

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

Meeting Minutes

On-Line Meeting

7:00 p.m. – Monday, April 26, 2021



Attending: Chairman Magni, Vice-Chair Dunker, Commissioner Banks, Deputy Commissioner Welch, Randy Johnson, Beth Wilkinson, Melissa Sommer, Ellen Gibson, Jack Neville, Mark Feldhusen

Also Attending: Derek Mannion, Superintendent of Maintenance, Luis Perez Demorizi, Open Space Coordinator, Carol Stapleton, Recreation Manager

Meeting began 7:01pm

1. Meeting Minutes -March- Accepted 8-0

2. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) Update

- Derek Mannion, Superintendent of Maintenance presented the IPM update. Full presentation attached (Attachment A).
- Mr. Dunker asked about funding for IPM. Mr. Mannion replied there is \$75K in the budget for aeration and seeding. With additional money there is more flexibility.
- Ms. Wilkinson asked what the damage is caused by white clover. Mr. Mannion stated it is competition for resources; water, nutrients and the clover attracts bees. Ms. Wilkinson asked the downside to play on a field of white clover. Mr. Mannion replied the white clover creates a slip factor on a playfield.
- Mr. Neville commented the regulation is the field is closed for 72 hours once the pesticide is applied. Mr. Mannion stated usually the field is closed 24 hours; it all depends on the pesticide used. Currently used was *Bacillus thuringiensis galleriae* (BTG).
- Mr. Feldhusen asked what *Bacillus thuringiensis galleriae* is. Mr. Mannion replied it is a bacterium.
- Ms. Wilkinson asked if BTG is used on mosquitos. Mr. Mannion did not know.
- Ms. Wilkinson asked if the pesticides are kept out of the watershed and applied in a way protect pollinators. Mr. Mannion replied yes, applications take place in early morning, areas are mowed before the pesticide is applied and rain factors into application. If there is wind over 15 mph the application is cancelled.

3. Hunnewell Off-Leash Area Expansion – Informational- (see attachment B)

- Mr. Demorizi reported many off-leash dogs are in the park that do not use the fenced off-leash area. The Off-Leash Working group (OLAWG) has met with neighbors and users of Hunnewell Park and the off-leash area. A plan was discussed and voted on to extend the off-leash area by installing a fence across the field to the woods line. There would be a pedestrian gate, transition gate and a vehicle gate for maintenance. The other half of the park, where the tot lot is would be for passive recreation.
- Chairman Magni asked if the fence is temporary. Mr. Demorizi replied yes, the fence would be phase 1. Phase 2 would be to enclose the area from the new

fence location to the New Balance parking area. Commissioner Banks commented the existing fenced area will remain as is.

- Chairman Magni asked by expanding will this encourage compliance. Mr. Demorizi replied yes. Chairman Magni asked if there is non-Newton usage. Ms. Stapleton replied yes. Non- residents can purchase medallions.
- Mr. Feldhusen asked if access to the tot lot is through the neighborhood. Commissioner Banks replied there are gate entrances through the off-leash area also.
- Mr. Johnson commented the area where the baseball field is located is a dustbowl and asked if grass will be planted. Mr. Demorizi replied the area is going to be left as is for now.
- Chairman Magni asked what will happen if people use the passive area for their off-leash dogs. Commissioner Banks replied signs will be updated, educate the users, and ask for Police support. Vice-Chair Dunker commented this is an issue all over the city people do not follow the rules. Chairman Magni commented maybe the new Police Chief will allow ticketing authorization for the Off-Leash Specialist.
- Commissioner Banks commented 7 off-leash areas is a lot for one person to cover. A letter has been written to the council to allow fines.
- Ms. Gibson stated she is a fan of self-regulation maybe that work with the dog walking companies
- Mr. Johnson asked who handles the medallions. Commissioner Banks replied the City Clerk office processes the medallions with the dog licenses. Recently, the Off-Leash Specialist has been provided a tablet with access to medallion sales.

Ms. Gavis made the motion to move the proposal to a public hearing. Ms. Gibson seconded the motion. Motion passed 8-0

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

- The Crystal Lake Informational Webinar went well. Great questions came from the presentation. Mr. Johnson commented Mr. Demorizi did a phenomenal job with the presentation. Ms. Wilkinson agreed.
- The pool and lake will be opening this summer.
 - There will be a slight fee increase due to the minimum wage increase over the last three years and the next two years.
 - No swim team meets. Swim team time has been changed around to allow for social distancing protocols
- Programming/camps are moving forward
- Playground accessibility matting is being installed at Bowen School and Memorial Spaulding School.
- The Northland Project discussions continue regarding the Splash Pad. P, R & C will manage the splash pad.
- Outdoor events are up in the air right now until the new state guidelines are released.

5. Committee Reports

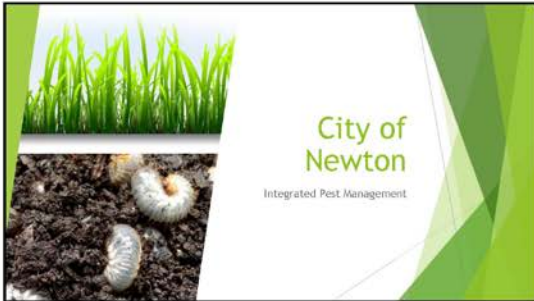
- Athletic Fields Committee – B. Dunker
 - There has been no meeting. This is a diverse group and it is difficult to come to an agreement on a way to increase fees
 - Mr. Johnson commented you cannot make everyone happy the group will have to decide eventually.
- Community Preservation Committee -B. Dunker
 - Mr. Demorizi did a great job presenting the final report on the Waban Hill Reservoir Project
 - Gath Pool project funding request was approved
- Urban Tree Commission – B. Wilkinson
 - Tree planting scheduled next week the city funded the low canopy areas. Newton has the largest number of road miles, and should have 36K-38K trees, currently there are around 24K trees. The trees need to be taken care of, there is no money for pruning and 311 requests are up 99%.
- Farm Commission – B. Wilkinson
 - There was no meeting this month. The CPC application will be submitted next month
- Commonwealth Golf Course – J. Neville
 - There was a tour of the golf course. Mr. Osgood, Golf Course Manager reviewed the history of the golf course and took us on the tour
 - Winter golf brought in \$41K this year.
 - Tomorrow there is a meeting the architect will be presenting on the building.
- Commission Manual Update – M. Feldhusen
 - Currently doing pre-work and pulling together parameters. Commissioner Banks stated the staff will assist and to contact Robin for assistance.
 - Ms. Gavis offered her assistance also.
- Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG) – Commissioner
 - Report above, agenda item #3
- Arts & Culture – G. Gavis
 - AI fresco is up and running
 - Newton Serves is scheduled May 2, there are 30 sites and 500 volunteers
 - Ms. Gibson commented AI Fresco and all the art in the villages is wonderful.

6. New Business

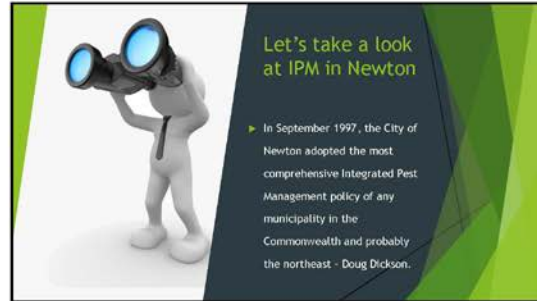
- No new business

Meeting Adjourned at 8:25pm

Respectfully submitted by
Robin Mclaughlin
Commission Secretary



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What Is A Pest?

- ▶ A pest is defined as an organism that damages or interferes with a crop. This can be a plant, a vertebrate, an insect or a disease
- ▶ IPM aims to suppress pest populations below the economic injury level

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What Are the Benefits of IPM

- ▶ Easy to implement
 - ▶ Improved safety and playability
 - ▶ Increase in beneficial insects
 - ▶ Decrease in pesticide resistance
- ▶ Healthier ecosystem
 - ▶ Decrease in pesticide use
 - ▶ Lower pest populations
- ▶ Public benefits
 - ▶ Cost effective
 - ▶ Good public image

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IPM tools - the outcome is to improve our turf

- ▶ Cultural
 - ▶ Aeration
 - ▶ Slice seeding/topdressing
 - ▶ Fertilizer/Lime
 - ▶ Topdressing
- ▶ Mechanical
 - ▶ Mowing
 - ▶ Deblatching
- ▶ Biological/Chemical
 - ▶ Flg
 - ▶ Pesticides

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Attachment A

5/5/2021



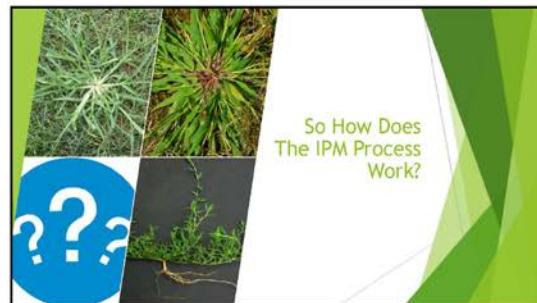
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Attachment A

5/5/2021



During the IPM process we will

- ▶ Monitor and document pests at locations during the growing season.
- ▶ Locations are monitored twice a month
- ▶ Randomly photograph athletic fields and count individual pests
- ▶ Document observations using our ipm monitoring sheets

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The IPM Process Continues...

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