

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

**Minutes of Meeting
October 26, 2020**

PRESENT: Cynthia J. Chaston, Christopher J. Gerstel, Michelle S. Geddes, Matthew M. Toolan

ABSENT: Bruce R. Williams

STAFF: Stacey Mulroy, Kristen Wright

GUESTS: Kevin Lavelle, Edward Olsen

Ms. Chaston called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM remotely using Zoom. Ms. Chaston read a statement regarding public meeting process due to COVID-19.

1. Open Forum – Public Comment

A. Needham Baseball & Softball

Kevin Lavelle from Needham Baseball & Softball presented a proposal to the Park and Recreation Commission to financial gift to help improve and maintain the little league baseball diamonds throughout Town. Mr. Lavelle also discussed the process that resulted in this proposal.

Ms. Mulroy asked how the cost was determined for these projects and if prevailing wage and other items that the Town must comply to. Mr. Lavelle stated that they have been trying to keep the projects under \$10,000 thresholds.

The Superintendent of Parks and Forestry stated that he is in full support of the gift and that it would not supersede any other project for the Town.

Ms. Geddes asked about future maintenance costs associated with these improvements. Mr. Lavelle stated that it could be a conversation about future gifts to the Town. Ms. Chaston asked about Avery improvements. Mr. Lavelle stated that some upgrades and even a bating cage in the future. Mr. Toolan asked about cost and prevailing wage. Mr. Olsen stated that he does not have the answer but would ask Assistant Town Manager Dave Davison. Mr. Toolan asked about any overage of the initial quote and who would cover any overage. Ms. Chaston stated that the next steps to move this process forward would be to have Needham Baseball work with the Park and Recreation staff and get the appropriate approvals. Mr. Olsen shared his appreciation again for Needham Baseball & Softball to help support the ancillary fields.

Mr. Toolan made a motion to accept the gift as presented by Needham Baseball and Softball. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed, 3-0-1.

2. Director’s Report

Ms. Mulroy presented the Director’s Report.

Ms. Chaston asked about the Trail Steward program. Mr. Toolan stated that with the trails being used more than ever, it may be a good time to revamp the program.

The Commission discussed the various CPC projects that would be going through the next cycle of the CPC. Mr. Toolan asked that they be notified with the date of the Public Hearing.

Ms. Chaston asked about receiving a report regarding the overall operations of the Pool. Ms. Mulroy stated that this report is in the process of being compiled. Mr. Toolan asked why the budget had such a short timeline. Ms. Chaston asked about the revenue for Fall programs. Ms. Mulroy gave a recap of Fall programs to date. Mr. Gerstel thanked the staff for a great operations and not one case of COVID was identified from any Park and Recreation programming or the operations at the Pools.

Ms. Mulroy discussed the capital project overview. Ms. Chaston discussed restrooms at the fields. Ms. Mulroy discussed the potential installation of port-a-potties and the commission further discussed this. Ms. Chaston asked about adding sun shading at the Pools. Mr. Toolan asked to add the Rosemary Recreation Complex as a line item for improvements to be listed and discussed the dock. Mr. Toolan asked about the joint projects with Parks and Forestry, the Dwight Passive Recreation Improvements, and the Cricket Field House renovation. The Commission further discussed the future of the Cricket Field House including the concerns about septic, the need for programming space, and the Cricketeer Adventure program.

3A. Projects

Rail Trail

Ms. Mulroy stated that the Rail Trail Committee will be meeting this coming Thursday and that there is a joint effort between Youth and Family Services, and Town Management to create a community graffiti art wall.

Open Space & Recreation Plan

No updates presented.

3B. New Program Ideas

Senior Walking Program

Ms. Mulroy discussed the creation of the program to facilitate senior exercise.

Mr. Gerstel would like to discuss having a cornhole tournament. The Commission was interested in investigating this idea.

3C. Facilities

Tennis Courts & Basketball Courts

Ms. Mulroy stated quotes have been received and she will be reviewing them.

3D. Events

Halloween Event

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

1775 Walk – April 2021

Ms. Mulroy stated the meeting went well and they will meet about once a month keeping in mind that it might be postponed again.

4A. Special Event Approvals

Eliot PTC – Parking Lot Bingo

The Commission discussed the event and shared concerns about having the cars running as well as the number of cars indicated.

Mr. Gerstel made a motion to approve the Eliot PTC – Parking Lot Bingo event contingent on the follow up questions from the Commission. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

Sunita Williams – Drive-in at DeFazio

The Commission discussed the event and shared concerns about cars running and questioned if the restrooms would still be available. Ms. Mulroy stated that we are working with Building Maintenance regarding the closing of the field restrooms and will get port-a-potties if necessary.

Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the Sunita Williams – Drive-In at DeFazio event contingent on the follow up questions from the Commission. Mr. Gerstel seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.

4B. Meeting Minutes

Mr. Toolan made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of August 10, 2020. Ms. Geddes seconded the motion and it passed 3-0-1.

5. Upcoming Commission Meetings

The Commission reviewed the meeting dates.

6. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours

Ms. Chaston asked that a topic be added to the standard agenda named 'Topics for the Next Commission Meeting'. Ms. Chaston asked that under that topic that the Commissions Goals and Camps vs. Programs. Mr. Gerstel would like to set up a chairs meeting with the Select Board to discuss the Commission Goals and the Select Board Goals.

7. Adjournment of Business Meeting

Mr. Gerstel moved to adjourn the October 26, 2020 Park and Recreation Commission meeting at 8:59pm. Mr. Toolan seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned at 8:59pm.