

Virtual Meeting 06:31 pm

January 9, 2025

Commissioners: Mara Huston, Bobby Beagan, Granger Atkeson, Laurie Eliason, Ben Carmel, Chair

Guests: Bill Spencer, Zach Kaufman, Sudbury Youth Lacrosse

Park and Recreation: Dennis Mannone – Director

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

Public Comment: None

Director Comments: Dennis reported he has been working with Gale Associates on the Field Needs Assessment survey. The deadline is January 10th and only 2 reports have been received from the youth user groups to date. Bobby stated the responses will have crucial data needed for the study and thought perhaps the holiday may have delayed the response. Mara will reach out to woman's and girls' softball, Granger will reach out to the accessible coaches/teams, Ben will send an email out tonight from the Park and Recreation Commission to see if that will improve the response and if not, calls will be made on Monday. Bobby suggested a field user group meeting in the future. Dennis suggested having Gale representatives present the survey results at the field user group meeting. Dennis is working with the new DPW Director on the SMILE Playground. He said the bid should be going out this week with the hope the project will be done by end of summer. He added they did have to make some modifications to the bid, the shade structure and spinner have been removed from the bid due to available funds. The Park and Grounds staff will start taking down the approved 24 trees around the playground this week and do some additional prep work. Mara suggested adding the tree report (that was completed in the past) to the supporting material for the January 9th meeting.

Summer camp registration took place on January 7th with a good response. Winter recreation programs are running in addition to pickleball memberships and sessions. The pool is currently shut down due to air quality issues and chemical issues with the water. Dennis is working with the Board of Health on the issues. Ben said he will invite Sandra Duran, Combined Facilities Director, to the February meeting to discuss the current pool issues, and the plan for the approved work planned to start in August. Dennis reported no update on the Extended Day/After School Program and nothing new to report on Department budgets for FY26. He said in his meeting with the Town Manager the topic of moving all of Recreation off the Town levy to the Revolving/Enterprise Fund. It may not be done this year, but possibly in the future years. The Commission was not in favor of this idea. Dennis said he discussed with the Town Manager his new plan to staff the Department and is hoping to keep open discussion on the topic in the future. Dennis said the Field Enterprise Fund also has funding issues and is hopeful the Field Needs Assessment will help figure out the proper funding. Mara mentioned the continued need to address the residents requesting to use the new Community Facility. She asked Ben to include this topic in Sandra's discussion at the February meeting. Mara asked for an update on recreation programs at the next meeting.

LAX update with Zachary Kaufman: Zach Kaufman, 17 Butler Place, and Bill Spencer, 206 Concord Road, Youth Lacrosse, asked for an update on the previously discussed lacrosse wall they wanted to donate at Haskell field and see if there was anything they could do to move the installation of a wall forward. They came to the Commission about a year ago. The Commission was in favor of the wall, but Bobby said the pause on moving forward is due to the Haskell pathway plan, the ADA plan, the Field Assessment Plan, in addition to the CPC Request involving Haskell field. Commission discussed the plans for Haskell and

the possibility of a portable lacrosse bounce back that could be stored in the cage with the soccer nets at Haskell. After discussion, the decision was to wait for the pathway design for a discussion on where the lacrosse wall could be located. Bobby offered to keep Bill and Zach informed on any pathway design progress.

Annual Town Report: Ben sent out the 2023 Annual report to the Commissioners. He highlighted core topics he thought should be mentioned in the 2024 Annual report; the Fairbank Community Center, Fields, Park and Recreation programming, the Atkinson Pool, and Finances. Ben asked Dennis to send information on 2024 programs. Dennis added the report is due by the end of January. Commissioners will review the document send feedback to Ben and then Mara will work with Ben to proofread and produce the final document. When the document is complete and approved, Commissioners will stop by the Community Center and sign the document. Dennis will forward the document to the Selectman's office.

Motion made to approve the 2024 Annual Report review process as discussed by Commissioners. The 2024 Town Report will be compiled with input from Commissioners and Director of Park and Recreation by Mara and Ben. Completed document, after review by Commissioners, will be sent to Dennis for signature by the Commissioners in the Recreation office. Motion received a second. Vote: Laurie – yes, Mara – yes, Granger – yes, Bobby – yes, Ben – yes. Motion passed 5-0 in favor.

ATM25 Revolving Fund: These Revolving Funds are completed every year and put on the Town Warrant. Dennis explained the department has 3 revolving funds, Teen Center (\$20,000), Youth (\$150,000) and Recreation (\$570,000). All roll up to a 53E1/2 Fund that is typically put on the consent calendar at the Town meeting. Dennis said he is not using the Teen Center and Youth Revolving fund at this time and explored the possibility of closing them, but the Finance Director is not planning on doing that this year, but will take a look at them for the future. Dennis stated the same expenditure dollar amount will be used for FY26.

Motion made to support the funding limits for the Youth (\$150,000), Teen (\$15,000) and Recreation (570,000) Revolving 53E1/2 Funds for FY26. Motion received a second. Vote: Bobby – yes, Mara – yes, Laurie – yes, Granger – yes, Ben – yes. Motion passed in favor 5-0.

Site Walk Discussion: Ben stated January 23 appeared to be a date that worked for Commissioners to participate in a field site walk. The Commission discussed the goal for the site walk and what they hoped to accomplish and what fields would be included in the walk. In addition, how much time they wanted to allocate for the walk. Dennis suggested the possibility of waiting for the Gale Field study to see what the report said about the state of the fields and how they may be developed and the actual needs. After discussion it was suggested that Commissioners walk the fields (Davis and Broadacre) on their own or in pairs and then be prepared for a conversation in February.

Commission Updates: Ben suggested it would be good for the Commission to discuss goals for the year. He agreed with Dennis that collecting data on programs to underscore the importance of what Recreation does for the Town is important. Dennis will work on some type of data sheet for the program activity. Ben stated he has been in contact with the Finance Director and invited him to attend a Commission meeting. The Finance Director will also look to see how the Recreation budget compares to comparable Towns.

Rail Trail: Laurie stated a meeting was held last night and signage for the Town and options for Parkinson Field is still being discussed. She said signs on Hudson Road will need to go before the Historic Districts Commission.

Haskell Pathway: Discussed earlier in the meeting.

Fairbank Community Center: No update

CPC: Discussed earlier in the meeting.

Polices/Finances: Finances discussed earlier in meeting. Granger suggested using the flow chart policy review he presented at a previous meeting the next time a project like the youth lacrosse wall is presented to the Commission. That will help see what works and what needs to be adjusted.

Future Meetings: February 11th scheduled for the next meeting. Some potential items for the agenda; signs at fields regarding dogs, Combined Facilities Dir invited to discuss the pool issues and work planned for the end of summer. Bobby will contact Chief Nix regarding signage at the fields.

Approval of Minutes: Motion to approve the September 16th minutes as amended. Seconded. Vote: Laurie – yes, Granger – yes, Bobby – yes, Mara – yes, Ben – yes. Motion passed 5-0 in favor. October and December minutes will be approved at the next meeting.

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