

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Room 204- City Hall

7:00 p.m. – Monday, February 24, 2020



Attendance: Chairman Magni, Andy Stern, Byron Dunker, Patty Kerwin Derrick, Melissa Sommer, Al Cecchinelli, Midge Connolly, Sam Figler, Mark Feldhusen

Meeting began 7:00pm

1. **Mayor Fuller introduces Nicole Banks, P, R & C Commissioner**
2. **Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2020**
 - Approved 8-0
3. **Commissioner’s Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance**
 - Carol Stapleton reported summer camp/aquatics interviews are scheduled. Kevin Clancy Basketball Tournament is scheduled March 13.
 - Athletic fields are too wet right now to begin spring maintenance
4. **Crystal Lake Management Plan – Update – Maria Rose, Engineering Department**
 - The City of Newton, working with Woodard & Curran and Water Resource Services, has completed the development of a Crystal Lake Management Plan, the city’s 27-acre natural gem and swimming resource in Newton Centre. This report summarizes a detailed water quality evaluation of Crystal Lake and its watershed and recommends a nutrient management strategy to help prevent repeat occurrences of summer harmful algae blooms, impaired water clarity, and other problems created by excess nutrients. The report recommends in-lake nutrient management techniques known to be very effective in similar lakes that will complement the watershed-based control and treatment measures. The work of the Crystal Lake Conservancy was extremely helpful in the development of this plan and will be critical in its implementation. The actions detailed in this plan will help the City comply with the increasingly stringent regulatory obligations under the federal Clean Water Act’s stormwater discharge “MS4 Program”, specifically regarding nutrient control into the tributaries of the Charles River.
 - Chief Operating Officer Jonathan Yeo commented the report is on-line for review (www.newtonma.gov/stormwater). A vacuum unit sweeper has been purchased to help with leaf and debris pick up around the lake.
 - The options for treatment are dredging the lake, which is expensive, or adding an aluminum treatment.
 - Mr. Stern asked how often the aluminum would be added. Ms. Rose stated there would be 2, half doses and would last over 10 years.
 - Mr. Stern asked if there is a toxicity issue. The aluminum treatment is difficult to disturb past 15’ and the treatment would be at 16’ in Crystal Lake.
 - Mr. Yeo commented the project would be funded from the stormwater program
 - Mr. Feldhusen asked if the biggest source of contamination is lawn fertilizer. Ms. Rose replied yes and then leaves.
 - Ms. Connolly commented the bloom seems to be cyclical. And asked if there is danger in the treatment. Ms. Rose commented there is always risk but this application would be controlled. Mr. Yeo commented he was in the water management field for 32 years, and never had a problem with this application.
 - Ms. Connolly asked how the public would be notified of the application. Ms. Rose stated, social media, written notification, and sandwich boards placed in the area.

5. Newton Early Childhood Program (NECP)- Playground Install-Public Hearing

- Mr. Valcarce presented a proposal to install an age appropriate playground behind the Newton Early Childhood Program at 687 Watertown Street, Albemarle Playground. Several options were presented to the Commission. The Commission chose option B and to include mitigation to repair the grass area.
- The proposal was slightly re-designed from the original proposal to allow for vehicle access for field maintenance and for the carnival rides on the 4th of July.
- Chairman Magni asked if the carnival could use mats to protect the grass. Ms. Stephanie Lapham commented they use grass mats, a dual tine material.
- Mr. Valcarce commented mitigation for the grass could be scheduled for July/August which would allow for a year for the new grass to be established.
- Ms. Connolly asked the square footage, Mr. Valcarce replied ~10K square feet.
- Commissioner Banks asked if irrigation is an option. Mr. Valcarce replied yes in some areas.
- Chairman Magni asked for any public comments. There were no comments.

Mr. Cecchinelli made the motion to approve the proposal as presented and to include improvements to the area surface; aerate, slice seed, irrigate and fence. Mr. Stern seconded the motion. Motion passed 8-0.

6. Dog Fest- Fall 2020 – Auburndale Cove- Informational

- The Rotary Club of Newton presented a proposal to have a Dog Fest event at the Auburndale Cove Saturday, October 3, 2020 (no rain date). The event will be from 11:00 to 3:00, and we expect that we will require the area from 8:00 to 5:00 to include setup, teardown, and cleanup There will be vendors, food and dog related demonstrations. This event is to create a fun community event that also gives the Rotary an opportunity to gain exposure with a wider range of Newton residents, and to familiarize them with the work Rotary does to benefit Newton, its schools, and its service organizations. Because dog ownership cuts across demographics we feel this event is an ideal way to reach out to a wide range of Newton residents. While there will be opportunities for attendees to make donations to Rotary, the event is not intended as a fundraiser.

Mr. Stern made the motion to move the proposal to a public hearing. Mr. Cecchinelli seconded the motion. The motion passed 8-0

7. Committee Reports

- Community Preservation Committee
 - Mr. Dunker commented there is money available for parks projects, such as athletic fields/turf. The project would have to be approved by the Commission and then presented to the CPC.
- Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee
 - Mr. Cecchinelli commented the public hearing went well. The draft is due by March 12.
- Farm Commission
 - Pursuing the City Council for property expenses.
- Commonwealth Golf Course- No report
- Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG)
 - President Albright is establishing a committee to review and revise the off-leash ordinance.
- Crystal Lake Working Group (CLWG)
 - Reviewing the contract with Weston & Sampson for Levingston Cove. Once a 60% completion they will come back to the Commission.
- Athletic Fields Committee
 - Mr. Figler requested a Commission member attend the field policy working group meeting to assist with usage and allocation of fields. Ms. Connolly volunteered to attend.
 - Field naming policy has been place on hold, it is difficult to determine a policy. The City Council would need to be included in the process. Commissioner Banks

stated Westwood could not come up with a policy they had to go through the town. And suggested, for items such as plaques, benches etc. a policy should be determined for the life of item.

8. New Business

- Commissioner Banks commented she is looking forward to working with the Commission and being more proactive than reactive.
- Mr. Stern asked for a report on budget, etc.
- Commissioner Banks will review the updated Open Space Plan and add goals for athletic fields and parks.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:25pm

Respectfully submitted

Robin McLaughlin

Commission Secretary