

Virtual Meeting – 6:00pm

May 4, 2020

Commissioners: Bobby Beagan, Mara Huston, Jim Marotta, Ben Carmel

Dennis Mannone, Dir. Park and Recreation/Pool

Guests: Jack Carty, Eagle Scout, Marianne Weldon, LSRHS senior parent, Janie Dretler, Jen Roberts, Selectboard

**Public Comment:** Marianne Weldon, LSRHS parent, attended to ask the Park and Recreation Commissions permission to hang a banner at Haskell field for graduating seniors. A banner congratulating the seniors is currently located on a building at the intersection of Concord Road and Route 20. Parents are looking for other places to hang banners around town and would like to hang a banner on the fence at Haskell field. Bobby B. stated he liked the idea but cited the town by-law regarding signs in Town. He said he would have to check with the Selectboard and Town Counsel to see what approval was needed in order to hang the graduation banner. Marianne stated that, if approved, they would be interested in hanging additional banners around town at Feeley Field, Cutting Field and other locations around Town.

**Eagle Scout Project-** Jack Carty updated the Park and Recreation Commission on his bat box project. He plans to place them at the different fields in Town. He has already met with Dennis M. and Chris Felt, Parks and Grounds, to determine the best locations for the boxes. Mara asked Jack how high the boxes will be and who will be installing them. Jack responded 10 to 15 feet high and that he had planned on installing them. Mara stated she had experience with Eagle Scout projects and informed Jack that he could not install them himself since they were too high. She suggested reviewing the Eagle Scout restrictions and figuring out another way to install the boxes.

A motion was made and seconded to approve Jack Carty's Eagle Scout project to install bat boxes at Haskell Field with the assistance of the Parks and Grounds staff and following the Boy Scout rules for installation. Motion amended to included approval of the Selectboard.

Mara asked if the Conservation Commission had been contacted, but Bobby stated he didn't think that was necessary.

Motion approved 3-0 Mara- Yes, Bobby- Yes, Ben – Yes.

**Director Update** – Dennis reported the Atkinson Pool has been closed since March 16 and Recreation Programs were also stopped at that time. Programs have been refunded on a pro-rated basis and residents that registered for Spring programs have been refunded. Dennis reported he had to refund over \$50,000 in program fees. He is concerned about running summer camp and the loss of revenue. and is currently waiting to hear what restrictions will be placed on camps. In regard to the Atkinson Pool, Dennis stated he refunded winter swim lessons. There is no way to pause recurring memberships, so current members are being charged \$1.00 a month to keep their memberships active in our system. Memberships have been cancelled if requested.

Bobby asked Dennis if he has received any guidance from the state. Dennis stated he is currently waiting for guidance. He is in contact with the Board of Health. A decision will have to be made soon due to the prep work required for summer camp. He has hired a summer staff on a contingency basis if camp runs. He is also working on back up plans if camp cannot run as it has in the past. Sudbury Adventure may be cancelled due to concerns regarding busses and daily trips to various locations.

Bobby asked about the status of private camps. Dennis replied many camps are waiting to hear about the restrictions, but some have started to offer virtual camps and others have cancelled their summer camps.

Mara stated the New York Governor has recreation/camp openings in his 4<sup>th</sup> phase. Mara asked about the status of the Atkinson pool. Dennis said it is currently closed and the water temperature has been lowered to save money.

Dennis stated his concern about the lack of revenue coming in for the pool and the ability to pay the full-time staff, in addition to the full-time staff salaries that come out of the Revolving Fund if summer camp is cancelled. He stated that a portion of the full-time Recreation salaries are paid out of the Revolving Fund and if no program revenue is coming in then the concern is there may not be money to pay the salaries.

Mara stated the Town has over \$3.3 million in free cash. She asked if Dennis had spoken with the senior management in Town about his concerns.

Janie Dretler, BOS, stated the Selectboard had been informed of the proposed deficits in the Field and Enterprise Funds for FY20. The shortfall for the Pool is proposed to be \$150,000 and the Field Enterprise Fund is \$50,000. The Revolving Fund and camp losses were not discussed.

Jen Roberts, BOS, stated the Town is planning on a 1/12 budget for FY21 until the Town Meeting in the fall. Dennis stated unfortunately that plan doesn't cover the Revolving Funds.

The suggestion was to keep the communication open with the Town Manage and Selectboard.

Mara stated the worst case would be to have to cancel all summer camps and keep the pool closed. She stated that the Town should not lose the recreation and pool staff due to something out of the department's control.

Bobby asked if Dennis had seen many cancellation request for the summer programs. Dennis has not seen too many yet, he said most people are probably waiting to see what the Governor and the CDC decide on running summer camps. He said the Massachusetts Recreation and Park Association is working with the Governor's office to advocate that camps are essential and many use them for childcare coverage in the summer months.

Bobby asked about online classes. Dennis offered the department offered a few on line classes recently and the response was good on a few classes.

Bobby suggested meeting again in a few weeks once more is known about the future of summer camps. He said based on what he has heard he doesn't see summer camps running at full capacity, but perhaps at 50%.

Mara suggested the Commission should draft a letter to the Selectmen regarding the current Recreation concerns and possibly try to get on the next Selectboard agenda. Jen Roberts stated if that is not possible the Commission could speak in Public Comment.

Dennis gave a field update regarding COVID-19. He said no large groups on the field, but residents have been using Haskell and other fields, but have been respectful and social distancing. Cutting is blocked off for usage. He is receiving occasional calls on the tennis courts and some summer field permit calls.

Bobby asked about the plans for the new well at Haskell. Dennis will follow up with Chris Felt to check on the current status.

Bobby stated the Commission will have to come up with plans for reopening the fields once the Governor releases his plans for the phases of reopening.

Jen Roberts asked Dennis if he had been in contact with Debra, Senior Center, and Brad, Superintendent Sudbury Schools, regarding reopening. Dennis spoke with Brad regarding the possibility of using the school gyms over the summer for possible camps. Brad stated the gyms may not be available because they may need to be reconfigured for use by the schools in the fall. Debra stated she is unsure when the Senior Center will reopen.

Minutes from the previous Commission meetings, March 2, March 31, and April 2 were reviewed and approved. 4-0 Ben-yes, Mara-yes, Bobby-yes, Jim-yes.

Bobby stated his action items are: 1) draft a letter to the Selectboard regarding the financial concerns with Park and Recreation and the Atkinson Pool; 2) get on the Selectboard agenda for May 15<sup>th</sup> or possible attend the May 5 meeting and speak in public comment.

Mara suggested inviting the new Town Manager to a Park and Recreation Commission meeting to meet him.

Jim Marotta stated he felt the financial impact of the virus will hit towns and municipalities later. The future capital plans for the Town were questioned. Bobby stated he would like to defer that discussion and put it on future Park and Recreation Commission agenda.

Meeting adjourned 8:00pm

