

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

**Minutes of Meeting  
March 4, 2019**

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

**ABSENT:** Michelle S. Geddes, Member

**TRUSTEES:** John Gallelo, Chairman  
Chuck Mangine, Trustee  
Dan Matthews, Select Board Chair

**GUESTS:** Ed Olsen, Superintendent of Parks and Forestry  
Brad Mezquita – Tighe and Bond

Mr. Gerstel called the joint meeting of the Trustees of Memorial Park and the Park and Recreation Commission to order at 7:02 PM at the Rosemary Recreation Complex.

**1. Joint Meeting with Trustees of Memorial Park – Synthetic Turf Replacement Project:**

On behalf of the Commission and Trustees, Mr. Gerstel welcomed Brad Mezquita from Tighe and Bond, and Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen. Mr. Olsen gave an overview of the design process, and noted that he had met with all the manufacturers and visited sites to see after installation. Mr. Mezquita provided a presentation – Appendix A. He noted that Needham has done more research on the products than what is typically done in other communities. He is recommending the Town install 2” Shaw Sports Legion turf, with a sand/crumb rubber infill, and a Schmitz Pro-Play 20D Shock Pad. Mr. Gerstel asked about the warranty. Mr. Mezquita noted that the pad is guaranteed for two life cycles of turf. Mr. Toolan asked about the benefits of shorter turf. Mr. Mezquita explained the Shaw single needle process, which combines the slit film and the monofilament into one needle. Other companies do alternating rows of the two types, but the single needle process holds up better in the long-term. He noted that Shaw does intense testing, with machines replicating actual use to determine the improved wear patterns. At Memorial Park, Mr. Mezquita recommends replacing the goal posts, which are not quite regulation length, plus the new models are easier for DPW to maintain. He recommends painted lines, but adding ticks in to help with marking. The 60’ diamond is recommended to be all carpet, but with a different color for base paths and home plate. He recommends an “N” logo be sewn into the carpet, rather than painted. Mr. Olsen noted that some of the current turf could be saved and used in batting cages and at the dog park, but that the remainder could be recycled, with a requirement to provide proof of recycling. Mr. Olsen recommends remaining with the sand/crumb rubber infill. Mr. Mezquita stated that the current blend is 70% crumb rubber with 30% sand, but the new mixture is closer to 50/50 or could be 70% sand/30% crumb rubber. Mr. Toolan

asked if the GMax is better or worse on natural grass fields. Mr. Mezquita explained that a heavily maintained natural grass field, such as the outfield at Fenway Park, might have better GMax, but that with the heavy use of natural grass fields in Needham, it is unlikely the GMax on those fields would be better. Mrs. Chaston asked about the lifespan of the new carpet. Mr. Mezquita noted that the quality of the turf has improved, so they would likely last longer than the current fields being replaced. Mr. Olsen noted that the prime reason for replacement, today, is that the fields are starting to not be within the correct range for GMax. The next replacement will not have that issue, due to the pad, so the reason would be the wear on the carpet. At DeFazio, Mr. Mezquita recommends adding the tick marks, replacing the exiting netting, and adding netting along the railroad side of the fields. Mr. Toolan asked if logos could be placed on these fields, so that the major fields are branded. Mr. Gerstel asked if one could be "N" and the other field, a rocket. A lay-out and cost estimate can be created. Mrs. Chaston asked if heavy equipment might create damage to the parks, but Mr. Mezquita noted that the equipment isn't that heavy. Mr. Toolan asked if a walkway could be created, for people to cross from Founders Field to Brock Field. Mr. Olsen stated that is on his long-term capital project list, but is not part of the scope of this project, and would require additional funding for engineering costs. Mr. DiCicco asked about having all the lines stitched into the carpet. Mr. Mezquita noted that it can be done, but is more often done on fields with single use or fewer sports, as the number of lines can be confusing. The carpet is laid from sideline to sideline, so any lines going in that direction are stitched in at the factory. After the carpet is laid, the other lines, are cut out and stitched in place. Painting lines was what was chosen in Needham during the prior installation. The brighter colors are the in-season sports, and the faded lines are the prior season sports. A third alternative is to have some lines stitched in place, and supplement with paint for other lines. Mr. DiCicco asked about the layout of the 60' diamond in relation to the sun. Mr. Mezquita stated that the safety preference, for the batter, is N-NE, which is the current layout. Mr. Gerstel asked about the time frame. Mr. Olsen is getting a quote from a buyer's consortium that the Town belongs to, for the carpet and pad from Shaw. If the Town's Assistant Town Manager-Finance Director believes this process meets state procurement requirements, then a bid would be developed for installation by a certified Shaw installer. At Town Meeting, a request would need to be made for an emergency preamble, which requires a 2/3rds vote. If approved, DeFazio could start in June and Memorial in July, with the goal to be finished prior to fall sports. The amount of work is equivalent to what was done at St. Sebastian's last summer. Mrs. Chaston asked for a cost estimate, but Mr. Olsen said that a more formal estimate is not available, yet. Mr. DiCicco asked if it took more time for lines to be stitched in, and Mr. Mezquita noted that it adds about a week to installation. Ms. Carey noted that stitching could be requested as an add-alternate to determine the additional cost. Mr. Gallelo will discuss the stitching of lines, for at least football, at the Trustees meeting next week. At DeFazio, Mr. Mezquita noted that a cost estimate could be added at DeFazio for adding the field names in the corners, as well as the center logos. Mr. DiCicco asked if the diamond infill or pad was different, to slow down the speed of the ball. Mr. Mezquita stated, for this type of use, it is the same as the field areas. Mr. Gallelo noted his experience on diamonds with pads, that the first bounce seemed similar to natural grass, but the second bounce was more erratic. Mr. Toolan made a motion to adjourn the joint meeting of the Trustees of Memorial Park and the Park and Recreation Commission at 8:18 PM, and the motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and approved unanimously.

Mr. Gerstel called the Park and Recreation Commission meeting to order at 8:20 PM.

2. **Minutes of Meeting – February 11, 2019:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 11, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel. Mr. DiCicco stated that the Assistant Director position should be posted, and the person hired should have experience with aquatics and running the facility. Mr. Gerstel asked that Assistant Town Manager Christopher Coleman be invited to the next Commission meeting, and Mrs. Chaston noted that the Commission did not have a formal role in hiring. Mr. DiCicco stated that the Charter should be changed so that the Commission controlled hiring in the department. Mr. Gerstel called for a vote on the motion, and it was passed unanimously.
3. **Director’s Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Mr. Gerstel noted that the Commission is still scheduled to have 2 additional March meetings. Mrs. Chaston suggested waiting until later in the meeting to discuss any changes. In relation to naming at Rosemary, Mr. Toolan asked what the Commission was willing to consider for naming. He is not inclined to support naming the pools, but consider some time of plaque recognizing people who had been part of the creation of the original site. Mr. DiCicco hopes to make a presentation on behalf of Charles “Red” Rizzo, but for the multi-purpose room. Mr. Gerstel asked that a letter be sent to the original proponents stating that a form of commemoration is under study.
4. **Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the report submitted by the Recreation Supervisor.
5. **Discussion Items:**
  - A. **Use of Multi-Purpose Room:** Mr. Toolan had asked Ms. Carey to put together the report on how the multi-purpose room is being used, which can be seen in Appendix B. He noted that it continues to show growth of programs. Mr. DiCicco would like any requests for use of the room to come before the Commission. He does not support use of the room for flu clinics over use by other groups. Ms. Carey noted that the Commission had not approved a draft policy for outside use of the room. Mr. Gerstel stated the Commission had agreed to let the department continue to develop programs for the room prior to approving outside group use. Mr. Toolan noted that Sundays, Wednesdays and Saturdays appeared to be the days with the most room for growth.
  - B. **Polling Locations:** Mr. Gerstel and Ms. Carey attended a meeting with the Select Board Chair, Vice Chair, Town Manager, Chairman of School Committee, Superintendent of Schools and Town Clerk. A discussion was held about moving the polling location from Needham High School to Rosemary Recreation Complex, due to the parking conflicts and traffic. Mr. Gerstel supports the idea, to ease congestion at the High School, but also to use the multi-purpose room for a Town benefit. Mr. Toolan agreed about the parking issues at Needham High, but in general felt that there wasn’t a safety issue for students at the schools. Mrs. Chaston supported the idea of moving the polling location to Rosemary

Recreation Complex. The traffic at schools, especially during pick up and drop off, makes it challenging for voters. She noted that an election could not work well in July and August, though, due to pool parking needs. Mr. DiCicco supports the change in location.

**C. FY'20 Budgets:** Mr. Gerstel reviewed that he, Mrs. Chaston and Ms. Carey had met with the Finance Committee, and that FinCom had recommended putting the 3 DSR-4 funding requests into a warrant article rather than into the operating budget request. Mr. Gerstel and Mrs. Chaston reached out to members of FinCom and Select Board to get support for placing the requests into the operating budget, but FinCom has voted unanimously to support a warrant article for the three funding requests. They will follow-up with the Select Board. Mr. DiCicco stated that the department needed to make any presentation at Town Meeting.

**D. Park Signs:** Mr. Toolan asked that additional No Dog signs be created for DeFazio, and that the faded signs be replaced. He asked for an estimate for replacement, and that the work be done within 6 months. Mr. DiCicco suggested that groups using the fields send photos of the signs to their participants. He also wants the updated signs to indicate that fields not permitted are available for use by the general public.

**E. Rosemary Recreation Complex – Construction, Operations, Memberships, Celebrations:** Mr. Gerstel has had a brief discussion with Adam Block from Needham Heights Association to help with the opening celebration. Mr. DiCicco noted that Community Center of Needham would also like to be a part of the celebration.

## 6. Action Items:

**A. CPC Proposals:** Mr. Gerstel noted that Mrs. Geddes and Ms. Carey presented the proposals for the Rosemary projects, playground improvements, and Cricket field house to the CPC, and Mr. Olsen presented Cricket field renovations and Dwight Field improvements. As the CPC does not have enough funds for all the projects, there was discussion about pulling Cricket field house and Dwight Field, to return next year.

**B. March Meeting Dates:** The Commission cancelled their meetings on March 11 and March 25, replacing them with a meeting on Monday, March 18 at 7 PM.

**C. Special Event Requests:** The Commission reviewed the following annual Special Event request:

**Needham Soccer Club Clinic:** Ms. Carey noted that the Soccer Club is looking to add a 3<sup>rd</sup> component to their August clinics. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from Needham Soccer Club to host a strength and conditioning clinic on August 15-17 from 8:30 AM – 11:30 AM at DeFazio. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiCicco and approved unanimously.

**Cub Scouts Pack 8:** Ms. Carey stated that she could coordinate a time on a Saturday morning at Claxton, as the fields aren't permitted for larger groups due to car washes. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request from Cub Scouts Pack 8 for a Saturday morning rocket launch at Claxton Field. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan and was approved unanimously.

**Needham Music:** Ms. Carey noted that this was a for-profit company that requested time at Greene's Field which is already permitted to two non-profit organizations. Mr. Toolan suggested that they look at whether the DeFazio tot-lot would work as it has parking and is more conducive to having music, but stated that there should not be any inflatables set up for the event. Ms. Carey will ask them to re-submit a request.

**Art in Bloom:** Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the request from Needham's Art in Bloom, held at the Library, to use the upper Rosemary parking lot for overflow parking on March 9-10, 2019. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and approved unanimously.

7. **Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours:** None presented.
8. **Topics for Future Agendas:** Mrs. Chaston asked for a discussion on the timing for the vote on appointment of Chairman/Vice Chairman of Commission. Mr. Toolan asked for a discussion on the creation of a real softball field with an outfield fence and batting cage. Mr. Gerstel asked for the Police Department to set up the speed radar at DeFazio for the opening of the season.
9. **Adjournment of Meeting:** Mr. Toolan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:36 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston and the meeting adjourned at 9:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP  
Director