

Virtual Meeting 6:31 pm

October 2, 2023

Commissioners: Mara Huston, Laurie Eliason, Jenn Stone, Bobby Beagan (joined the meeting at 7:10pm), Ben Carmel, Chair

Guests: Zach Kaufman, Boys Lacrosse

Roll Call – Jenn – here, Mara – here, Laurie – here, Ben – here

Public Comment: Karyn Jones, 27 Pendleton Road, informed the Commission of an accessible trick or treat activity to be held on the 31st of October from 5 to 7 pm in the neighborhood of Meadow Brook Circle and Meadow Brook Road. Tables will be set up and treats will be available including allergy free treats and toys at every station. She said businesses in Town have donated goods for the event and that overflow parking would be available at the middle school.

Director Update: Dennis stated work at Feeley Field has been going very slow due to weather, delays in supplies, and contractor staffing issues. He said once upper is done work will start on Lower Feeley with drainage and new dugouts. Phase one was originally supposed to be completed by the end of October. If that date is missed, completion will move to next spring and will lead to discussions on why the completion date was missed. Laurie asked about the status of Phase 2. Dennis said the bid has not gone out yet. The current architect has chosen not to continue with Phase 2, so it will have to go out to bid again.

Ben asked if Feeley 1 is not available for use due to construction, what fields are girls' softball using. Dennis stated this is not a busy time for girls' softball, but he is in contact with Jeff Dade, Girls Softball, to address any issues that come up. He said he will be checking the status with the contractor this week.

Dennis gave an update on the Haskell/Smile playground renovation; Warner Larson is the contracted vendor for this project. They are working to get the final design completed and specs out to bid hopefully sometime over the winter with construction beginning in the spring. He said weather and plans for the summer camp possibly using the Haskell playground again could impact the construction plans. He recently added new wood fiber to the playground.

Dennis sent out latest department budget numbers, which showed the Pool revenue down by \$40,000. The Field Enterprise fund is okay for now, but he said it will look worse over the winter when salary expense is higher and revenue is down. He alerted the Commission that the field permit fees will probably need to increase again. He said the Pool revenue issues will continue with additional shut downs due to pool repairs and the move to the new building and added that staffing is still an issue.

Ben asked Dennis about the dive well leak. Dennis stated the pool experts feel the leak is in the skimmers and have proposed a 7-day shutdown at some point for the repair. It may be completed when the pool is shut down for the move to the new building. If that doesn't work, the leak repair may need to wait until after swim season. Ben asked if the pool experts were confident the leak would be fixed. Dennis said he is hopeful that the pool experts got it right this time because the whole process has been frustrating and resulted in a lot of down time for the pool and lost revenue.

Jenn asked if there was a cost identified for the lost water and extra supplies to replenish the dive well water and asked if anyone knew where the water is going. Dennis stated the lost water is roughly 500

gallons every 24 hours. Additional chemicals are needed to balance the new water added. He did say the leak seems to be a bit slower, so that is a good sign. He is concerned that it may take longer than 7 days to replace the skimmer pots and retile the areas impacted.

Commissioners mentioned concerns regarding swim teams and closing the pool for the move to the new building. Dennis said the exact dates have been changing, but an email will be sent out with dates and information regarding the move to the new facility. Dennis expressed concern about the lost revenue again for Recreation and the Atkinson pool and the need to once again cancel pool memberships.

Update on Rail Trail: Laurie stated the Rail Trail Advisory Committee has been meeting frequently to ensure that everything is in order as the trails are being developed and finalized. They are discussing amenities on both trails and the development of the trail south of the diamond and south of Route 20 which is Phase 3 of the project. She said Fuss and O'Neal are the consultants working on Phase 3 and the proposal for the full design work. 25% of the design work needs to be completed by June of next year. Ben asked if discussion had taken place on the ongoing maintenance of the rail trails and a bathroom at the Broadacres site. Laure said a concrete slab will be poured for a potential pavilion at some point. A water hook-up and bathroom has also been discussed, but no definitive plans yet. She said they have also been discussing pet waste disposals along the trails and how trash will be handled.

Haskell Pathway Update: Bobby stated he walked Haskell Field with Sandra Duran, the Combined Facilities Director. They discussed the current pathway and possible changes to get greater accessibility to the fields, the possibility of a pathway down the middle of Haskell field and bringing the pathway inside of the fence. He will also meet with Dennis and the Parks and Grounds foreman on this project. He would like to start off by connecting the pathway on the right side of Haskell down to the back pathway. Sandra felt the project would have to be done by a third-party vendor, but Bobby expressed hope it could be done in house. Mara suggested speaking with the DPW Director. Bobby said he would meet with Dennis and the Parks and Grounds Foreman first to get their perspective and more information. Dennis stated he is not in favor of a pathway down the center of Haskell field. It would divide the field in half, impact irrigation and mowing. He would like to see the baseball field moved off Haskell to Broadacres and leave Haskell as a lacrosse and soccer field which would allow more room for a path along Hudson Road inside the fence.

Bobby noted the benches along Haskell field are not handicapped accessible and that may be something that has to be addressed in the future.

Fairbank Community Center Update: Mara reported delays in the schedule since Eversource has not connected permanent power to the new building. This is causing delays since there are multiple issues that cannot be completed until power is established in the new facility. Once power is on, an elevator inspection is required and then a fire safety inspection and once they are completed and passed an occupancy permit can be issued. She mentioned another big issue is getting the elevator inspected, which must be completed by a state agency. Currently, projects not requiring power are being completed, such as installing carpet, painting, installing light fixtures, etc. The move date will change depending inspection approvals.

Wall for Lacrosse/Soccer with Zach Kaufman: Ben stated Youth Lacrosse requested to construct a cement wall for lacrosse/soccer practice at Haskell field. Zach Kaufman, 17 Butler Place, presented information on the practice wall, similar to the one at LSRHS. He said lacrosse players can practice by throwing a ball against a wall if they don't have a partner. He said the wall at the high school is heavily

used, and they would like to build one for players in middle school and younger. The wall he is suggesting at Haskell is a bit smaller than the one at the high school. It is a concrete wall that is 20 feet long, 10 feet high and has two sides. Youth Lacrosse would fund the construction and maintenance cost of the wall. Zach said they envision the wall being located along the Hudson road near the fenced in storage area. Laurie expressed concern over safety especially if the walking track is brought inside the fence in the future. Dennis said he wasn't sure if there was enough room in that area for a two-sided wall. He said the Town would have to check on the insurance and make sure it would be covered. He also thought the Select Board would want to comment on the project since it will be a permanent structure on Town property. He expressed concern about vandalism such as graffiti along with the possibility of moss growing on it which would be part of the maintenance costs. He also thought the grass in front of the wall would erode and become non-existent. Zach stated there is thought to install green artificial turf in front of the wall.

Jenn asked if there was a different area the wall could be located. Commission discussed some additional locations and addressed concern for balls hitting cars and overall safety.

Dennis said next steps would be to meet with Zach on site, stake out the area and see how it will fit in to the proposed location. Take some photos and then review with the Commission again, in addition to gathering data on insurance and answers to other questions brought up in discussion tonight. Jenn asked about the timeframe for this project. Zach said they could do it any time as long as the ground was not frozen. Zach will meet with Dennis on the site and arrange another time to follow up with the Commission with their findings. If the project is approved it will need to be gifted to the Town.

Fall Fest Update: Mara stated the good news was the Sudbury Foundation approved the grant for the Fall Fest and over 40 groups requested booth space. The bad news was the event was rained out, so it has been postponed to the spring of 2024.

Fall Town Meeting Articles: Ben stated the Commission usually takes a position on all articles that impact Recreation and this fall Article 6 and 7 involve Recreation. Article 6 is on the Pool and Article 7 is on the new Fairbank Community Center. Article 6 is seeking \$100,000 for the design costs associated with replacing the pool roof, structural repairs, a new rooftop dehumidification unit, creation of a chemical room separate from the boiler room and full grouting and significant repair to the deck tiles. Laurie stated her understanding that if the design funds are approved the goal is to bring the full pool repair costs in an Article at the spring Town meeting.

Mara made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support Article 6 at the fall 2023 Town meeting. Laurie seconded the motion. Jenn asked if the proposed repairs were value engineered out of the funds appropriated for the new Community Center. Mara stated there was not a lot of focus on the pool in the design of the new facility. Bobby asked about the dive well repair and if that was part of this funding request. Mara stated the dive well repair is part of the current Fairbank project. Dennis expressed concern that while this work is needed, if approved it will mean additional shut down time for the pool and lost revenue. Vote: Jenn – yes, Laurie – yes, Bobby -yes, Mara – yes, Ben – yes. Vote passed in favor – 5-0.

Article 7 is seeking \$900,000 to supplement the appropriation made under Article 18 of the 2020 Town Meeting for reconstruction of the Fairbank Community Center. The current contingency fund is not expected to be sufficient to complete the project with the extended schedule. Jenn asked if it could be more than the \$900,000 based on the way she read the wording of the article. Mara offered to email the PBC the questions from the Park and Recreation Commission on the Article.

Mara made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support Article 7 at the fall Town meeting. Laurie seconded the motion. Vote: Mara – yes, Laurie – yes, Jenn – abstained, Bobby – yes, Ben – yes. Vote passed in favor 4-0 with one abstention.

Actioning Park and Recreation Commission Priorities: Ben stated a new Planning Director has been hired by the Town. He is scheduled to start in mid-October. Ben will reach out and invite him to the November or December meeting. Bobby suggested the Commission take steps to get ownership of the Broadacre parcel if it was just deemed for Recreation use. Mara agreed and stated the Open Space and Recreation Plan should look at the various parcels and make sure ownership is marked correctly in the Town books. Mara stated she had done research on parcels owned by the Recreation Commission and offered to send them out to the Commission. Ben stated he has started work on gathering data on Town funding and how to compare Recreation funding in Sudbury to other Towns. He hopes to have data to present in the December meeting. Mara mentioned the need for funds to run Community events and to get them into the budgeting process, so Recreation doesn't have to rely on grants and donations. Laurie discussed the priority for after school care and the group of parents who are working on a survey to send out to residents. The parents presented the idea of the survey and what other Towns are doing in a previous Commission meeting. Dennis said he did not have any update from his last discussion with the parents. Laurie offered to follow up and report on the status of the survey at the next meeting.

Review and Approve Meeting Minutes: Mara mentioned the upcoming Town Forum. Laurie mentioned attendance could be in person or virtual. Bobby and Laurie thought their schedules might allow them to attend.

Approval of the September 11th Park and Recreation Commission minutes moved to the next meeting.

Future meetings scheduled for November 6th and December 4th.

Bobby made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Jenn. Vote: Bobby – yes, Jenn – yes, Laurie – yes, Mara – yes, Ben – yes. Vote: 5-0 in favor.