

DRAFT

Virtual Meeting 6:36pm – June 12, 2023

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

Director, Dennis Mannone, Director Park and Recreation, Sandra Duran, Facilities Director

Public Comment: None

Chair Comments – First summer concert will be held on Thursday, June 15th. Sandra Duran, Facilities Director, emailed him about a tour of the new Fairbank building, but he is unable to go. She also requested to speak to the Commission on installing a grass mat at Heritage Park. Ben invited Sandra to speak at this time.

Sandra stated the invite for the tour was just for the Chair due to limitations on the number of people allowed in the active construction work site. She will arrange another date for Ben to see the site. Mara was invited due to her role in the design process. Sandra is hopeful she will be able to arrange a visit for the rest of the Commission farther along in the construction phase. October 30th is the current date for the move to the new building. Bobby asked about video of a tour of the building. Sandra thought that would be possible. Ben said he was not able to add the grass mat discussion to the amended agenda. He said the SPS, Sudbury Schools, will be running a science program from July 10th to July 20th and the class will be using Heritage Park. Sandra is requesting approval to install a grass mat to make the grass accessible for those in wheelchairs. This will allow them to travel with the class and not have to take a different path. Sandra has already discussed this with the Park and Recreation Foreman and how the mat and grass would be maintained. Laurie asked if the mat would be rented or purchased by the Town. Sandra said it would be purchased and put used to provide accessibility for individuals in other areas of Town too. The Commission was in favor of the mat and suggested it might be good to keep it in place for the July 4th.

Director Update – Dennis sent out Pool and Field Enterprise financials. He will be doing maintenance on the fields before the end of the Fiscal year. The pool has been closed since the middle of May, so expenses have been less for the last month. Camp will start on July 5th and run through the middle of August. The Haskell playground will be used again, due to construction. Ben suggested posting an announcement on the Town page stating the playground will be closed during camp hours. Mara asked if the \$10,500 for the Stabilization fund will be transferred at some time. Dennis said he has spoken with the Finance Director and he was not sure if they would be able to double up on the transfer this fiscal year. Dennis mentioned the field fees may need to increase in the next year. He said half the Park and Grounds salaries and benefits drains the Field Enterprise Fund quickly. Mara mentioned this is something the Commission needs to address in the overall financial conversations. Dennis pointed out the Field Enterprise Fund does not have funds to cover Heritage or Grinnell Park. The Town budget would cover those expenses. Ben suggested discussing Park and Recreation financials at a future meeting to understand what is covered by permit fees and what is covered by Town funds.

Mara asked Dennis for information about the Pickleball tournament. He reported overall it went well, but had to be moved from Saturday to Sunday due weather. He said it was something the staff would consider offering again to the public.

Bobby mentioned in the past a soccer goal was left out on Haskell for play and wondered if that was a possibility this summer. Dennis said he would discuss with the Parks and Grounds staff. He said his experience is that it becomes more of a problem to leave one set of goals out. He did say that Cutting Field always has soccer and lacrosse goals available for practice.

Open Space and Recreation Plan discussion with Town Manager – Andrew Sheehan, Town Manager, was invited to discuss the status of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. Ben noted the staff shortage in the Planning Department and said the Commission wanted to discuss the options available to start working on the plan and what the timeframe is to get staff hired. Andy agreed the staffing issues make it difficult to follow the normal course of action. He said the environmental planner position has been open for over a year and the Director for just about a month. He said they are focusing on the Director position first at this time. He is hopeful to have a Director hired in the July/August timeframe. His suggestion would be to follow the normal planning process and have the Open Space and Recreation Plan managed through the Planning department. Laurie expressed concern over the delay with the plan due to Broadacres and nothing has happened to the land designated for Recreation. She added the Commission needs the Open Space and Recreation Plan to apply for grants. She would like to see the plan be a priority since the last one expired in 2013. Andy agreed there is a need for the plan, but with the short staff and Rail Trail projects the plan has delayed the project. Bobby expressed interest in doing something with the designated Recreation area possibly using in-town resources or other avenues to get to use the land. Andy agreed it was good to solicit information, his concern is that if the plan is not part of an overall comprehensive plan it could impact the overall project. Mara asked what the Commission could do to help move the Open Space and Recreation Plan forward. Andy agreed the Commission could work on the RFP in tandem with the Conservation Commission to identify the scope of the project. He suggested reviewing other towns RFPs to get ideas and examples of other RFPs for Open Space Plans. He also suggested a site walk on Broadacres to discuss future plans for the site. Dennis expressed concern the RFP be done right and said CPC funds or other capital funds may be needed to fund the project. He also suggested the Commission review the past RFT for the Open Space and Recreation Plan. He thought it would be helpful for the new Planning Director to have a working document as a starting point. Mara suggested a subcommittee to review the existing Open Space and Recreation Plan and the Commission did receive a set of RFPs for guidance. Mara agreed that any groundwork done on the RFP would be helpful to the new Director of Planning.

Fairbank Road/Hudson Road Intersection – Ben mentioned the concern over the new Fairbank Road/Hudson road intersection changes to Andy. Ben said there has been a noticeable increase in traffic and the concern is what will occur when the new Community Center is open and Haskell Field has heavy use. Andy said the intersection is a part of the Complete Streets program in Town which began back in 2019. He said the redesign is having the effect desired by making the intersection more accessible and safer for all users, specifically pedestrians. He said he was aware of the initial traffic backup but felt it was getting better and the new intersection would be good for everyone.

Commissioners expressed concern about the traffic and felt it would get worse with the opening of the new Fairbank Community Center and youth sports use at Haskell Field. Mara felt the traffic got a bit better only because drivers are using other routes due to the backup. She also expressed concern that the pedestrian cross walk is not as safe as it was before. Mara suggested sending a letter to whomever is appropriate expressing the concern about the intersection. Mara made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission write a letter to the DPW Director, Town Manager and Select Board expressing

concerns about the revisions to the intersection at Hudson and Fairbank Road. Motion received a second from Laurie. Bobby questioned if there was a vote on the agenda and said whatever is written he would want it reviewed by the Commission before it was sent. Mara amended the motion include bringing the drafted letter to the July meeting for review. Laurie seconded the amendment. Vote on amendment; Bobby -yes, Mara – yes, Laurie – yes, Ben -yes. Vote passed 4-0 in favor. Vote on original motion; Bobby – no, Mara – yes, Laurie – yes, Ben – yes. Vote 3-0 passed. The email will be written and discussed with the Commission at the next meeting before it is sent out. Mara offered to write the draft and Laure offered to review it.

Continuation of Director Report – Laure asked how the summer camp and Sudbury Adventure program registration. Dennis reported that camp has been a bit difficult this year due to the construction and losing registrations due to the SMILE program and other summer programs the Sudbury Schools offers during the summer. Counselors have been hired but it will be a different summer again due to the construction and loss of the pool for at least a portion of the first session. He said there is still a lot of work to do, so he is hopefully they will be on schedule. Mara asked about the status of the Park and Recreation bus. Dennis said the order was cancelled because the manufacturer was not making any more of the buses. He has started to research vans again. He said he may have to go before the Select Board again once he sees what is available. Bobby asked about Sudbury Adventure and Dennis thoughts on why registration is low. Dennis said it is hard to tell with that age group. He added this is only the second year since Covid that the program is running. In addition, the it is just a 4-day program now, instead of 5 days in the past. Mara left meeting for Rail Trail discussion.

Commission Updates – Rail Trail – Laurie said there hasn't been a BFRT task force meeting since the last Commission meeting. She said that a lot of work is being done on the trails with the surface prep starting soon. The consultant is monitoring the construction company on a weekly basis. She has been trying to get an understanding on what amenities will be built and what will need to be completed in the future. She said it looks like there will be parking at Broadacres, a concrete pad for use in the future, a hydration station at Broadacres and one at Hudson Road. There will be a connection to the Parkinson's field and connection at Davis field too and kiosks. She is not aware of any bathrooms currently planned. She said these additions will be discussed at future task force meetings. Bobby asked if people have been using the trail as it is being built. Laure said there are signs not to use it, but hasn't heard that it is a problem.

Mara rejoined the meeting. Laurie gave an update on the trail south of the diamond. She said the TIP (the process to get funding) has been submitted to extend the BRFT down to Framingham, which once accepted will move it to the 25% design phase. She said the parking for the MCRT is a concern. Laurie mentioned signage on the trails and suggested that item as something to discuss at a future meeting. It was suggested to have someone from the task force attend a Park and Recreation Commission meeting.

Fairbank Community Center Update – Mara stated the pool work is in progress, but did not have a lot of details. She said an exterior window that is now an interior window will be replaced. Painting is in progress in some sections of the building. She said once the windows are certified as weather proof, interior work will begin in the recreation area. She said more will be known after the tour on Wednesday.

Bobby asked if the project was on schedule. Mara stated it was pretty much on schedule at this time. She said the plan is to move to the new building in early November. The Recreation side won't be

finished until the spring/summer of 2024. Laurie asked if the basketball courts are on schedule as well. Mara stated once the parking lot is paved on the Recreation side the basketball court will be built.

Laurie Eliason: Mark, can I ask you about the courts. Have you heard anything about that, or are they on schedule as well, or as close to schedule as possible? I assume we with the funding we have now, with everything's moving ahead right? So all the funding was approved of town meeting. Jen didn't tell me anything specifically about that. But basically, the plan is, once the old building is destroyed. Laurie asked if the

Fall Fest – A final report was sent on Fall Fest 2022. Mara is working on a grant for funding for the 2023 Fall Fest, planned for September 23rd from 12 to 5 pm. Mara suggested the Commission discuss at the July meeting the policies on who can have tables at the event and what the fees will be charged. The grant application has to be reviewed and approved by the Town Manager. Mara will send an email to let him know the grant application will be sent to him shortly.

Haskell Storage Plans – Bobby asked for this item to be on the agenda to discuss the area around the soccer net storage area. He said with the Hudson sidewalk changes the overgrowth of weeds has been removed. He was interested in what was going to occur in the cleaned-out area and send emails to DPW and Dennis. He thought there was chance to do some landscaping in that area. He suggested the Commissioners take a look at the location. Dennis said the area will be used during Sudbury summer camp. The nets will be locked up and put on the outside of the fence. The long-term plan is to possibly fix the fence, regrade the area, and use it for some other purpose such as basket ball court, pickleball court or more parking. Ben asked Dennis what he would want in that area if money wasn't an issue. Dennis a second basketball court/pickleball court would be good if it isn't going to be built at Fairbank. Or perhaps just a few pickleball courts with nets, which would be nice close to the Senior Center. The corner exercise equipment was discussed and the wish for new bathrooms at Haskell along with a pavilion. Dennis added a splash would be great too. Mara stated this was a good conversation to start thinking about the upcoming budget/capital expense cycle.

Discussion of Priorities for Upcoming Year – Ben presented a document on priorities the Commission had discussed in past meetings. In the past he said there was a request to delineate the areas the Commission had control over from areas where there is an interest. He used the Rail Trail as an example; the Commission has a vested interest, but not control over it. It was suggested to assign a Commission to each priority to monitor the progress and give updates to the Commission. It was decided to wait until Jenn was present to confirm the priority assignments, but the Commissioners discussed them and tentatively assigned some priorities, especially where a Commissioner was already involved. Commissioners continued discussion various projects on the priority list. Ben said he would clean up the list of priorities by the next meeting to drive a more targeted discussion on the priorities.

Dennis thought it was a good idea to have action items for the fiscal or calendar year and then keep them on the agenda for updates throughout the year.

Review and Approve Meeting Minutes - Laurie made a motion to approve the minutes from May 15. Seconded. Vote – Bobby – yes, Laurie – yes, Mara – yes, Ben -yes. Vote passed in favor – 4-0.

Ben discussed future meetings set for August 7th and September 11th.

Bobby made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Mara. Vote – Bobby – yes, Mara – yes, Laurie – yes, Ben – yes. Vote passed 4-0.