

TOWN OF NEEDHAM TRUSTEES OF MEMORIAL PARK

MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, February 11, 2016 – 7:00 PM – Memorial Park Building

PRESENT: John Gallelo, Chairman; Jim Healy, Clerk; Bill Topham

ABSENT: Mark Forbes, Vice-Chairman; Chuck Mangine, Matt Borrelli BOS designee

GUEST: David DiCicco, Park & Recreation designee

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Gallelo at 7:07 P.M. A quorum was declared.

The minutes of the January 13, 2016 were approved 3-0. It was noted that we are meeting tonight instead of our usual meeting night on the 2nd Wednesday of the month because there was a Special Town Meeting last night.

We received an email from Patty Carey (Park & Rec Director) that Trustee Mangine has submitted a W-9 so his invoice in the amount of \$241.31 can be paid.

We received an email from Town Manager Kate Fitzpatrick that the Facilities Department will repair both stairways and cracking of the concrete slab at the Gazebo, but that completion of this work is weather dependent.

In response to our inquiry about the origins of the Highland Avenue retaining wall replacement, Fitzpatrick advised this work is included in the Capital Article requesting a feasibility study for the Memorial Park building, and the Trustees will be able to speak with the consultant about the need / amount of this work – if the feasibility study is approved by Town Meeting.

We discussed our vote at the January 13 meeting authorizing Needham Little League / Needham Softball to use the 60' field-turf diamond from May 1 to July 31. First, we clarified that this authorization was only for Fridays – the Trustees voted 3-0 to clarify our prior vote. Second, following our January 13 meeting, we were advised by Carey that the Needham Little League / Needham Softball and Needham Soccer had an agreement concerning this matter. We requested evidence of this agreement and none has been provided.

In response to our request for the installation of a “NO DOGS” sign at the Admiral Gracey entrance to the playing fields, Carey advised that Parks & Forestry will move one of these signs to this area (thank you).

We received an email from Carey attaching a communication from the Needham Tennis Club (Suzanne Donahue) complaining about the trash in and/or around their property. Trustee Healy responded by re-stating the Trustees longstanding complaint about the “trash” situation at Memorial Park. We received two responsive emails from Interim High School Principal, Joe Barnes, who advised he had made the following efforts – meeting with members of the NHS Student Council who are studying the trash issue; a planned communication to the NHS students who have parking permits; the placement of an additional trash barrel at the bottom of the stairway next to the 90’ baseball diamond; and NHS custodians go out to the upper parking lot and pick up trash on a regular basis (the Trustees notes this effort does not extend to the lower parking lot or the playing fields). Barnes stated he will get back to the Trustees following his meeting with the student council.

Because some of the trash consists of beer bottles/cans, Carey advised that Needham Police will be doing extra checks at the Tennis Club, Memorial Park and NHS watching for instances of under-age public use of alcohol.

Parks & Forestry Director, Ed Olsen, reported that he and Doug Mangine picked up trash at the Tennis Club (inside the courts and out) as well as the upper High School area. They also returned the seasonal trash barrels to Pickering Way by the Park entrance and placed a new barrel by the Tennis Club property. Olsen reported that he asked NHS Athletic Director, Micah Hauben if some NHS student athletes would assist in these efforts, and Olsen did not hear back from Hauben. After Mangine’s and Olsen’s fine work (again – many thanks), Suzanne Donahue sent a thank you email.

Selectman Vice-Chair, Matt Borrelli, sent a communication to the Trustees that Needham Police will also be increasing their presence around the High School during the lunch hours for both trash enforcement and to deter inappropriate conduct.

We received the following “Special Event Requests”:

- Needham American Legion Baseball – for the 90” diamond every Sunday in April and May from 3:00 to 6:00 pm.
- Needham Soccer Club – for the field-turf rectangular field for the annual Memorial Day Tournament from May 27 through May 31 (will ensure no conflict with NHS sports on May 27). Request also to use bathroom facilities and concession room. Request to install porta-potties. Request also for a Waiver to use the field lights between 9:00 and 10:00 pm on both May 27 (already allowed under Special Permit) and May 28.
- Needham Exchange Club – for the entire Park for the annual July 4th Celebration, from July 1 to July 5, 8:00 am start each day; July 3 until 11:00 for fireworks; use of Gateway Garden sign boards 6/24 through 7/5; Music amplification and electricity use for lights and food tent; request to use bathroom facilities and install porta-potties; request for use of concession room.
- Park & Recreation – for the Gazebo; 90’ diamond and Park building for the Arts in the Parks series, July 7, 14, 21, and 28 and August 4 and 11; 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm. Request for use of small sign board – to be put up on the morning of each concert and removed the next day. Sound systems belong to the musicians.

Request for use of the bathrooms and the garage area (for folding chairs and music stands).

- Rocket Lacrosse – for use of the field-turf rectangular field from June 22 to 24 from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm; if NHS gets out later than June 22, they request June 27 – 29.

Consistent with Trustee policy, these requests are not voted until our next meeting. That being said, the Trustees had the following initial comments / requests:

- All groups who use the Park must police “no dogs” rule.
- One of the requested “rain days” for Rocket Lacrosse (June 29) is in conflict with the fields being closed from June 29 to July 6 (in preparation for the July 4th festivities) – see Trustees prior vote on January 13, 2016.
- We would like a representative of the Exchange Club to attend a future Trustees meeting to discuss their event.
- We would like a representative of the Arts in the Parks program to attend a future Trustees meeting to discuss their event.

We received from Carey the Spring 2016 NHS Athletics Field Schedule, and our only objection is to the use of the 90’ diamond on March 26 – please advise NHS accordingly.

We reviewed the “Joint Policy” for the “Parks, Athletic Fields and Other Facilities” (as amended in January 2014), and we made the following comments with respect to the fields at Memorial Park:

- Definitions – “Organized Activity” does not include “NHS captain’s practices”; “Non-Profit” and “For-Profit” should not necessarily be limited to sub-section “c3” of Section 501; we believe there are other 501c non-profits that should be recognized; and “Spring Season” does not start prior to April 1 unless approved by the Memorial Park Trustees with consultation from Parks and Forestry – MIAA is not the guiding institution.
- Permitted Uses – We see that Section 7 states that all permit holders agree to abide by the most current set of Regulations for Use as provided by the Director of Park and Recreation – we assume these “regulations” contain a “No Dogs” provision – but we believe language should nevertheless be inserted in this “Permitted Uses” section requiring permit holders to police the “No Dogs” regulation.
- Application Process – If all applications must be submitted within the required listed timetables, how do you administer the rogue application that is submitted outside of these timetables? The Trustees believe that if an organized group submits a proper application, regardless of the timetables, and the field requested is open, a permit should be issued.
- Appeals Process – We would like to receive written notice of any “appeal” that is filed with respect to Memorial Park before any hearing takes place. Although this may be the current practice, we recommend the policy explicitly state that the decision of the Fields Appeal Committee is by majority vote.

As a general comment, the Trustees believe this “Joint Policy” relates to field scheduling only, and not field governance. The Trustees will continue to exercise its judgment and discretion with respect to the use of Memorial Park.

We are continuing to review our Special Permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals concerning the use of athletic field lights, especially with respect to lights for the baseball diamonds up until 10:00 p.m., on Thursday and Saturday nights.

A Motion to adjourn was made, seconded and approved 3–0 at 8:00 pm. The next Trustees meeting will be on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, at 7:00 pm, at Memorial Park.

END OF MINUTES.

Respectfully submitted,

James G. Healy, Trustee and Clerk