

Virtual Meeting 6:36pm - March 6, 2023

Meeting Roll Call: Bobby – here, Laurie - here, Jenn – here, Ben– here, Mara – here.

Director, Dennis Mannone, Director Park and Recreation

Public Comment: None

Report from the Chair: Mara stated Town Elections are Monday, March 27th. Emergency order for remote meetings is set to expire on March 31, 2023. Mara is waiting to hear what that means for the April Commission meeting. Mara stated the enhanced AV (which includes ALS) for the new Fairbank Building is being designed so a good estimate is available for Town Meeting Article. All Recreation Articles will be discussed in the April meeting. Furniture for the new building has been ordered. Floors, lockers and colors etc. have been decided and October move in date is still on target. The new front entrance and work on the pool viewing room Recreation pool viewing is planned to start in November 2023. Paving and landscaping of the new Recreation entrance is planned for spring of 2024. The dive well leak will be fixed during the May-July shutdown and funded by ARPA. Funding for the needed grout and tile work will be requested in a Town Meeting Article. If the Article is approved, the work will take about 5 weeks and will be done at a later date. Ben asked if the Commission had any involvement in deciding on AV. Mara stated she is scheduled to attend two meetings on AV. She has spoken with members of the community, particularly swim team parents involved with streaming and recording swim events to make sure she understands the needs. Bobby expressed confusion on Mara being involved in the meetings. Mara said it was because she was part of the Working Group for the Fairbank building and the group has not been dissolved yet. Bobby expressed concerned the Commission wasn't involved in the discussions. Mara said she would bring information back to the Commission from the meetings. She stated that many of the decisions are staff oriented and she and the Working Group are not involved due to decisions made by the last Town Manager. She said that may change with the new Town Manager. She stated she was frustrated she was not more involved and able to give the Commission more information. She stated the new Town Manager asked her to be involved in the AV conversations for the Advanced Listening Systems. Bobby said he still would have expected the Commission to be involved in the discussions. Dennis said there were AV discussions last year that he wasn't invited to attend and he thought the process of involving residents in decisions added to the confusion.

Laure felt that there should be a representative at the meetings and thought it was fine if the information was brought back to the Commission. Bobby said typically when a Commission member is involved it is because the Commission has voted that member to be the representative for the Commission. He felt if decisions are being made by a Commission member, then the rest of the Commission should be aware of that process. Jenn agreed and said its good to be transparent about all the decisions being made in regard to the building. She said this project was something the whole Town voted on and it should not be just a few residents making the decisions.

Mara clarified the decision makers are the Permanent Building Committee who interact with the Owners Project Manager and the Town's Facility Director. She explained the AV meeting she attended was by invitation from the Facility Director. The meeting was to discuss the Advanced Listening System the seniors were interested in having throughout the new facility. She said the additional funding for

this system will be a Town Meeting Article that will be discussed and voted on by the Commission at the next meeting.

Dennis said he was involved in an AV meeting last November and was told at that point the budget would be tight. He was also notified last week of two meetings on AV which confused him because he thought the AV had been decided and was confused when Mara was also in the meetings. Mara clarified the budget for AV has been discussed and is ADA compliant and the Advanced Listening System is what is being discussed in one of the AV meetings. The other meeting is to confirm the AV plan. Dennis reiterated he was never involved or invited to the Advanced Listening Systems meetings.

Jenn expressed concern regarding the process and why everyone would not be invited to meetings. Mara said she has contact with Jen Pincus, Permanent Building Committee, and speaks with her for about an hour before each Commission meeting to get updates on the new Community Center so she can relay the information to the Commission. She said there are topics the Project Team wants her involved in because of her knowledge and she has been involved in this project from the very beginning.

Laurie asked to discuss the outdoor space again. She is concerned about the loss of space for camp and the need for a pavilion of some type. Mara stated the parking lot plans are all set and there is outdoor space for summer camp. She said the overall landscape architecture plan for the project is on the Town website. She added the fence and lights for the one basketball is a CPC Article the will be voted on at the spring Town meeting. Laurie stated she would still like to discuss the outdoor camp space at a future meeting. Mara said there would be many conversations after Town meeting.

Dennis was still confused about the AV and the upcoming meetings. Mara stated she was just providing input in the meetings. Jenn questioned if the input should be coming from all of the Commission members and perhaps they should be talking about it before the meeting and then Mara would be representing the Commission views. Mara made it clear she was not making any decisions, just giving input based her knowledge of the pool/building operation.

Bobby agreed that all Commission members would not be able to attend the meetings, but felt it was important to be in the email loop so they would have the opportunity to comment. Jenn commented there should be a set process so all involved are invited to all meetings. Mara said there is a process and everything is transparent and everything is being done through the Permanent Building Committee. She said there are regular project meetings that she is not involved in.

After continued discussion the Commission decided to table the topic> The Commission requested to be kept up to date on information from meetings on the new Fairbank building.

Mara stated she emailed the Town Manager, Director of Planning, and Town Clerk based on the conversations from last month's meeting. She was invited to the Council on Disability (COD) meeting, but did not attend. She said the COD wanted to talk about the Town articles that are Recreation focused, so she will be attending their April meeting. Mara said she met the new Town Manager at the Library Meet and Greet and filled him in on the recreation articles and topics discussed at previous Commission meetings. He said his plan is to visit all standing committees, but she is unsure when that will be due to the upcoming preparation for Town meeting.

Director Update: Dennis sent out financial reports. He is concerned about lost revenue for the pool when it is closed in May/June for repairs due to the construction. Memberships will be cancelled again

due the shutdown. He is also concerned about how the shutdown may impact the camp if the work is not complete by the beginning of July. He added there are leaks in the old Fairbank building due to the recent snow and melting. He is concerned about the lack of fresh air in the building since windows can't be opened due to the construction. He will be addressing this concern with the Facilities director.

Bobby asked about summer camp sign ups in relation to last year. Dennis stated that the numbers right now are lighter than last year. He is still hiring summer staff, which may allow him to let in additional campers. He said there will be between 50 and 70 kids per session, in the past there were over 120 per session. He said summer camp will again use the Haskell field playground, which will be closed to the public from 9am to 3pm.

Mara asked how many people come to swim on a day pass. Dennis said about 10 a day. Dennis expressed concern about the possibility of 2 shut downs due to the construction. He is concerned about lost revenue and some vendors who may not return if they find new pools. He said the shut down plan is also concerning in regard to hiring staff for the summer. He is also waiting to advertise again for the Aquatic Supervisor due to the shutdown schedule. Part time staff is covering open shifts at this time.

The Field Enterprise Fund is currently in the negative by \$34,300. This is not surprising since the Park and Grounds salaries hit the fund throughout the year. Spring permits are starting to come in now and Dennis expects to break even by the end of the fiscal year. He expects to discuss the long-term plan for the Field Enterprise Fund with the new Town Manager. Fees will have to increase next year. Mara stated the report didn't seem to show the \$10,500 taken out for the turf stabilization fund. Dennis will follow-up.

Dennis reported a Feeley Field One - Phase One pre-bid meeting was held on March 1st at the DPW building. Deadline for submittal is March 15th. The contract, once awarded, will need to be signed by the Town Manager; the hope is the start date would be sometime in April with a completion date within 90 days. Mara asked if Dennis had received the funds from the Girls' softball yet. He had not, but heard they were raising funds.

Dennis stated he is engaging a landscape architect to work on bid documents for the Haskell Playground renovation. He will have someone with a playground certification inspect the Haskell playground to check on the current status of equipment. At this time, he is not sure of the timing of the project.

Mara will add this project as a bullet item under the director update for future meetings.

PRC Roles and Responsibilities: Ben and Bobby discussed the history of developing the Park and Recreation Charter and where the document stands at this time. They presented the last iteration of the document which included many of the edits and changes suggested in previous meetings. Ben stated the Charter has two sections. The general section which includes roles and responsibilities, and a financial section. He said the financial aspect would not be included in the discussion tonight, so the focus would be on the duties and responsibilities. He said with the new Town Manager, they would revisit the financials and need to have more discussion at a later date.

Ben presented the Park and Recreation Charter which showed the various comments made at earlier meetings. The Commissions discussed, made edits, additions, clarifications and changes to the various areas of the Charter, including the duties and responsibilities of the Commission, and the roles of the

Commission Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, and Commission members. Ben said the goal of the Charter is for the Commission to work in concert with the Department.

Ben will incorporate all the additional edits and changes from tonight's meeting and then send a revised document out to the Commission for review again and then plan for a vote at the next meeting. Mara asked Ben to send the revised document out within 24 hours if possible so responses can come in as soon as possible. She reminded the Commissioners to not reply all, but send comments individually to Ben. Mara stated it should hopefully only take a 5-10-minute discussion at the next meeting once all the revisions had been made to the document before a vote is taken.

Misc.: Mara proposed May 15th for a Commission meeting date due to the Town meeting in early May. She suggested reviewing the Chairperson role during that meeting. Mara suggested the other Commissioners think about the opportunity to become the next Chairperson or if they would want her to continue as Chairperson.

Review Meeting Minutes: Bobby made a motion to approve the February 13th, 2023 minutes. Laurie seconded the motion. Vote: Bobby – yes, Laurie – yes, Jenn – yes, Mara – yes, Ben – abstained since he was not in attendance. Vote passed 4-0-1 in favor.

Next meeting is April 10th, 2023, May meeting is scheduled for the 15th. Summer meeting dates will be discussed in the April meeting. Mara said she is hopeful there will not be a need for a meeting in August.

Motion to adjourn by Bobby. Seconded by Jenn. Vote: Bobby – yes, Jenn – yes, Laurie – yes, Ben – yes, Ben – yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.