

Virtual Meeting – 6:35pm
February 1 2021

Commissioners: Bobby Beagan, Mara Huston, Ben Carmel, Dick Williamson, Jim Marotta
Dennis Mannone, Dir. Park and Recreation/Pool
Guests: Howard Feng (Fin Com), Jen Roberts (BOS)

Public Comment: None

Mara informed the Commissioners if times are listed on the agenda they must be adhered to, so moving forward, she will only list time slots if a guest is scheduled to join the meeting at a specific time.

Director Update: Dennis reported the Field Enterprise Fund has taken in \$83,000. The Parks and Grounds salaries and benefits have not been charged to the account yet. If they had been charged, the fund would be in the negative. He has received spring permits, but said it will be difficult to fit everyone in since some of the fall programs that were cancelled due to Covid in the fall are starting in the spring along with regular spring field rentals.

The Pool has been extremely busy with swim teams and rentals. He has received calls for rentals from schools that are in the second season of swim team competition. These are teams that normally hold swim team season in the fall. Mara asked how many of these swim teams will stay once Covid is over. Dennis was unsure, but stated he may pick up rentals from a few of the new teams since they are pleased with the current rental situation.

Recreation staff is working on summer camp and clinics and plans for February break. Family gym time is now available. The gym can be rented for \$20 hour by families. Mara asked if this was available at night. Dennis stated the pool staff is lifeguarding and not available to supervise the Recreation side, so the family gym time is only available when Recreation staff is on site. He is still unsure how the CDC rules will change for summer. His plan is to have registration for camp in early March.

Mara clarified with Dennis that half of two Recreation staff salaries are paid out of the General Fund and the other half is in the Revolving Fund. The Director and Office Administrator are paid from the General Fund.

Approval of Revolving Funds for Town Warrant/Annual Report – Recreation Revolving Funds are voted on every year at Town meeting. The spending limits on the 53E1/2 Funds are as follows: Teen Revolving Fund (\$10,000), Youth Revolving (\$200,000) and Recreation Revolving (\$650,000). Dennis explained the Teen Revolving and Youth Revolving funds are used for revenue/expenses for teen and youth programs. All other Recreation revenue and expense are processed through the Recreation Revolving Fund. A motion was made to approve the Recreation Revolving Funds. Motion received a second from Ben. Motion approved 5-0 Ben – yes, Jim – yes, Bobby – yes, Dick – yes, Mara – yes.

Mara asked if the articles needed to be signed. Dennis said he would check to see if they had to be signed, or if approval in the minutes would be acceptable. Mara offered that other committees had voted to allow the Chair to sign. A motion was made to allow the Chairperson to approve the Revolving Warrant Articles for the rest of the Commission. Motion received a second from Jim and was approved 5-0. Jim – yes, Bobby -yes, Dick – yes, Ben – yes, Mara – yes.

Mara stated she used the 2019 Recreation Town Report as the basis for the 2020 report and just added to it. Mara asked for comments or edits from the Commissioners. Ben suggested adding something about the Garden Clubs and the new sign at Heritage Park and information on Frank H. Grinnell Veterans Memorial Park. Dennis thought something should be added about the Rail Trail. A motion was made to approve the edited 2020 Town Report. Jim seconded the motion and it passed 5-0. Jim – yes, Bobby – yes, Ben – yes, Dick – yes, Mara – yes.

CPC Project Update Vote: This topic was briefly discussed at the last meeting when Bobby questioned if a second vote was needed due to the increase in the dollar amount for the Haskell Playground CPC request. Dick made a motion to approve the increase requested from CPC for the Haskell Playground. Ben seconded the motion and it was approved 5-0. Bobby – yes, Dick – yes, Jim – yes, Ben – yes, Mara – yes.

Field User Group Recap – Mara asked for comments regarding the User Group discussion at the last meeting. Bobby thought the discussion was good, but said the users need to stay involved and let the Commission know what they need and then be involved with the process to get things accomplished. Communication will be key moving forward. Dick stated the user groups are sensitive to increasing the field permit fee and it is something the Commission will have to deal with moving forward. Block reservations verse hourly was discussed and is an ongoing issue that may need to be addressed.

Mara mentioned she had a discussion with Janie Dretler (BOS) and Ellen Joachim (LSRHS Comm) and learned that LSRHS has put in a warrant article on the Town Warrant to replace the turf at the Community Field with the expectation the Town will pay for half. They discussed the current state of the Community Field use and LSRHS softball field use. Replacement fees for the field are not included in the MOU agreement. Bobby suggested speaking with Pat Brown (former Selectboard member). She worked on this topic a number of years ago. Bobby offered to reach out to Pat Brown. Dick stated the Community Field agreement and the softball field agreement is still an issue. Mara stated the softball field is an addendum to the Community Field agreement (MOU). Dennis expressed concern over the amount of time it takes to handle the field permits for the high school Community field and softball field. Mara asked if the Lincoln youth groups count as a in Town group. Jim stated he would go back to the original agreement that said 50% use to Town and 50% to LSRHS. Mara stated the actual agreement says the LSRHS programs, second is the users thru Sudbury Park and Rec (paid permits), lighting fees go to LSRHS. The agreement also states that any 3rd party users that do not come through the Park and Recreation permit policy can get any remaining time on the fields. Jim stated he thought there might be another agreement and will look for it. Mara asked Jim to send her anything he finds on

the original MOU. Mara said she will speak with Art Reilly, LSRHS AD, to discuss lighting the two lower turf fields at LSRHS and asked if one of the other Commissioners wanted to join in the discussion. Bobby offered to join and mentioned getting additional information on what impacts the lifespan of turf fields, so everyone is on the same page.

Discussion moved to Broadacre verse Davis as a Park and Recreation priority – Mara stated she was surprised that Broadacre, when cleared, is as large as Davis. Bobby stated it will be as large as the current playing space at Davis. Davis is large, but a part of it is conservation and other parts are sloped and not useable for fields at this time. Bobby stated he has worked with Dan Nason, DPW Dir,) on Davis in the past trying to develop plan to make the existing field space more playable. He stated that while Davis is still an opportunity to develop, perhaps Broadacre is where the attention should be now as it may be easier and faster to develop into actual playing fields. Bobby shared a field layout from Warner Larson, that was done on Broadacre showing a potential baseball field, a rectangular field and parking. He also shared a layout showing a rectangular field, a baseball field, a softball field and parking. All are options up for discussion. Bobby said Dan Nason will work with Warner Larson to get an estimate for design costs. Mara expressed concern regarding parking at new site with what is currently available, along with the parking for the Rail Trail. Discussion on parking and possible combination with the Rail Trail. Fields and Rail Trail being used at the same time may put concerns on parking. Bobby stated that there was also discussion of artificial turf at the Broadacre site to reduce the need for irrigation. Dennis mentioned bathroom facilities will also need to be addressed at this facility. The current bathrooms at Featherland may to long of a walk, Rail Trail users may also need bathrooms. Mara stated she is looking at the possibility of using CPC funds for a Recreation Plan study for next fall. Ben asked about the possibility of using Rail Trail funds for bathrooms and parking. Dick stated parking is included for the Rail Trail.

Field Maintenance Enterprise Fund – Possible Fee Increase – Dennis has been working with the Town Manager and Finance Director regarding the current status of the Field Enterprise Fund. Dennis reported the main issue with the Field Enterprise Fund is the salary and expenses are outpacing the revenues brought in from field permits. He stated over the years, the average revenue generated from field permits is \$196,000. Shortfalls in the past have been covered by retained earnings. In 2020, the Town had to assist with \$40,000 to cover the lost revenue due to Covid. Dennis stated the field permit fees may have to go up in order to meet the expenses in the next fiscal year. He is also working with Eversource to make sure the bills are accurate and he is charging the correct amount for use of lights.

Mara shared data she received from Chris Felt, Parks and Grounds. She reported on the hours spent on specific activities of the Park and Grounds staff. Much of their time is spent lining, mowing and preparing fields for play in the fall, spring and summer. Mara will speak with the Town Manager and Finance Director next week to see if the Field Enterprise Fund is still a model that works. Dennis and Ben may also attend. Dennis stated the increase must be communicated to the field users soon, so it can be incorporated in their fees. Dennis stated the permit fees should go up a certain percentage every year due to cost of living increases,

minimum wage increase, utilities, etc. It was decided to wait on a vote to increase the field permit fee until after the discussion with the Town Manager. At some point, Dennis would like to have a conversation on what expenses should be in the Field Enterprise Fund. The Fund currently covers all expenses associated with the irrigation systems at the fields, electricity for meters at the fields, bathroom cleaning and bathroom supplies.

Long Range Planning Mission/Statement and Goals – Ben presented slides which discussed the 2021 Park and Recreation Commission need to develop a defined mission, short- and long-term goals, and a process to drive the next decade of fiscally stable, structured/unstructured utilization of park and recreation capabilities/facilities. He also discussed the defined focus groups, and how do they drive towards the goals.

He presented two options for a Park and Recreation Commission mission statement, pulling in all the different facets of recreation activities, both passive and structured. Bobby added he felt the Commission was also responsible to manage policy regarding maintaining and financing the services provided by Recreation.

Dennis asked if something about aquatics should be included in the mission. Bobby asked if there was a thought to vote on the mission tonight. Mara stated no vote, this allows the mission to be edited and reviewed. Jim M. thought properly maintained parks with financially sound operations should be added. He also suggested meeting with the FinCom to discuss finances and funding the Park and Recreation services/facilities. Mara will reach out to the FinCom Chair.

Mara asked Ben to email his slides to the Commission for review and asked if anyone had anything else regarding long term goals. Dennis stated long range plans for Sewataro need to be discussed since there is starting to be some overlap with his department. Mara stated Janie Dretler (BOS) has already reached out to her on that subject and Mara will keep the Commission updated on the discussions.

Plan for Garden Club Discussion at March 1 meeting -Dick has reached out to the Sudbury Garden Club and asked them to attend the next Park and Recreation Commission on March 1. Mara asked Dick to reach out to both the Sudbury Garden Club and the Thursday Garden Club. Dick will invite both clubs to the next meeting.

Motion to approve the January 5, 2020 as amended. Seconded. Approved 5-0. Bobby-Yes, Jim – Yes, Ben – yes, Dick – Yes, Mara – Yes.

Mara stated the chat transcript from the Field users will be added to the minutes.

Next Park and Recreation meetings are scheduled for March 1, April 5 and May 3, 2021.

Motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded. Approved 5-0. Bobby -Yes, Jim – Yes, Ben – Yes, Dick – Yes, Mara – Yes.

