

Virtual Meeting – 6:33pm

August 16, 2021

Commissioners: Bobby Beagan, Mara Huston, Laurie Eliason, Dick Williamson

Aug 16, 2021 Meeting Roll Call: Bobby – here, Laurie – here, Mara – here, Dick - here

Public Comment: None

Comments from Chairperson: Bobby asked Mara to give an update on the Fairbank Community Center. Mara shared information presented at the August 12 PBC meeting. The project is overbudget, so there is ongoing discussion on what will be trimmed. She described the current layout of the building. She is advocating for gender neutral bathrooms in all sections of the building. Laurie asked if there were doors on the family locker room. Mara stated there are doors and a door that will lead directly onto the pool deck. Bobby asked if the presentation was available to the public. Mara thought it was. Mara did not have information on the specific cuts to be made to the budget. Bobby asked if the new basketball courts will be regulation size. Mara said probably high school size courts. Mara said the picnic area will be changed from cement to grass and the parking lot will be reduced, so people would have to park across the street. One conversation, in regard to the budget, was to remove both outdoor basketball courts from the plan. She was not sure she would be able to support that option. She felt it was important to keep at least one outdoor court since Fairbank has the only full-size outside basketball courts in Town. Bobby agreed and said he sees both courts being used all the time and would not support the removal of the courts. Dick and Laurie agreed. Mara will make sure that view is known in the next meeting. She said there is discussion to replace the sidewalks with asphalt and curbs with asphalt curbing to reduce costs. The School Department offices will be on the second floor and their space will mirror the Senior Center footprint. Laurie asked why a second floor, Mara stated it was the architects that decided and suggested it was due to budget and the size of the property. She said there is discussion to reduce the overall footprint of the building, but she wasn't part of that conversation so she isn't sure what the reduction will look like. Hallways will be narrower and rooms smaller in size. Bobby expressed concern, because he was approached by someone a few months ago who suggested the PRC should stay very involved in the project because cuts may be made from a financial viewpoint and not a user viewpoint. Bobby wanted to make sure the Commission was very involved before any final cuts were made because it would not make sense to do this new project if many of the important areas are sliced away as a budget cut. Mara said she and Dennis are involved in the meetings. Bobby just wanted to make sure the Town Manager knows the Commission should be more than just involved. He said he will contact the individual who alerted him to stay involved to see what else they know since the person knows how Towns operate. Laurie asked when the Commission on Disability gets involved with the building. Mara has asked that question and the answer is after a few more design phases. Mara will contact Chris, the Project Manager, and Bill Barletta to get answers on the timeframe for involvement of the Commission on Disability. Mara showed drawings of the proposed exterior of the new building. Mara discussed the pool viewing area and stated the hallway will provide extra viewing, so she will make sure the hallway cannot be too narrow. The next meeting will be

after Labor Day and at the last meeting she found out the construction will not impact the upcoming swim team season. It is unclear how the construction will affect pool users and summer camp and how long the pool will be shut down. She emailed the Town Manager regarding how to handle any lost revenue, but he is not in a position at this time to address that concern until he knows the scope of the issue. Dick asked if the new building layout would be helpful to the Recreation Department on rainy summer camp days. Mara said yes since there will be three program rooms and a large gym that can be divided in half.

Director Update: Dennis is on vacation, Mara stated summer camp is over and the pool will close for the last two weeks in August and will reopen September 7. Laurie offered that her family participated in Sudbury summer and had a great time and thought the program was fantastic. Mara said she would like to see more Facebook posts on the summer success stories.

Atkinson Pool Status for fall - Mara put this topic on the agenda because it was discussed in previous meetings. The plan was to open to memberships/punch passes in September. She wanted to talk publicly about it since it may not be happening. The Delta variant has become more worrisome and Dennis told her he does not plan on offering all memberships at this time. She wanted to make sure the Commission was aware of the change. Laurie asked if the pool usually shuts down in the summer. Mara said the pool usually shuts down at the end of summer to do cleaning and maintenance, but Dennis did not tell her exactly what would be done during this shutdown. The pool may be closed down longer next summer depending on the renovation work that needs to be done at the pool in regard to the new building.

Field User Fees –The Commission will review the field permit pricing structure and field permit policy in the fall, but Mara felt the pricing on three smaller user requests should be discussed in this meeting. Do they pay seasonal fees or hourly fees? What determines a clinic? Should they pay hourly? Mara presented a spreadsheet with information on the three small users and how their pricing varies. Youth football has not paid for their spring permit yet. Dennis billed them for seasonal use per the field permit policy. Youth Soccer requested use of the fields in the summer. Some of these requests did not meet the one time use policy, so they would be charged the seasonal rate per the field permit policy, which would be more expensive for the users. Youth Soccer went to the LSHS for field space. She asked how the Commission wants to deal with this issue. She was looking for the Commission to have a discussion on policy, not change the pricing. Dick asked what policy issue Mara wanted the Commission to discuss. Mara said the issue is what requests qualify for hourly and what qualify for seasonal use. Mara said there is a clinic rate, which is more than the seasonal rate. She stated the current field permit policy does not clearly define what is a clinic versus a season or hourly use. She said the Commission will have a deeper discussion on fees starting in September. Flag football is saying in the past they have been charged the hourly rate and Dennis is charging them the seasonal rate this year. The Commission discussed the issues and the concern about losing smaller users due to the fees being charged.

Steve O'Keefe, President of Youth Soccer, said their summer program was to engage more families and give training opportunities during the summer. They offered two four-week programs due to feedback from families. Their feeling is more field use, more revenue for the

Field Enterprise Fund when the fields are not usually in use. They went to the LSRHS for the summer because they were able to get an hourly fee.

Commissioners discussed the Field Permit Policy and the need to review it more closely, so the fees are clear and fair for all users. They felt the policy need to be updated.

After a long discussion, Mara asked the Commission what they wanted to do about the fees charged for the small user requests on her spreadsheet.

Bobby asked Mara if she was hoping the Commission would introduce a policy that might affect the field permit requests from the small users this fall. Mara stated youth football hasn't paid their spring permit yet because Dennis wanted the Commission to discuss the fee. Youth soccer took their program to the high school. Mara stated the Commission could define when hourly fees are appropriate. Bobby questioned if it could be done retro actively. Mara stated Dennis was looking for the Commission to discuss the fees charged since there is a disagreement on what should be charged. Mara stated the current field policy is not working and she is looking to make changes to the entire field policy structure and fees. Bobby stated he found it difficult to make any decisions since Dennis was not at the meeting. He did not know what discussions had taken place. Bobby suggested he could make a motion to recommend what youth football should pay for the spring field permit, but it would be up to Dennis to decide what is actually charged based on what the Commission was told by Town Legal Counsel about setting fees.

Laurie thought the motion should include the understanding that current policies will be followed moving forward.

Bobby made a motion for the Commission to recommend Sudbury Flag Football and Cheer pay the hourly fee for their spring 2021 permit due to confusion with our existing Field Permit policy. Laurie seconded the motion

Henry Hayes, Town Manager, asked before a vote was taken, if the Commission had taken a look at the document in question. Henry said he was asking based on what agreement was signed and the fact the payment should have been in a previous fiscal year.

Mara found an email with a copy of the field permit, but the rest of the Commission had not seen it yet. Mara stated Dennis said a decision could wait until after the fiscal year.

Henry understood, but the decision that was previously made by Dennis regarding the requests was to follow the current field permit policy. Mara stated that was correct but in previous years the users paid hourly, which was their expectation this year, but Dennis said no and charged them the seasonal rate per the policy. This would be more expensive for the users.

Henry asked if the definition on the forms changed. Mara stated it had not changed and the field permit policy has not been updated since 2017.

Laurie said this appears to be Dennis' decision. It seems like there was some leniency in the past and the permit policy wasn't enforced. She thought it would be helpful to understand his perspective.

Bobby agreed and said he thought this was Dennis' decision and asked Henry if he agreed. Henry said yes and offered the decision was made based on the information available to Dennis at the time he processed the request and he was following the policy.

Bobby would like to see better communication regarding the field permit fees and said the Commission takes some responsibility for the confusion. Henry agreed that communication is key.

Mara and Laurie will work on changes to the field permit policy regarding hourly verse seasonal rates and present at a future PRC meeting.

No vote was taken on Bobby's motion regarding Sudbury Flag Football and Cheer spring permit fee. Henry suggested either vote the motion down or rescind it to keep the process clean. Bobby said he would rescind the motion, but Mara thought a motion should be voted since there was a second on the original motion.

Bobby made another motion to rescind his previous motion regarding Sudbury Flag Football and Cheer, which received a second. Bobby – yes, Dick -yes, Laurie – yes, Mara – yes. Motion passed 4-0.

Mara stated this issue will be sent back to Dennis, but said it gives the Commission an idea of the situations they need to address.

Approve Minutes: Motion to approve the May 3 minutes. Seconded by Dick. Dick – yes, Bobby – yes, Mara – yes. Motion passed 3-0. Laurie did not vote since she was not on PRC at that time.

Motion to approve the June 21 minutes with corrections. Seconded by Bobby. Bobby -yes, Laurie – yes, Dick – yes, Mara – yes. Motion passes 4-0.

Mara stated next meeting is September 13, many items to discuss, so she may need to think about a second meeting. Items include capital planning, field policies, roles and responsibilities of the Commission.

Mara made a motion to adjourn. Seconded. Dick – yes, Laurie – yes, Bobby – yes, Mara – yes.

