



NEWTON PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Zoom Meeting

7:00 PM – Monday June 15, 2020

Attending: Chairman Magni, Vice-Chairman Richard Tucker, Commissioner Nicole Banks, Al Cecchinelli, Andy Stern, Byron Dunker, Patty Kerwin Derrick, Melissa Sommer, Jack Neville, Michael Clarke, Mark Feldhusen, Sam Figler

1. Meeting Minutes – May 2020

- Accepted 8-0

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

- Athlete's Unlimited is running virtual programs Spring and Summer. The spring program has been very successful
- A Summer Fun program will run at Lower Falls Community Center as an in person option this summer with 60-90-minute classes
- Field permitting – opened today. Sports groups are responsible for reopening plans
- Drive-in movie – free event hosted by Newton Community Pride. July 10 & July 17
- Professional and student artist on each Saturday July 18, 25, August 1 (Sunday rain date) Comm Ave. Auburndale, Chestnut and Comm Ave and Walnut
- Summer Concerts: New location being selected, start phase 3
- Facilities/parks
 - Tennis/Pickleball/Basketball
 - Courts reopened June 8
 - Newton Center Tennis Courts opening July 1
- Playgrounds
 - Playgrounds remain closed due to Covid 19.
- Splash Pad under review for reopening phase 3
- Crystal Lake and Gath Pool Closed due to Covid 19, parking lot open for the park area
 - Signs posted at both locations. No lifeguard on duty. Facility closed. No trespassing signs at lake coves reminder to follow social distancing guidelines and wear a mask when cannot
- Newton al Fresco
 - Picnic tables provided for outdoor eating spaces throughout City, some in parks, Cove tables
- IPM Committee
 - Approved treatment plan: Weeks field, Lincoln Warren field, Albemarle field (June 22/23)



- Waban Hill Reservoir 95% complete and hoping to finalize in the next week or two, pending minor adjustments as needed.
- Newton South HS Lights Lighting equipment will be delivered on June 18th. The contractor has begun submitting materials for approval and the upgrades from Eversource are underway.
- Forte Park improvements the city is finalizing agreement with the developer. Unsure of the timing but we expect to see developer funded improvements to Forte in the coming year. Development construction schedule has not been confirmed.
- Accessibility walkways
 - Work completed (Auburndale, West Newton Common, Weeks Park)
- Office
 - Office reopening plan being established; estimated date July 6
 - Bookkeeper position
 - 2nd round interviews scheduled with 2 candidates
- Cultural Development
 - Office relocating from City Hall to 1294 Centre St; estimated date July 6

3. Kennard Sculpture Trail – Public Hearing

- The sculpture show is an outdoor show will run from September 12 – November 7
- The event information and artist projects may be reviewed at the following website: <http://friendsofkennardpark.org/>
- All state guidelines will be followed

Mr. Tucker made the motion to accept the proposal as presented. Mr. Stern seconded the motion.

Motion passes 8-0

4. Newton Tennis- Clay Courts -Mike Lewitt

- Mr. Lewitt stated due to Covid-19 spring lessons were cancelled, summer lessons are reduced and the plan for Fall lessons is unknown. Lessons supplement the clay court maintenance. 75 memberships are required to cover operating costs at clay courts.
- Mr. Neville asked what the budget is to operate. Mr. Lewitt replied, \$19.5k for maintenance, \$16k for monitors, miscellaneous for remaining balance. City receives 16% of revenue.
- Mr. Lewitt would like to add one new rule:

- 1) *In addition to the rules below, our procedures for addressing Covid-19 are changing and evolving all the time. All members will be required to adhere strictly to whatever*



Covid-19 related requirements are in force at the time of play. Violation will result in suspension of membership without refund.

- Mr. Stern requested signs be posted at the clay courts “no tennis before 9am”. The graffiti on the tennis backboard be removed and the netting on the tennis court fence be removed at the end of the tennis season and if replaced can the color be changed from blue to dark green or black. Mr. Lewitt replied yes, the netting can be removed at the end of the season, but the netting will not be replaced for a few years.

Mr. Tucker made the motion to accept the fees and rules proposal as presented. Mr. Cecchinelli seconded the motion. Motion passed 8-0

5. Albemarle Playground – Bike Racks- Luis Perez Demorizi, Open Space Coordinator, Dave Montage, Parks & Pedals

- Equipment going into the park: Park & Pedal electric bike charging and rental station with the capacity for up to 4 ebikes. The rack has two hoops but can hold 4 bikes.
- The name of the company is: Metro Mobility, LLC at 1035 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA 02141.
- The terms of the agreement: The company has received a grant to develop and deploy a charging station for rentals of the Park & Pedal eBikes as a pilot. This pilot program in Newton is meant to support the existing park and ride parking spaces at the corner of Albemarle Rd and Crafts St. The cost per bike is \$12 per day or \$49/week – unlimited usage. There is no cost to Newton for the installation of the station. The Park & Pedal bike rental program has substantially fewer touches as it only allows for one rider on one bicycle per day. The expected electric consumption for the station is roughly 65KWh per quarter (\$10.00 per quarter). The city will be invoicing metro mobility a minimum of 65KWh per quarter based on whatever price the city is paying per KWh.
- Scope of work for the installation: The subject area is a roughly 6 x 8-foot mulched section next to the well pump electrical box which is adjacent to the Albemarle Field soccer field at the corner of Albemarle Rd and Crafts St. The installation consists of the company installing four (4) 12” x 12” concrete slabs to hold the bike racks in place. There will be very minimal digging during this install and the electrical conduit will be surficial. Metro-Mobility, per recommendation of PRC staff, has the city’s electrical contractor on board and ready for the install (Your Electrical Solution, Inc.). Metro Mobility is responsible for maintaining the bikes and the bike racks. Should there be an issue, Metro-Mobility will remove the charging station.
- COVID 19 protocol and procedure: The bikes will be free to medical workers and first



responders to alleviate their concerns about riding public transportation. They are planning routine cleaning and disinfecting of their station, and will be following the CDC guidelines at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/disinfecting-building-facility.html>

- This will include their workers wearing gloves and the recommended cloth face coverings when handling bikes and disinfecting all bicycle and station touch points during every visit to the station. The Park & Pedal bike rental program has substantially fewer touches as it only allows for one rider on one bicycle per day. This contrasts with other bike share programs which are focused on serving many riders each day with one bicycle. Furthermore, unlike bike share programs, there are no public keypads/kiosks that are used by multiple riders on Park & Pedal stations. All Park & Pedal operations are controlled by the user's private mobile phone
- Mr. Neville asked if this is a permanent fixture. Mr. Demorizi replied no, the units are movable, they are on 12'x12' concrete slabs so they do not shift.

Mr. Stern made the motion to accept the proposal as presented. Ms. Sommer seconded the motion.

Motion passed 8-0

6. Committee Reports

- **Community Preservation Committee – Byron Dunker**
 - Discussion on rail trail connection in Needham, otherwise it has been quiet. There is \$11 million available for parks projects with no requests
- **Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee – Al Cecchinelli**
 - Public comment period extended. No updates, no plan
- **Farm Commission – Patty Kerwin Derrick**
 - Discussion with Councilors regarding maintenance of the building.
 - Farm stand is not open this year, but they are accepting on-line orders
- **Commonwealth Golf Course -Jack Neville**
 - Mass Golf has a program for kids which allows kids to experience golf that may not otherwise have the opportunity. Sterling Management changed participation hours, which pretty much eliminates program. When asked why, the management company said they would come back with an answer. Newton Commonwealth should put the residents needs first but it is not run that way. Ms. Kerwin Derrick asked if there is any recourse for not following the rules?
- **Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG) – Commissioner Banks**
 - Commissioner has been touring the off-leash areas
 - The City has one Animal Control Officer and she has requested a change to rules that rabies information be required by person with dog.



- A smaller group is meeting to discuss fees for tickets and an ordinance change that would allow the Off-leash Recreation Specialist the ability to issue tickets
- **Crystal Lake Working Group (CLWG) – Commissioner Banks**
 - Working Group has not met.
 - Department is working with Weston & Sampson to re-engage contract
- **Athletic Fields Committee – Commissioner Banks**
 - After several discussion regarding permitting and the issues involved Chairman Magni and members present agreed The Commissioner, Mr. Dunker, Ms. Connolly, and Mr. Figler would provide framework for committee and looping in stake holders as required.
 - Commissioner Banks commented there already has been discussion with Mr. Dunker and Mr. Figler about creating in CPA funds list with the goal of creating more rectangular fields.
 - Commissioner Banks stated a meeting will be scheduled late summer or early fall after the Covid-19 re-opening plans are in place

7. New Business

- **No new Business**

Meeting adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin McLaughlin