

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

**Minutes of Meeting
August 26, 2019**

PRESENT: Cynthia J. Chaston, Vice Chairman
David C. DiCicco, Member
Michelle S. Geddes, Member
Matthew M. Toolan, Member
Patricia M. Carey, Director
Angela O'Connor, Assistant Director

ABSENT: Christopher J. Gerstel, Chairman

Mrs. Chaston called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM at the Rosemary Recreation Complex.

- 1. Minutes of Meeting – August 12, 2019:** Mr. DiCicco made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2019 meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Toolan. The motion was approved.
- 2. Director's Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. Carey updated the October meeting dates and noted that she would not be present at the September 23rd meeting. Representatives of the lacrosse wall construction project will attend the September 9th meeting. The Commission reviewed the Select Board goals, and Mr. Toolan noted that a number of the goals appeared to be ones related to the Park and Recreation Commission, without consultation with the Commission. Ms. Carey will request a "chairs meeting" with Commission representatives to learn more about these goals. The Commission reviewed photos of Andrew Horton's Eagle Scout project in the Town Forest, replacing planks of wood with a bridge over a wetlands area.
- 3. Program Report:** The Commission reviewed the written report. Ms. O'Connor gave a brief overview of the summer programs. Mrs. Chaston asked if there were suggested changes, but Ms. O'Connor still needs to review with Recreation Supervisor Chris Burnham. Mr. Toolan asked for attendance statistics and other information, so that residents can hear about the success of the summer.
- 4. Discussion Items:**
 - A. Summer Field Projects Updates:** Ms. Carey reported that the Cricket project is complete and in full use by Needham High School teams. The majority of the turf and pad is installed at Memorial Park, with the softball section still to be done, and then in-fill. The pad installation began, today, at DeFazio. The hope is to have Memorial Park done around Labor Day, with DeFazio finished shortly after that. Mrs. Geddes asked how long groups needed to wait before using the fields, but Ms. Carey said they were useable once the in-fill was installed.

B. Playgrounds Capital Planning: Ms. Carey has met with one vendor to get some concepts for the Commission to review and will meet with 2-3 additional vendors. Mr. Toolan asked that the groups submitting information be updated on the Commission prioritization of the DeFazio tot-lot with minor renovation to Perry's playground area.

C. Rosemary Recreation Complex: Ms. Carey thanked the Town officials who were assisting with the slide monitor role during this final week of operations, including Select Board members John Bulian and Dan Matthews, and Assistant Town Manager Christopher Coleman. Four new lifeguards, with prior experience, were hired last week, and Human Resources sped up the approval process so that the new employees could start last week and be trained prior to this week when they are the primarily lifeguards on staff. Only one summer lifeguard is available all week, with a few additional ones coming in 1-2 days to help. Mrs. Chaston noted that some members of the Select Board had called members of the Commission with concerns on not being open through Labor Day. Mr. DiCicco felt that more could have been done to recruit staff to remain open through Labor Day, including from pools or lakes that closed earlier in August. Mr. Toolan agreed that different recruitment options are needed but did not feel that recruiting high school and college students would provide enough quantity of lifeguards. Ms. O'Connor explained the schedules of the summer lifeguards, and how they are trying to schedule extra shifts around their current obligations. She noted that some summer staff in other towns take a position knowing the final date of work, and do not look to take on additional work after that date. Mr. Toolan noted that the "after action" review of the summer should include staffing issues but should also celebrate how successful the pools and programs were. Mr. DiCicco would like the Commission to interview staff members to find out why they didn't stay through Labor Day and talk to other students to find out why they didn't apply for positions. Ms. Carey said that a full report on the pools and summer programs could be available for an October meeting, and Mrs. Chaston asked that it be scheduled for the October 21st meeting. Mrs. Chaston asked that the summer staff be thanked for the successful summer, and noted the Commission's appreciation for all the extra hours put in by the office staff.

5. Action Items: None presented

6. Issues Not Reasonably Anticipated by Chair within 48 Hours: None presented.

7. Topics for Future Agendas: None presented.

8. Adjournment of Meeting: Mr. Toolan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 PM. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Geddes and the meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM.

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Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Carey, CPRP
Director