



Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Room 205 – City Hall

7:00 p.m. –Monday, November 16, 2015

Attending: Chairman Arthur Magni, Vice-Chairman Richard Tucker, Commissioner Bob DeRubeis, Andy Stern, Bethel Charkoudian, Byron Dunker, Don Fishman, Peter Johnson, Sam Figler, Pat Palmer

Meeting began 7:00 pm

1. Meeting Minutes - October 19, 2015 –Accepted 8-0

2. Commissioner's Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance

- *Newton South Tennis Courts* are undergoing a complete rebuild. These courts will be closed until early July 2016. The goal is to have the topcoat done before winter the seal coat will be done in the spring. This will impact the spring tennis season.
 - Mr. Stern inquired about the funding. Commissioner DeRubeis stated the project is funded by CIP money and is a Parks & Recreation Project on school property. The next courts to be rebuilt are McGrath Playground in FY17 and Burr Park in FY18.
 - Mr. Palmer asked if the east courts at McGrath Playground will be done, Commissioner DeRubeis stated no the east side courts have been recently crack filled with the Riteway System.
- *The Highland Playground Project* is tentatively scheduled for spring construction. Commissioner DeRubeis will appear before the Community Preservation Committee on December 10th to request one million dollars, total cost 3.3 million.
- *The Farlow Park Project* is now being managed by Elaine Gentile. The pond basin has many holes and the engineers have recommended a gunite bottom which will increase the cost.
- *Programs:*
 - Currently NNHS indoor recreation programs are running
 - School vacation camp registration is open and the department is preparing for the summer camp fair the end of January.
 - There is an increase in minimum wage in January which will increase the seasonal wages.
 - The Scholarship fund for summer camps is also running low. All who apply will receive some assistance. Mr. Stern asked if information could be circulated about making donations.
 - Over 55 programs run year round, Nancy Scammon, Director has implemented intergenerational and inter department programs.

- Special Needs Programs– Karen Peirce has been added as an assistant to Mark Kelly, Special Needs Director. This has created the opportunity for additional programs for adult special athletes.
- Programs & Services Committee will be discussing the leaf blower ban and have asked the Commissioner for the impact the ban would have on the department. There would be approximately 30% increase on the maintenance side and a 7%-10% decrease in tree removals and pruning's, Forestry uses leaf blowers for tree clean up. Mr. Palmer asked if this ban would include snow blowers, Commissioner DeRubeis replied no it would not.
- Mr. Figler asked for an update on turf fields and synthetic fields. Commissioner DeRubeis stated there was a meeting with Youth Soccer representatives. Halloran or Forte field are options for a synthetic field because they are heavily used and already lighted. The concern with synthetic fields in the infill used. Fessenden School currently used organic material on the newly constructed synthetic field; we will wait to see how the organic material compares.

3. New Business

- Chairman Magni received a suggestion from Mr. Kastner, Commission Member to include commission committee reports to the agenda, such as the Farm Commission, CPC and Golf Course. All agreed this was a good suggestion, committee reports will be added to the agenda going forward.
- Chairman Magni requested the Cabot Redesign Committee be included to the Committee Updates on the agenda.
- Commissioner DeRubeis reported on Off-leash Areas: Jason Roberts has been out due to an auto accident. Officer Torres reported issues with professional dog walking companies at Hunnewell Park. OLAWG will be meeting December 4th to discuss the issue.
- The Angier School project is moving along. Staff and the contractor are cleaning the wooded triangle area as agreed upon.
- Mr. Stern asked for an update on Crystal Lake. Commissioner DeRubeis stated there is no update.

Meeting adjourned 7:50 pm

Respectfully Submitted,
Robin McLaughlin