

March 18, 2019

Park and Recreation Commission Meeting/Public Hearing

Commissioners: Bobby Beagan, Mara Huston, Jim Marotta, Dick Williamson, Mike Ensley
Kayla Wright, Park and Recreation/Atkinson Pool Dir.

Guests: Melissa Rodrigues, Town Manager, Dan Nason, DPW Dir.,

Attendees: Mary Ellen Clark, Bob Lee, Scott Ritter, Christianne Murray, Jenny Eaddy, Cindy Simon, Christina Carosella, Chris Crisafi, Judy Hall, Pat Brown

Presentation on potential changes to user fees – Melissa Rodrigues, Town Manager, presented the current Pool and Field Enterprise Funds and the plan for FY20. Melissa started by answering the question: What is an enterprise fund budget? She stated these funds allow accounting and financial reporting for municipal services for which a fee is charged in exchange for goods or services. These budgets should be self-sufficient and not carry deficits, because deficits have to be covered by the tax levy. Melissa stated the Pool Enterprise Fund is in better shape than last year due to the 6% increase voted for FY19, but the pool is still not bringing in enough revenue to cover the expenses. After reviewing historical information regarding pool revenues, the Town is recommending a 10% increase to pool rates effective July 1, 2019. The current projection shows there will not be a fund balance at the end of this fiscal year. If the increase is not approved, Melissa said the Town would need to look at reducing hours at the pool in order to balance the budget. Costs for pool programs are also recommended to have a 10% increase. Melissa discussed inequity in the pool rates and the need to take a closer look at the membership rates to be sure they are priced accurately for the different categories. Melissa stated she would like to see a 3% increase every year to keep up with the cost of living.

Melissa said the Field Enterprise Fund budget is in good shape at this time due to the 7% increase last year. The Field Enterprise Fund budget is increasing due to a salary contract settlement with the union for full time Parks and Grounds employees. Operating expenses have a slight increase in Utilities and Park Maintenance. Melissa stated the capital expense funds of \$10,500 in the budget for the last 10 years, for a mower, which is now paid off, would be transferred to the Field Turf Stabilization Fund. The other half of those funds, which were in the Highway department budget, will be transferred to the Field Stabilization Fund.

\$40,000 will be set aside from the capital budget for field/park and grounds projects.

Motion made to open up the Public Hearing at 7:00pm to discuss user fee increases. Motion received a second and approved 5-0

Discussion ensued from attendees including questions on sources of revenue, retained earnings, and programs. Questions asked about the Fire Academy using the pool for no fee. Kayla stated the Fire Academy has been using the pool for training purposes for over 15 years

with no fee. They have found a new location and will no longer be using the Atkinson Pool for training.

Chris Crisafi, pool member, stated the men's room is messy and has a showerhead missing. He said the facility is looking worn and needs a good cleaning and maintenance.

Melissa said she would look into these concerns. She also stated that it has been difficult to justify spending money on the current Fairbank facility due to the fact there are proposals in place recommending new facility. The Fairbank facility is unfortunately an old building, the pool is cleaned nightly by an outside service.

The Fairbanks building article has been postponed until the fall Town Meeting. Bobby suggested those interested in a new facility need to do marketing, and work to generate interest in the new facility. Mara H. mentioned the possibility of using the Friends of Park and Recreation. She said the Friends of the Goodnow Library raise funds through trivia nights, book sales etc.

Scott Ritter, Charles Radio Flyers, stated his concern about a rate increase on the field permits. He said they are a small group, mostly retired, and do not have a lot of extra money.

Chris Crisafi asked if there was a marketing program to generate interest in the pool.

Motion made to close the public hearing at 7:45pm Seconded and approved 5-0.

Commission discussed taking a vote on the rate increase. Bobby and Michael stated they did not see a way around the increase. The vote will be taken at the next Commission meeting.

Bobby Beagan made a motion to vote to enter Executive Session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of the of real property if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body (Camp Sewataro) pursuant to General Law chapter 30A, 21(a)(3) and to include Pat Brown and Dan Nason.

Motion received a second from Mara H. and approved 5-0.

Motion to Vote to close Executive Session, seconded and approved 5-0.

Motion to reconvene the Park and Recreation Commission meeting, seconded and approved 5-0.

Discussion and vote to recommend to Board of Selectmen the purchase of Camp Sewataro. Motion made to support the acquisition of Camp Sewataro and recommend to the Board of Selectmen. Motion received a second and vote was 1-4 not to support the motion.

Update on Fairbank Project – Jim M. stated he met with Janie Dretler, Melissa and Rich Tinsley on Monday. Melissa discussed some preliminary drawings for the new facility. Melissa agreed to go back to the architect to come up with something that could work for all parties. Jim is not sure the Senior Center has seen the drawings yet.

Janie D. said she was going to have a discussion with Jack Ryan, but it had to be rescheduled. Bobby asked why Jack R. would be meeting alone with the architect and Melissa without a representative from Park and Recreation. He suggested all parties be involved with meetings on the new facility. Bobby stated it is important to make sure that everyone involved in the new Fairbank facility is on the same page.

Janie said she would keep all parties informed of meetings on the new Fairbank facility.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.

