mr. Gerstel was not available to attend last week's CPC meeting due to business, but has been told that at least one member of the CPC expressed concern with the number of requests submitted by the Park and Recreation Commission. Mr. Gerstel will reach out to that member prior to the next CPC meeting. He noted that it will be helpful to have Commission member support at the upcoming meetings when the proposals are discussed. Ms. Carey has not been given a schedule of times when proposals will be reviewed.
- D. Lights Waiver – Soccer Club:** The Commission reviewed the annual request from the Soccer Club to extend the use of lights until 10 PM on Friday, May 24 and Saturday, May 25 at DeFazio for the Memorial Day Weekend Tournament. Mr. Toolan noted this allows them enough time to get games played at the start of the tournament. Mr. Gerstel asked to have this topic placed on the next agenda, for a second discussion and vote.
- A. Dwight Field Project:** Mr. Gerstel welcomed DPW Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen. Over the summer, the Charles River Center (CRC) approached Mr. Olsen about the passive recreation parcel that sits between the CRC's Grugan Center and the

baseball diamond. They have been making improvements to their property and were concerned about the condition of the public property. Mr. Olsen discussed the possibility of reducing the slope, improving stormwater management, removing trees in poor condition and adding new trees, adding a picnic area and possibly a small playground area. The stormwater management would assist with flooding concerns, and the improved area would be an asset to families visiting the baseball diamond, as well as the CRC participants and neighbors. Mr. Olsen submitted a Community Preservation (CPC) request for \$35,000 in design funds, and has estimated the construction would be in the \$350,000 range. Mr. Toolan asked if the parking lot was part of the project. Mr. Olsen stated that it wasn't part of the current proposal, but could be included in the long-range plans for the Highway Division. Mrs. Chaston stated a concern that \$350,000 might seem to be a lot of funding for a small parcel. Mr. Olsen noted the costs of grading and stormwater improvements, and that the picnic area and playground would possibly increase the costs beyond the estimate. CRC has discussed a possible financial partnership, but nothing formal has been reviewed. Mr. Toolan asked what would happen if no project moved forward. Mr. Olsen would need to do some work on cleaning the area, including removing the failing trees, and he would look to find solutions to some of the current draining issues. The Commission thanked Mr. Olsen and supported the project moving forward in the CPC process.

5. Action Items:

A. Special Event Requests: The Commission reviewed the following annual Special Event requests:

Soccer Club Memorial Day Weekend Tournament: Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the Needham Soccer Club's request to use fields at DeFazio, Newman, Pollard, Cricket and High Rock to host the 42nd annual Memorial Day Tournament on Friday, May 23 through Monday, May 27, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes. Mr. DiCicco asked what the Commission's fee is, and Ms. Carey stated that it was \$15,000. Mrs. Chaston asked if there were any issues, and Ms. Carey said that the event was well organized, and the Soccer Club followed all requirements and communicated well with all Town departments. Mr. Toolan asked for a confirmation on outside vendors. Mrs. Geddes asked about DeFazio parking. Ms. Carey noted that additional parking is still available at PSAB and Pollard. Mr. Gerstel called for the vote, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Soccer Club Clinics: Ms. Carey noted that the possible reconstruction of the synthetic turf fields could impact the clinics' use of synthetic turf field, but that natural grass fields could be made available for it at DeFazio and Pollard. Mrs. Geddes made a motion to approve the request of the Needham Soccer Club to host summer soccer clinics during the week of August 5-8, 2019 and August 12-15, 2019 at DeFazio Park. Mr. Toolan seconded the motion. Ms. Carey will notify the Soccer Club that alternate field locations will be determined prior to the event, in case of construction conflicts. Mr. Gerstel called for the vote, and the motion was passed unanimously.

Bay State Instructional Football Clinic: As with the Soccer Clinics, alternate field locations may be needed for this event. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from Bay State Instructional Football to host a 3 day high school football clinic at DeFazio Park on August 12-14, 2019. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

Needham Youth Classic Track Meet: Ms. Carey noted that the annual meet, normally 1.5 days in late July will now be 1 day in mid-July. As with the prior events, construction may impact use of synthetic field space, but alternate space is available at DeFazio. Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the request from the Needham Track Club to host the annual Youth Classic Track Meet at DeFazio on Saturday, July 13th. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Monsignor Haddad Middle School Reenactment from Battle of Gettysburg: Ms. Carey noted that the practice time conflicts with regular YMCA use, but that the event and raindate do not conflict. She can have the school coordinate the practice time with the YMCA. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request from Monsignor Haddad Middle School to host a reenactment of Picket's Charge from the Battle of Gettysburg on Thursday, May 23, 2019 with a raindate of Friday, May 24th. Mr. Toolan seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Relay for Life: Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from the Needham/Dedham/Wellesley Relay for Life and American Cancer to host the event at Newman on Saturday, May 18, 2019 through Sunday morning, May 19th. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and passed unanimously.

Youth Lacrosse Clinics: Ms. Carey noted that this program could be impacted by the possible synthetic turf reconstruction project, but that other field space could be accommodated. Mrs. Geddes made a motion to approve the request from 128 Lacrosse to host a 3 day youth lacrosse clinic at DeFazio on June 19-21, 2019, with alternate dates of June 24-26 if school is still in session for the initial dates. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan and passed unanimously.

Eliot School Derby Dash: The proponents of this event notified Ms. Carey that they will be withdrawing this application, so no action was taken.

Jog Your Memory: Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the request from Jog Your Memory 5K, Inc. to host a 5K run and 1.5 mile walk, utilizing outdoor areas at Mitchell for the start/stop on Sunday, September 15, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan and was passed unanimously.

6. **Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours:** None presented.
7. **Topics for Future Agendas:** Review signs at parks and recommend replacements and additions.

8. **Adjournment of Meeting:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:26 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and the meeting adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP
Director