

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

**Minutes of Meeting
January 28, 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: Dr. James Morehead, Resident
Dr. Jean Morehead, Resident
James Goldstein, Bay Colony Rail Trail Association

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

- 1. Minutes of Meeting – January 14, 2019:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 14, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and was approved unanimously.
- 2. Director’s Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Mr. Gerstel noted that the department’s operating budget would be reviewed at the Finance Committee on Wednesday, January 30th. He and Mrs. Chaston will attend, and other Commissioners are welcome to join them. The Community Preservation Committee (CPC) will review the Commission’s proposals at their Wednesday, February 13th meeting, and Mrs. Geddes will attend and present the projects with Ms. Carey. Mr. Toolan noted the upcoming meeting regarding the possibility of using the multi-purpose room for a voting location. Mrs. Chaston noted that residents were concerned with the use of schools, for safety of students and for appropriate amounts of parking being available. Mr. DiCicco asked about the state regulation on clinics. Ms. Carey noted that it was a recent change, and all groups looking to host clinics or camps should contact the Public Health nurses to determine what is needed. Mr. DiCicco has spoken to Health Director Tim McDonald about the state mandate, and will reach out to contacts at the state to explain the impact on small organizations.
- 3. Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the report submitted by the Recreation Supervisor. Mr. Toolan asked about the department offering a lifeguard certification class. Ms. Carey stated that the department has always handled re-certification, and last year offered certification. A class can be offered this year in early June, prior to full-time hours starting.
- 4. Discussion Items:**
 - A. Naming Proposal – In Memory of John D. “Jack” Marr:** Mr. Gerstel welcomed Dr. Jean Morehead and Dr. Jim Morehead. Drs. Morehead have submitted a

recommendation to name the pool area in memory of John D. “Jack” Marr, who was the Town Engineer at the time who created the “temporary pool” solution that saved the Town money and allowed people to return to swimming in Needham. They noted that Mr. Marr approached Congresswoman Margaret Heckler to seek federal funding, which was granted. Dr. Jean Morehead also noted Mr. Marr’s work on the purchase of Ridge Hill, and that he reached out to Needham Market in Great Britain to establish a relationship between the two communities. Mr. DiCicco noted that he has been researching the former pool project, and the role of Park and Recreation Commissioner Charles “Red” Rizzo, and has seen the contributions of Mr. Marr. Mrs. Chaston noted that the Commission had not placed any names on parts of the facility at this time, but appreciated all the information provided. Mr. DiCicco suggested that the Commission make decisions on naming prior to the grand opening in early June.

B. Rail Trail CPC/Grant Applications: Mr. Gerstel welcomed James Goldstein from the Bay Colony Rail Trail Association and a member of the Rail Trail Advisory Committee. Mr. Goldstein has submitted a request for design funds to the CPC, and a MassTrails grant request for \$80,000 to the MA Division of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) for construction funds, which is a reimbursable grant. The funding would be for the creation of a trailhead between Fisher Street and Charles River Street, with some parking spaces and other amenities, including picnic tables, benches, and commemoration of the historic location, once a train station. He is seeking support of the Commission for the requests, and will be attending the Select Board meeting on January 29th to get official support. Mr. Goldstein noted that current parking is at DCR’s Red Wing Bay, which is well below the trail and not ADA compliant. Mr. Toolan asked about outreach to neighbors. Mr. Goldstein noted that the outreach was extensive prior to building the trail in 2016, and also included reimbursement grants for neighbors who added screening to their properties. The outreach could be done, again, and he also noted that preliminary discussions are underway with DCR to partner on this area becoming a recreation hub, with improvements at Red Wing Bay, access to the trail, and to the Trustees of Reservation’s Charles River Peninsula. Mrs. Chaston asked if the parking would be ADA compliant. Mr. Goldstein noted that hadn’t been considered. He has reached out through the Conservation Director to the Conservation Commission and at this time it doesn’t appear additional permitting would be needed. Mr. Goldstein noted that the grant requires the Town to provide a match of 20%, which can include in-kind services, so he is hoping that the DPW Engineering Division can provide in-kind support. Mr. Gerstel noted that the funding requests had been discussed with the Rail Trail Advisory Committee and that Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen and Town Engineer Tony DelGaizo had participated in the discussions. Mr. Goldstein handed out a draft letter of support that he had written for the Commission. Mr. Toolan noted his concern with having extra parking placed near the DCR parking, instead of on the High Rock entry side, at the start of the trail. Mr. Goldstein stated that was a valid concern, but noted that efforts were underway to get approval to have the start of the trail be on Chestnut Street, which provided a connection with businesses and the commuter rail. The parking at DCR does not have space for at-grade parking for the trail. Mr. Toolan asked if the request was being submitted too early, but Mr. Goldstein anticipated that additional grant requests would be made for future projects on the trail. One future

project would be to add improved signage and flashing lights at the two road crossings. Mrs. Chaston noted the need for parking for all users, including ADA. Mr. DiCicco noted the need for neighbor input on the project. The consensus of the Commission was to support the funding requests, and Mr. Gerstel will sign a letter on behalf of the Commission.

C. Rosemary Recreation Complex – Construction, Operations, Memberships, Celebrations: Mr. Toolan reached out to Project Manager Mike Retzky to discuss the Commission’s concerns with the height of the lighting and speakers in the multi-purpose room, as well as the “cage” around the projector. He noted that the projector doesn’t have the capacity to add features to it, so the cage isn’t inhibiting its use. For changes to the speakers and lights, a re-design would be needed for both. The ceiling is hard, and has duct work and other elements above it, so the re-designs would need to evaluate how to do that, as well as maintain the correct light levels and sound levels. Mrs. Geddes noted that the number of speakers doesn’t seem needed, but asked what would be gained by moving them higher into the ceiling. Mr. Toolan noted that there wasn’t likely enough in the contingency for re-design and construction, but he noted that the Town’s IT department could be asked. Ms. Carey noted that the IT department didn’t design the sound system, but that it was done by a consultant to the architect. Mr. DiCicco noted his concern that the room had been designed as a conference center as opposed to a program room. Mr. Toolan noted that the Town Manager’s recommended budget had been produced. Ms. Carey stated that the Town Manager supported all of the additional funding requests, submitted on the DSR-4 forms. Mr. Gerstel will reach out to Assistant Town Manager Christopher Coleman about the status of the Assistant Director position.

D. CPC Proposals: Mr. Gerstel has reached out to the Chairman of the CPC to get input on the discussions that were held at the last CPC meeting, but has not heard back, yet. Mr. Toolan asked about the status of the Dwight Field proposal. Ms. Carey stated that the CPC would likely reach back to the Commission on the priorities for projects on property under their jurisdiction, so that they would likely need to give input on the Dwight project, even though it was submitted under DPW. There isn’t sufficient funding available for all of the recreation related projects. Mrs. Chaston noted that she is on the board of the Charles River Center, so would recuse herself from any votes, but wanted to note that the important part of the proposal would be correcting drainage issues. Mr. DiCicco will try to do a site visit with Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen, to have a better understanding of the project.

5. Action Items:

A. Lights Waiver Request – Soccer Club: At the January 14th meeting, the Commission reviewed a request from the Needham Soccer Club to have the athletic field lights on until 10 PM at DeFazio Founder and Brock Fields on Friday, May 24, 2019 and Saturday, May 25, 2019. Ms. Carey noted that the Commission has granted the request in prior years and there had not been any concerns. No additional comments have been received on the request. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request of the Needham Soccer

Club to have lights on until 10 PM on Friday, May 24, 2019 and Saturday, May 25, 2019 for the Soccer Club's Memorial Day Weekend Soccer Tournament. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and was passed unanimously.

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

Needham Baseball and Softball Opening Day: Ms. Carey noted that the Commission had approved us of DeFazio in 2018, but with a different time frame for the multi-purpose fields and track, allowing for morning use and later afternoon use. Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the request from Needham Baseball and Softball Opening Day on Sunday, April 28, 2019, with use of McLeod, Asa Small, Warner, and Carleton Pavilion from 8 AM to 5 PM, and use of Brock, Founders, Healy, Conroy and the track from 10:30 AM – 2:30 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan and was approved.

Needham Baseball and Softball Spring Training: The request is for special training sessions for teams, held at Mitchell, Mills, Newman or Broadmeadow Upper. Ms. Carey noted that the Newman PTC already held the permit for the June 1st date, but all other dates coincided with the regular permits for Needham Baseball and Softball. Mrs. Geddes made a motion to approve the request from Needham Baseball and Softball for specialized training on the dates/locations noted on their special event request, with the exception of June 1 at Newman. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Needham Baseball and Softball Coaches Challenge: Ms. Carey noted that Claxton # 1 would be available on Sunday, May 19th, but that Memorial 60' diamond would not be a back-up option, as lights cannot be used on Sunday nights at Memorial. Mr. Toolan noted that the group should not remove the temporary fencing in place for NHS Softball. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from Needham Baseball and Softball to host a Coaches Challenge game on Claxton # 1 on Sunday, May 19th. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and passed unanimously.

Needham Baseball and Softball Spring Tournament: Ms. Carey noted that the fields requested fell under the regular permit times for Needham Baseball and Softball. A tournament fee would be charged for this event. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from Needham Baseball and Softball to host a spring baseball tournament on Saturday, May 4, 2019 and Sunday, May 5, 2019 at DeFazio Warner, DeFazio McLeod, and Walker-Gordon. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and passed unanimously.

Needham Baseball and Softball Williamsport: Ms. Carey noted that this request typically is for Small and Mills, but this year also includes Upper Broadmeadow, Claxton # 1, and Memorial 90'. She will forward the Memorial request to the Trustees. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve use of Mills diamond, Asa Small diamond, and Upper Broadmeadow diamond for Williamsport games, if approved as a game site by the league, with the requirement that a Needham Baseball and Softball representative be on

the fields for all games. Mr. DiCicco seconded the motion. Mrs. Geddes asked if there was a fee for this use, but the Commission agreed it was an extension of the regular season. The motion was approved unanimously.

Parent Talk Barn Babies: Mrs. Geddes made a motion to approve the request from Parent Talk to host Barn Babies at the tot lot at DeFazio Park on Sunday, May 19, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and approved unanimously.

St. Joseph School Field Day: Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request from St Joseph School to host the annual field day at Greene's Field on Monday, June 10, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and passed unanimously.

128 Lacrosse: Ms. Carey noted that the practices are typically held on the synthetic turf fields at DeFazio, but may be conflicted due to the possible construction, so she would coordinate alternate space for them if there is a conflict. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from 128 Lacrosse for some summer practice dates, on field space to be determined by the Director. Mrs. Geddes seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Boys Lacrosse Friday Night Lights: Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from Needham Boys Lacrosse to host special games on Friday nights during the spring season at DeFazio Founders Field, with the requirement that a Needham Boys Lacrosse representative be on site for all games. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and approved unanimously.

Geared Up for Kids: Ms. Carey explained that this event has been held at the PTC building, as well as the back of the High School. They are requesting to be in the front of the Pollard School, using all of the Pollard parking lots, so the request to the Commission is to use DeFazio for overflow parking on a June Sunday morning and early afternoon. Ms. Carey noted that groups using the fields at Pollard would need to park at DeFazio for that morning and early afternoon. At DeFazio, the fields are permitted in the morning for Adult Soccer, Soccer Club, Track Club and Baseball/Softball, with Boys and Girls Lacrosse using the synthetic fields in the afternoon. The consensus of the Commission was to keep use of the DeFazio parking lot for the groups using DeFazio. Mr. Toolan made a motion to deny the request from Geared Up for Kids to use the DeFazio parking lot as auxiliary parking for their proposed event on Sunday, June 2, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and was approved unanimously. Ms. Carey will notify the Town Manager's office that the DeFazio parking lot is not available for the Geared Up for Kids event.

6. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours: None presented.

7. Topics for Future Agendas: Naming discussion for Rosemary.

8. **Adjournment of Meeting:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan and the meeting adjourned at 8:58 PM. The Commission also acknowledged the Chairman's birthday.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP
Director