

Virtual Meeting 6:33 pm

March 4, 2024

Commissioners: Mara Huston, Laurie Eliason, Bobby Beagan, Granger Atkeson, Ben Carmel-Chair
Dennis Mannone - Dir Park and Recreation

Roll Call –Mara – here, Bobby – here, Laurie – here, Granger – here, Ben – here

Public Comment: Abby Kaufman, 17 Butler Place, commented on the plan to extend the current walkway on Haskell Field which would be behind her house. She informed the Commission of a 1971 walkway easement which made Butler Place the extension of the walkway. In 2007 Town officials again looked at extending the walkway on Haskell field. That plan was ultimately pulled from the Town warrant. She encouraged the Commission to honor the existing walkway easement agreement. She asked for clarity on what approvals are need for this proposed walkway extension to proceed and if abutters will be notified.

Chair Update: Ben stated his discussion items will be discussed during tonight's meeting.

Director Update: Dennis stated the Recreation side of the new building is still in the middle of the construction of the new facility. Primary vote will be held in the new gym, March 5th, so programs were cancelled for March 4th, 5th, and 6th, but the pool will be open. Pool is still short staffed on supervisors, but more lifeguard applications have been received. Pool may be closed earlier depending on rentals and staffing. Summer camp registration went well, still have some openings. Recreation side of the new facility is slated to be complete in late May early June and then he will determine what outside space summer camp will use. Spring and additional summer programs are being planned. Springfest will be held June 22.

Spring field permits and payments are coming in, but fields are not open yet. Feeley Field is still in Phase 1, once the contractor work is complete, Town will go out to bid to get an architect for Phase 2. The Smile playground has been delayed due to paperwork issues, but plan is to bid it out in late April with a plan for construction in late August/early September. Laurie asked about use of the gym over February vacation week and the Terrific Two program. Programs ran over vacation week, staff is still trying to figure out what programs work well and what can be offered based on ages. The current basketball hoops are not designed to lower, so it limits the age group that can use them. He is in the process of hiring high school students to work as gym monitors for evening programs. Terrific Two program is going well, but is more labor intensive since the gym equipment has to be set up and taken down daily due to programs in the gym. He is running a toddler gym program in the mornings to make use of the equipment.

Laurie asked about the Pool article planned for the spring Town meeting. It was suggested to invite Sandra Duran, Combined Facilities Director, to the April meeting. Ben asked about the utility expenses. Dennis stated he still does not know the true utility expense in the new facility. Laurie asked for the status of the van/bus. Dennis said he will be giving the Select Board an update in March on the request for a gas van to be converted to hybrid at a later date. He is hopeful it will be approved and be ordered for delivery before the summer.

Commission Update:

Rail Trail: Laurie stated there is an Advisory Commission Wednesday night. They will be discussing the results of a Rail Trail maintenance survey. Phase 3 design has gone to Mass DOT and there is a CPC article for Town Meeting that supports the remainder of the design. The Rail Trail Advisory Committee and the Planning Department would like to hold a Community Outreach meeting at the end of April.

CPC: No update.

Fairbank: Mara stated the contractor is working to close up the wall, that includes windows and doors, in the new Recreation side. She said windows will need to stay covered to protect from any damage while the outside work continues. Pool viewing area, even if completed, won't be able to be used until the outside of the Recreation entrance is completed. The drainage has been redesigned and they are in discussions on how implement the design. The barn door has been constructed and will be installed shortly. Mara was informed the summer camp will not be able to use the new grass area this summer on the Recreation side of the building, but thought the grass behind the Senior Center area could be used. Dennis stated he was not aware of this information. Next PBC meeting is March 12 and the drainage issues at the new Fairbank Facility will be on the agenda.

Haskell & Pathway: Bobby has offered three days and times to meet at Haskell for a site walk. He is trying to get all Commissioners, Dennis and Sandra to attend. Bobby met with Tom, Park and Grounds, regarding the location of the lacrosse wall and spoke with Dennis and Zach. Tom was able to stake the location today. Mara suggested framing meeting at Haskell around the proposed pathways at Haskell field along with the lacrosse wall. Laurie mentioned the Town wide ADA plan and the need to make the fields more accessible. The discussion would also include where the lacrosse wall would be located on Haskell field and the future use of the fenced in area that currently stores the soccer/lacrosse nets. Mara questioned if there were other areas around Haskell field where additional handicapped parking could be located. Bobby added the need to get clarification on the agreement surrounding the Butler Place walkway with Town counsel. In addition, the concern was to be aware of suggested changes that could impact the way the soccer/lacrosse fields are currently laid out on Haskell. Bobby mentioned Parks and Grounds concerns when discussing changes at Haskell involving irrigation and any changes to ongoing maintenance. Bobby mentioned the possibility of moving the baseball field to Broadacres in the future and the that he would research the history of when trees were taken down at Haskell and how that may impact the agreement regarding Butler Place

Sudbury Soccer – Ben received an email from Steve O'Keefe, President SYSA, regarding three projects. Steve could not be present, so Marco Verwijs presented a request to add additional netting to the fence behind the goal on the west side of Cutting field abutting the entrance to Cutting field. The need for the fence is balls are often kicked over the goal and fence into the driveway entrance and swampy field area. Young players climb over the fence to retrieve the balls which is unsafe. Sudbury Youth Soccer is requesting to install and pay for netting. The netting would be installed by a professional and then gifted to the Town. Bobby asked about the height. Marco stated the end posts are 24ft, but 4ft will be in the ground, so the new net height including the existing fence will be 20ft. Ben offered the netting will be small enough to stop lacrosse balls. He added poles for the netting would be embedded in the ground/concrete outside the fence, with three additional extensions added to support the net. Installation would take a day and a half. Dennis said he has not seen any of the plans, but stated the Town would need to review the plans since it will be installed on Town property. It was decided that SYSA would bring the request back to the Commission after they met with Dennis and discussed the specifics of installation and maintenance. Ben will add SYSA to the agenda in April.

Bobby stated it would be good for the Commission to have a process for projects that needs to be followed depending on the request, location, dollar amount. Ben agreed and thought that developing that process should be part of the Park and Recreation Priorities. Dennis agreed and said the Commission could set up the process similar to the Capital Improvement process so that forms with

product/request specifications, insurance etc. would all be completed at the time of request/presentation.

Defining and Advancing Commission Priorities –

Lax Wall and Pathways - discussed earlier in the meeting.

After-School – Discussed this topic last meeting and Commission sent an email to the Town Manager. Ben received an email from the Select Board saying email was received, but that they were in the midst of preparing for the upcoming Town meeting. Laurie stated she would like to see a discussion on how use of the Community Center could be optimized along with transporting kids to the center after school to attend programs.

Utilization of PRC resources (including Fairbank) - Commission sent an email to the Town Manager regarding use of the new Fairbank Community Center. Ben received response that it was received but had not been discussed yet because they were in the midst of preparing for Town meeting.

PRC-Finances – Ben stated he has had some discussion with Dennis on Park and Rec Finances.

Ben suggested review of the Commission’s priorities. He shared the Sudbury PRC Core Priorities draft last updated on August, 7, 2023 with Commissioners assigned to specific tasks. Priorities discussed included; Completion of all Rail Trail projects, completion of Fairbank Community Center, completion of Feeley Field improvements, completion of Lyons Pride/Smile Sudbury Playground, Haskell Field improvements, Sudbury Summer Camp, Initiate open Space and Recreation Plan and Field Needs Assessment, Progression of After School Care support, Progression of equitable Town Funding of Park and Recreation staff and programming, Formalize and document PRC Policies, and Future Priorities/Interests. Commissioners discussed the various projects/items on the priority list. The information was updated and Commissioners names were assigned to projects on the list.

Ben suggested the possibility of a separate meeting in May to discuss Park and Recreation Financials. Mara suggested inviting the Planning director to the meeting in May.

Meeting Minutes: Motion to approve the February 6, 2024 minutes as amended. Seconded by Mara. Vote: Laurie – yes, Mara – yes, Granger – yes, Bobby – yes, Ben – yes. Motion passed – 5-0 in favor.

Future meetings - April 1, 2024, May 13, 2024, June 3, 2024

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