

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

**Minutes of Meeting  
April 27, 2020**

**PRESENT:** Christopher J. Gerstel, Cynthia J. Chaston, Michelle S. Geddes, Matthew M. Toolan  
Stacey Mulroy, Angela O'Connor, Kristen Wright

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

Mr. Gerstel thanked everyone for joining the meeting and stated that he would like to continue to hold regular Park and Recreation meetings with the only exception being that they will be held remotely using Zoom instead of in person.

**1. Director's Report**

The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Mulroy discussed that the team continues to work remotely. *Attachment A.*

Ms. Mulroy stated that all spring programming being cancelled. Ms. Mulroy stated that we are working with the Golf Club in regards to our Senior Golf program.

Ms. Mulroy stated that the Earth Day clean-up went well and the tree saplings are still being distributed by Park and Recreation staff. Mr. Gerstel stated that he heard good things about the Arbor Day tree pick-up and that it was especially reassuring during the time that was currently in. Ms. Wright stated that Parks & Forestry Foreman Mike Logan 750 lbs. of trash last week. Mr. Gerstel also wanted to commend the RTS staff for the great job they are doing during the pandemic.

The Commission discussed the barriers that were being used at the RTS and if they were the same barriers that structure the DeFazio parking lot. It was determined that they were and that we would make sure they were returned when it was time to set up the DeFazio parking lot when the fields reopen.

**2. Program Report**

The Commission reviewed the written report. *Attachment B.*

Ms. O'Connor discussed the current Park and Recreation Spirit Week and that HS Field Hockey Coach Dina Hannigan, who we have partnered with before to offer clinics, did a great video for crazy sock day and that team members from the Youth Field Hockey team created a great video for Wacky Hair Day.

Ms. O'Connor stated that during the Arbor Day event, that was a collaborative effort between Parks and Forestry and Park and Recreation, over 300 trees were picked up on the first distribution day and there are approximately two more ready to go for the second distribution day which is tomorrow.

Ms. O'Connor stated that we are collaborating with both the Housing Authority, Needham High School, and Youth and Family Services to create Activity Boxes and that the staff is still working on other virtual programming ideas.

Mr. Toolan asked if the e-sports or virtual horse game activities could be organized. Ms. O'Connor thanked him for the ideas.

**1. Director's Report (revisited)**

Ms. Mulroy discussed the Rosemary Lake Dredging project. Mr. Gerstel stated that there is a request from the project manager to extend the project a week to get more sediment from the bottom of the lake. Mr. Gerstel asked if the requested extension would impact the pool start-up timeline. Ms. Mulroy stated that it would not impact the pool start-up.

**2. Program Report (revisited)**

Mr. Gerstel stated that the Needham Soccer Club and Needham Lacrosse have cancelled their Spring season. Ms. Geddes added that Needham Track Club cancelled their spring season.

Mr. Gerstel asked if there were any updates on Summer Camps in Needham. Ms. Mulroy stated that the Public Health Department will not be issuing licenses to camps in the month of June. Ms. Mulroy stated that the Needham Public Health Department is hoping to have state guidance by June 1<sup>st</sup> to issue their policies for camps in July and the remainder of the summer. Ms. Mulroy stated that the Health Department is asking that we also not hold any programs in the month of June. Mr. Toolan what is the rationale of cancelling until June 30<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Mulroy stated that at the very least it gives us time to figure out how to implement social distancing into future programs. The Commission discussed the regulations of the camps throughout Town and how the pandemic may impact them this summer. Mr. Gerstel asked members of the Commission to provide questions to the department staff for the Public Health Department. Ms. Geddes stated that understanding the level of discretion the Needham Public Health Department will have within the guidance provided by the state.

**3. Discussion Items**

**A. Pools**

Mr. Gerstel stated that there was a meeting held with member of the Commission, the Department and other Town staff discussing the levels of service needed for the Pools. Mr. Gerstel stated regardless of if we open or not, the Pool will have to be opened up for annual maintenance reasons. Ms. Geddes asked if maintenance items were removed from the bid. Ms. Wright stated that there were no maintenance items included in the scope, and that the scope of the bid was only for start-up procedures ask they were identified from the projects close out documents. Ms. Mulroy stated that the close out documents go through every bolt and fastener in the facility and many of those items need to be completed thoroughly every 5 or so years and not annually. Ms. Mulroy stated that Weston & Sampson will look over the scope to identify which tasks should be completed during which timeline as well as identify the items that fall under prevailing wage and which do not. The Commission discussed different funding sources for the opening costs as well as future openings of the facility.

The Commission discussed the upcoming closing bid and the timeline.

Mr. Toolan asked to discuss all possible scenarios for the Pool this summer. Ms. Mulroy stated that the staff will be looking at if we open, what that will look like in terms of level of staffing. Mr. Gerstel asked what the timeline is for start-up and the recommended time that it should run before it is closed. Ms. O'Connor stated that it will need to run for at least 30 days. Mr. Gerstel asked how long would it take to create the plan for opening once the state issues the guidance. Ms. O'Connor stated that a lot of communities are looking a time slot schedules to open and include deep cleaning in between. Ms. Mulroy stated that we will also have to have look at staff scheduling. Mr. Toolan asked what the front public facing statement. Ms. Mulroy stated that the statement to the public is that we are awaiting further guidance. The Commission discussed allowing current members to roll over the memberships to next year.

**B. Summer Programs**

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

**C. Project Updates**

None discussed.

**D. Field Permits**

Ms. Mulroy discussed having user groups reapply for field permits once the guidance about field permits from the state.

**E. Celebrations & Events**

Ms. Chaston gave an update from the Needham Exchange Club regarding the 4<sup>th</sup> of July.

**4. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours**

Mr. Gerstel had a conversation with Mr. Olsen about future field maintenance and Mr. Gerstel wants to ensure that we are supporting him.

Ms. Chaston stated that the Commission needs to discuss replacing Commissioner DiCicco's seat, so all the seats are full. Mr. Gerstel will send the procedure about replacing a seat on the Commission. Ms. Chaston asked about the next meetings. Mr. Gerstel stated that the next four meetings would be Monday, May 11, Tuesday, May 26, Monday, June 8, and Monday, June 22. Ms. Mulroy will set up the Zoom meeting.

Mr. Toolan had nothing additional to discuss.

Ms. Geddes had nothing additional to discuss.

Ms. Mulroy had nothing additional to discuss.

Ms. O'Connor would like to discuss the memberships at the next meeting.

Mr. Toolan did not have anything additional to discuss.

Ms. Geddes did not have anything additional to discuss.

Ms. Chaston expressed gratitude for the Staff that has been working remotely and remains present in the community on social media and as we move forward. Mr. Gerstel noted the staff's social media post and challenges the Commission to produce something better for the next holiday.

Mr. Toolan asked about filling the vacant seat on the Commission. Mr. Gerstel will investigate the options.

**5. Topics for Future Agendas**

None presented

**6. Adjournment of Business Meeting**

**Mr. Toolan moved to adjourn the April 13, 2020 Park and Recreation Commission meeting at 8:26pm. Ms. Chaston seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8:26pm.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kristen Wright  
Administrative Specialist