

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

**Minutes of Meeting  
March 18, 2019**

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

**ABSENT:** David C. DiCicco, Member  
Michelle S. Geddes, Member

**GUESTS:** Adam Block, Needham Heights Neighborhood Association

Mr. Gerstel called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting – March 4, 2019:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan. The minutes of March 4, 2019 were approved unanimously.
- 2. Director’s Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Carey noted that the first May meeting date conflicts with Town Meeting and the second May meeting date conflicts with Memorial Day. A discussion on changing the dates will be held at the next meeting. Mr. Toolan drove by Riverside Park to look at the adjacent parcel to get a better understanding of the proposal. Ms. Carey noted that the formal request was not submitted prior to the meeting, so will need to be discussed at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Gerstel noted that a meeting with state officials was held last week regarding expanding the Rail Trail to Chestnut Street. Ms. Carey reported that it was a hopeful meeting, and that the MBTA representative will do a site visit to gain a better understanding of the options for a pedestrian path next to the unused rails, which would remain in place for future maintenance needs on the active rail line.
- 3. Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the report submitted by the Recreation Supervisor.
- 4. Discussion Items:**

Mr. Gerstel introduced Needham Heights Neighborhood Association President Adam Block. Mr. Gerstel and Mr. Block have had discussions about the Association assisting with the Commission’s grand opening celebration. Mr. Block noted that the Rosemary Recreation Complex and Pools are an extraordinary resource to the community. Their board would like to assist with the Saturday activities, assist with any needed fundraising, and provide giveaways with NHNA logo. He listed some multi-generational ideas. Mrs. Chaston asked how many members might volunteer, and what type of funds might be available. Mr. Block

isn't sure, yet, on the volunteer numbers. For funding, they don't have a large account, but would be willing to raise funds. Mrs. Chaston stated that she had met with the association during the early stages of the project and noted their interest and support. Mr. Block will report back to his board, and Mr. Gerstel noted the short amount of time to prepare before the event. Mr. Toolan stated his appreciation for the volunteer efforts, but said that the Commission needed to be careful with advertising. The Commission will need to work on keeping the focus on the facility and finding equitable ways for the groups participating to be recognized, including NHNA as well as other community groups including Community Center of Needham. Mr. Block asked about food trucks. Mr. Gerstel said that the Commission had discussed for summer visits, but are choosing not to include for this event. The Commission will continue the discussion at the next meeting.

- A. Synthetic Turf Replacement Project:** The Commission reviewed different renderings of the synthetic turf replacement at Brock and Founders fields at DeFazio. By consensus, they chose the option that had the field names stitched in small text on the sidelines, to assist people walking onto the fields, and the blue and gold "N" logo used by Needham High to be stitched in the center of both fields. The Commission viewed the six green color options, and prefer the options that mix green with lime or green with olive. They asked that the Parks and Forestry Superintendent make the final decision on color. The Commission viewed a draft rendering based on discussions of the Memorial Park Trustees for Memorial Park. Mr. Toolan expressed concern for player safety with the blue end zone and striped pattern within just the football area. He also noted that the Trustees chose a different "N" logo than what is used by Needham High. Mr. Toolan will reach out to a member of the Trustees to discuss his concerns.
- B. FY'20 Budgets:** Mr. Toolan has spoken to Select Board Vice Chairman John Bulian about the warrant article for the additional pool staffing. Mrs. Chaston has reviewed the draft warrant and it appears it will be Article 11. Ms. Carey noted that the Finance Committee voted unanimously to support adoption of the article.
- C. Pilot Program – Mobile Food Vendors:** Mr. Gerstel reported that a vendor had expressed interest in operating 7 days a week at DeFazio, with the exception of the special events that request to exclude scheduled food vendors. The vendor has opted not to make the request. Ms. Carey noted that the Commission's current pilot program is for weekends, with two slots available earlier in the day and two slots later in the day.
- D. Spring Fields:** Ms. Carey reported that the special event list and note had gone to all groups and the permit dates are available on the website. She and Parks and Forestry Superintendent Ed Olsen are working on a handout that explains the importance of staying off fields until they are ready for use, which will hopefully be available this week.
- E. Rosemary Recreation Complex – Construction, Operations, Memberships, Celebrations:** The Commission held a discussion earlier in the meeting on the celebration. Ms. Carey shared information provided by Project Manager Mike Retzky on the project plaque that would be installed in the foyer. The Commission agreed that Mr. Retzky should be listed on the plaque as Project Manager due to the amount of time and

effort he put into the project. Mr. Toolan asked that the names be consistent, either with or without middle initials.

**5. Action Items:**

**A. Summer Fee Recommendations:** The Commission reviewed the recommendations, as seen in Appendix A. Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the Summer Fees, as listed in the March 15, 2019 recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chaston. Ms. Carey asked for a clarification for Swim Team. In the past, a season membership has been required along with the fee. The Commission agreed to continue with that requirement. The motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Gerstel asked for an update on memberships and fee assistance for the next meeting.

**B. Riverside Park:** Ms. Carey reported that the developer has not submitted his formal request, yet, so no action was taken. The Commission members will each try to drive by to see the possible project in advance of the next meeting.

**C. CPC Proposals:** At the recent CPC meeting, Mr. Gerstel deferred the requests for Cricket Fieldhouse and Dwight Field renovations until next year, so they will not be voted on by the CPC this spring. The public hearing will be on Wednesday, March 27 at 7:30 PM. Mr. Toolan hopes to be able to present the Commission's requests for Rosemary projects and playground improvements at the public hearing, and Ms. Carey will coordinate on the presentations.

**6. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours:** Mrs. Chaston asked that Assistant Town Manager Christopher Coleman be invited to an upcoming meeting to discuss staffing. Mr. Toolan also suggested asking the Select Board Chairman.

**7. Topics for Future Agendas:** Mr. Toolan noted his prior request to discuss the softball complex ideas. Ms. Carey noted that Mr. Olsen has improvements at Claxton on the capital plan, and can discuss the ideas with the Commission that include replacing the lighting on # 1 and adding to # 2; creating some form of dugout/shade for the players; and continuing to maintain the batting cage. Mr. Toolan would like there to be a discussion about a permanent outfield fence.

**8. Adjournment of Meeting:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:51 PM. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan and the meeting adjourned at 8:51 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP  
Director