



Robert J. DeRubeis
Commissioner

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Room 204 - City Hall

7:00 p.m. – Monday, May 21, 2018

In Attendance: Chairman Magni, Vice-Chairman Tucker, Commissioner DeRubeis, Andy Stern, Byron Dunker, Peter Johnson, Michael Clarke, Jack Neville, Sam Figler, Pat Palmer

Meeting began 7:00 pm

1. **Meeting Minutes – April 23, 2018- Approved 7-0-1** (Mr. Stern absent April)

2. **Commissioner’s Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance**
 - Summer camp programs are 80% full.
 - Gath Pool was painted today. Pre-season starts June 11
 - Crystal Lake left beach is flooded. Drain being checked
 - May 19 Picnic and Play event cancelled due to rain. There will be a Red Sox event July along with a couple of other Picnic and Play events.
 - The 40th Anniversary of Athletes Unlimited was held May 16th.
 - The Over 55 “Senior” Prom took place on Thursday May 17th.
 - Commissioner DeRubeis introduced Allison Crosbie the newly hired Open Space Coordinator.
 - Highlands Project is pretty much complete. Fields will be open next Fall. Roadway paving to be done by DPW.
 - McGrath tennis court and off-leash area renovation project construction meeting in scheduled May 23rd.
 - Forestry: This fiscal year 803 trees were planted, unfortunately 1,007 came down.

3. **Upper Falls Greenway Art Display – Public Hearing**
 - Chuck Tanowitz of the Newton-Needham Chamber of Commerce and Wendy Wolfe from *Studios without Walls*, presented the proposal.
 - The proposal is to have an outdoor sculpture show along the Greenway from June – August. The theme of the show is “Beyond Boundaries”.
 - The group is doing fundraising for this event.
 - A walk-thru with the P & R Department would take place before event
 - Vehicle access would be required for set-up and removal of sculpture pieces.
 - There was an email from the condo association that abuts the Greenway. Mr. Tanowitz spoke to the individual and they have agreed not to have any sculptures on the section of the Greenway behind the condos.
 - Mr. Tanowitz asked if the poison ivy along the Greenway can be removed. The Commissioner will have the crew take a look.
 - Mr. Neville asked about what ideas have come up for the area around The Depot restaurant. Mr Tanowitz commented the ideas are still being collected.

- Chairman Magni commented on the email stating the notification letters were not received at the condo association until May 18. Ms. McLaughlin confirmed the letters were mailed on May 7.

Mr. Neville made the motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed 8-0.

4. Farlow Park Project – Public Hearing

- Mr. Jones, Friends of Farlow Park (“Friends”) is proposing to install three plaques on the bridge:
 - The year the bridge was completed: 2018
 - A plaque with the donors names
 - A plaque for the Friends of Farlow Park and the City Departments
- The two plaques with the list of names would be located on the inside at the end of the bridge. The date would be placed on a cornerstone. The plaques will be bronze. The cost is estimated at \$3,000.00.
- Laura Shaw, 116 Church St. commented. The project has been a disaster, the park has been closed for a year and the “Friends” group has not communicated with the neighbors. The plaques are ugly and not appropriate.
- Steve Carter, 48 Eldredge St. agrees with Ms. Shaw and asked if there are any other parks with large plaques. Chairman Magni responded yes Salvatore A. Balsamo Millennium Park at City Hall.
- Jay Walters, 83 Pembroke St., the project idea began 14 years ago; there was plenty of time for people to be involved. This is a great project and a huge achievement. Acknowledgement of donors and supporters is an American thing to do.
- Commissioner DeRubeis agrees with Ms. Shaw and Mr. Carter, the project has gone on too long and takes responsibility for the former manager of the project who conducted closed meetings. Tomorrow at 11am there is a meeting at Farlow Park and the neighbors are welcome.
- Mr. Shaw thanked the Commissioner and stated he had spoken with the Commissioner last fall and the Commissioner was very helpful. Mr. Shaw blames the friends for the lack of communication. The plaques are huge and the \$3,000 cost for the plaque should be put towards the park.
- Mr. Jones commented in the “Friends” defense once the project began they had no control.
- Commissioner DeRubeis commented the one concern is the general maintenance of the pond. To assist in pond maintenance a quote was requested and the quote came in at ~ \$2,500/year.
- Mr. Tucker asked if this was the first time there has been opposition to this project. Commissioner DeRubeis stated no it is not the first time the project received opposition.
- Mr. Figler asked if there is a precedent for types of signs. Mr. Stern commented signs similar to little league. Mr. Clarke commented Farlow is acknowledging donors, little league acknowledges donors.
- Mr. Stern asked if future donors would be added. Mr. Jones replied no.

Mr. Tucker made the motion to approve the proposal as presented. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed 5-0-3.

5. Angier School Shade Structure – Informational

- Angier School PTO is proposing shade structures near the playground. Currently there is no shade and the area is very hot. The structures are 12'x12' and there would be three structures assembled in a "U" shape next to the playground. The PTO would cover the maintenance fee for the canvas top to be removed and stored each winter. The field is used as a snow dump and the trucks need to get by the structure to dump the snow in the field.
- Mr. Tucker asked if shade trees were an option. Commissioner DeRubeis commented shade trees would take a while to create shade. The Gath Pool has a similar shade structure.
- Mr. Stern requested the color of the structure be consistent with nature.
- Mr. Clarke would like to see an option for a more natural structure such as a pergola.

Mr. Clarke made the motion to have the group return to the June meeting with a natural alternative plan. Mr. Stern seconded the motion. Motion failed 3-5.

Mr. Figler made the motion to move the proposal, as presented, to a public hearing. Mr. Dunker seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-2.

6. Committee Reports

- Community Preservation Committee –no report
- Farm Commission – no report
- Cabot Redesign Committee –no report
- Commonwealth Golf Course – Mr. Neville attended a meeting to discuss the Management RFP
- Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG) – Drawing of proposed area in Norumbega Park is being prepared for the Conservation Commission
- Crystal Lake Working Group (CLWG) – May 30 is the public meeting for the Levingston Cove proposal
- Athletic Fields Committee – Next meeting scheduled June 14
- Policy & Procedure Review
 - Field Naming- no report
 - Sign Policy Committee–no report

7. New Business

Meeting Adjourned at 9:13pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Robin McLaughlin

Parks & Recreation Commission Secretary