

Park and Recreation Commission Meeting
May 29th, 2024 @ 7:30pm

Present: Christopher Gerstel (Chair), Michelle Geddes (Vice-Chair), Cynthia Chaston (Member), James Rosenbaum (Member), Stacey Mulroy (Director), Dominic Stanganelli (Administrative Assistant)

Absent: Dina Hannigan (Member)

Guests: Hilary Bruel (via Zoom)

Call to Order

Mr. Gerstel called the meeting to order at 7:35pm, May 29th, 2024.

1. Open Forum Public Comment

None.

2. Meeting Guests

None.

3. Chair's Update

None.

4. Director's Report

The Rosemary Pools were uncovered on Friday, May 10th, 2024, and Weston & Sampson returned for further work on May 24th, 2024. Sod has been installed on the beach at the Pools. Playground maintenance is continuing and will be ongoing throughout the Summer.

The first Public Meeting for the Active Recreation Feasibility Study has been tentatively scheduled for Monday, June 24th, 2024. The Claxton Field Renovation project has been approved at the Spring Town Meeting and DPW will look to finalize procurement with our winning bidder, Cataldo. We have received an updated quote from Fuss & O'Neil for the DeFazio Playground Renovation Project and will be moving forward with that. The Needham High School Tennis Court Renovation and Expansion has been deferred to the Fall Town Meeting.

The Summer 2024 Leaders in Training program has 33 confirmed registrants who will be spread across our various Summer Camps and Swim Lessons. Summer camps are 100% staffed – we are just finalizing contracts and paperwork. We have hired 80% of the Pool staff and still need 5 lifeguards, 2 swim lessons instructors, and 1 maintenance staff.

Chris asked what factors have contributed to the delayed pool opening by Weston & Sampson. Stacey replied that there was a two-week gap between uncovering and further work as they had been called elsewhere due to unforeseen circumstances with other projects. Cynthia asked if there is concern about lower pool pass sales. Stacey replied that she has noticed the drop in sales but noted that folks are most likely going on more vacations than last year due to softening of Covid-era travel sentiments.

5. Discussion Items

Chris brought attention to the athletic field light hour survey that went out previously. Stacey commented that it is split, with varying hours and days. Cynthia would like to reach out to soccer, softball, and lacrosse user groups as they typically utilize the fields at later hours. Chris asked if we could run the extended hours as a pilot this Summer exclusively at Memorial Park and move forward with other parks after consulting with the Zoning Board. Michelle and Cynthia both expressed reservations about moving forward as there doesn't seem to be a large demand. James recommended allowing only baseball diamond lights since that is the Trustees' primary point of concern. Chris wondered if we could support the Trustees, while still pondering extended light use at our other fields so as to not dissolve our joint-control policy. Stacey stated that if it gets extended to 10pm, user-groups must be trained on how to turn off lights in the case of unforeseen circumstances that call for early shutdowns. The Commission concluded that further exploration into the joint policy with the Memorial Trustees is needed.

The Commission discussed looking to further define court hours from dawn to dusk to proper hours. Cynthia stated that Needham High School neighbors are concerned about early morning noise stemming from the school's tennis courts. James recommended aligning court usage hours with the Town's noise ordinance hours, 7am - 8pm. See vote below.

6. Action Items & Approvals

6A. Special Event Approvals

None.

6B. Policy Approvals

Adopt Noise Ordinance Hours as Court Use Hours

Motion: Chris

Second: Cynthia

Vote: 4-0

6C. Fee Approvals

None.

6D. Previous Meetings' Minutes

Minutes of 4/23/24

Motion: Cynthia

Second: Michelle

Vote: 4-0

Minutes of 5/1/24

Motion: Chris

Second: Michelle

Vote: 4-0

Minutes of 5/14/24

Motion: Cynthia

Second: Chris

Vote: 3-0

7. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours

None.

8. Topics for Future Meetings

Dog policies re: playgrounds and active playing facilities. Pickleball policies.

9. Next Meetings

- Monday, June 10th, 2024
- Monday, June 24^h, 2024
- Monday, July 8th, 2024
- Monday, July 22nd, 2024

10. Adjournment of Business Meeting

Motion: Cynthia

Second: Michelle

Vote: 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:53pm, May 29th, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dominic Stanganelli

Administrative Assistant