

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

**Minutes of Meeting  
April 8, 2019**

**PRESENT:** Christopher J. Gerstel, Chairman  
Cynthia J. Chaston, Vice Chairman  
Michelle S. Geddes, Member  
Patricia M. Carey, Director  
Angela O'Connor, Assistant Director

**ABSENT:** David C. DiCicco, Member  
Matthew M. Toolan, Member

Mr. Gerstel called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting – March 18, 2019:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 18, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Gerstel. The minutes of March 18, 2019 were approved unanimously.
- 2. Director's Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Mr. Gerstel extended the Commission's congratulations to Mr. DiCicco for receiving the Needham Exchange Club's Golden Book of Deeds award, and noted his many contributions to the Needham community. Mr. Gerstel congratulated Mrs. Chaston on her participation in Dancing with the Needham Stars. Mr. Gerstel welcomed Assistant Director Angela O'Connor to the meeting. Mr. Gerstel noted that the pilot program with Big Belly trash and recycling units will begin in a few weeks, and the Commission will review how it worked after a full season to see if they have recommendations for alternate locations.
- 3. Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the report. Ms. O'Connor shared information from the Life Is Good two day workshop that she attended over the weekend. It encourages all to "do what you love, and love what you do."
- 4. Discussion Items:**
  - A. Synthetic Turf Replacement Project:** Ms. Carey reported that the turf and padding for both parks is being purchased from a consortium and the price is under \$1 million. The installation by a qualified installer is ready to go out, and bid opening will be just prior to Town Meeting. The estimates range from \$600,000-800,000 for installation, including warranty and some work during the warranty period. The funding request is for \$2.5 million, so it is likely the project will come in under the original estimate. Ms. Carey noted that the regulations for appropriations from the Athletic Facilities Fund require a 2/3rds majority vote to authorize spending.
  - B. FY'20 Budgets:** Ms. Carey noted that the Finance Committee voted to support the warrant article for Rosemary staffing. The Community Preservation Committee will vote

later this week, so the Commission will know if their two proposals will move forward to Town Meeting. Ms. Carey will begin drafting the information on the articles for Town Meeting, with the goal of having information ready prior to the League of Women Voters' warrant meeting. Mr. Gerstel and Mrs. Chaston are available to attend the warrant meeting, but Mrs. Geddes is not available. Ms. Carey will check with Mr. Toolan and Mr. DiCicco.

**C. CPC Proposals:** Mr. Gerstel attended the recent Finance Committee meeting consultation with the CPC. The FinCom hopes that the new dock would not be put in place until after the sediment removal project in the lake. They also would like to know more about the playground projects that would be done. The CPC will now vote on which proposals to recommend to Town Meeting.

**D. DeFazio Park Signs; Driveway:** Mr. Gerstel shared the option of having two solar powered speed signs placed on the driveway to DeFazio, for those driving in and out. He noted that the advisory speed limit sign should be raised to 15 MPH so that vehicles could achieve the goal of driving slowly. Mrs. Geddes, anecdotally, noted that it appears that drivers are being more cautious. Ms. Carey shared draft text for new signs and recommended additional Welcome and No Dog signs be placed at the Pollard entrance, and 2 additional No Dog signs be placed at the track. Mrs. Geddes asked that the synthetic turf rules be more prominent, so that it is easier to show people what is not allowed. Ms. Carey will get estimates on the sign replacements.

**E. Rosemary Recreation Complex – Construction, Operations, Memberships, Celebrations:** The Commission reviewed the updated membership list from last week. Ms. Carey shared the feature on the facility in Athletic Business magazine. Ms. Carey reported that the landscapers will be back on site this week to restore the grass and replace the plantings that did not survive the winter. The railings will be painted once the daily temperatures are warmer. They have been out to look at the scope of work. A meeting will be held this week with the contractor on repairing the surface of the spray deck. A meeting will be held this week with the pool contractors to schedule the season opening services, so that everything can be ready for a Memorial Day weekend opening. Mr. Gerstel and Mrs. Geddes will work on finalizing the ideas for the celebrations, and will reach out to Community Center of Needham.

**F. Re-Organization of Commission:** The Commission decided to wait until after Town Meeting to vote on Chairman and Vice Chairman positions.

## 5. Action Items:

**A. May Meeting Dates:** The Commission will hold a meeting on Monday, May 20 to replace the May 13 and May 27 meetings. If an additional meeting is needed, the Commission will look at holding it prior to Town Meeting on May 13<sup>th</sup>. The re-organization of the Commission will be held at the May 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mrs. Chaston is not available for the May 20<sup>th</sup> meeting. Mr. Gerstel is not available for the April 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

- B. Special Event Requests – Needham Baseball and Softball:** Ms. Carey noted that the two requests are for training clinics for current members of the softball division of Needham Baseball and Softball, and are scheduled during times they hold permits. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request from Needham Baseball and Softball to hold a softball clinic at Claxton # 2 on Wednesday, May 1 from 6-8 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and approved unanimously. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the request from Needham Baseball and Softball to hold a softball clinic on Wednesday, April 24 on Claxton # 1 from 6-8 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and passed unanimously.
- C. Summer Fee Recommendations – Part Two:** The Commission reviewed the recommendations for aquatics programs – youth and adult stroke clinics, high school swim and dive conditioning, pre-masters workout, adult aquatic exercise, and sunset yoga, as seen in Appendix A. Mrs. Chaston made a motion to approve the program fees as recommended by the Director and Assistant Director and seen in Appendix A. Mrs. Geddes seconded the motion and it was passed unanimously.
- D. Riverside Park:** The Commission reviewed the request from Elite Home Builders to replace a retaining wall that is adjacent to the property line at Riverside Park. In addition, the existing chain link fence would be replaced and some new trees would be planted. Mr. Gerstel has driven by the property a few times, and Mrs. Chaston went by after the prior meeting. Mrs. Geddes made a motion to support the request of Elite Home Builders to replace the retaining wall and chain link fence that is on the property line between Riverside Park and the Riverside Street Condominiums and to add trees to replace the ones that will not survive the construction. Mrs. Chaston seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously. Ms. Carey will notify the contractor, and will ask Parks and Superintendent Ed Olsen to provide guidance to the Commission on the tree replacement.
- 6. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours:** Mrs. Geddes received an e-mail from a resident who is upset that field space has not been available in Needham for the EMASS Senior Softball League. The program is regional, with about 500 members, who play games on weekday mornings and Saturdays. Ms. Carey said that it has been several years since a request has been made, but that as a regional program, it was a lower priority in the Commission’s scheduling policy than Needham groups, so space was not available after all of the other permits were done. The Commission would need to revisit its policy.
- 7. Topics for Future Agendas:** None presented.
- 8. Adjournment of Meeting:** Mrs. Chaston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and the meeting adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Needham Park and Recreation Commission  
Minutes of Meeting  
April 8, 2019  
Page 4 of 4

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP  
Director