

Virtual Meeting 06:33 pm

May 1, 2025

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

Guests: Andy Sheehan, Town Manager, Victor Garofalo, Sandra Duran, Combined Facilities Director

Park and Recreation: Dennis Mannone – Director

Roll Call: Grainger- here, Bobby – here, Laurie – here, Ben – here, Mara – here (6:36pm)

**Chair Comment:** Ben stated the plan was to discuss pool bids and other Town meeting articles and dates for the Field Assessment Survey.

**Public Comment – None**

**Town Meeting Planning/Review of PRC Related Articles/Review of Updated Pool Bids:** Sandra started with a quick overview of the pool bid and rebid process. The initial bids came in considerably over the allocated funding so the project was rebid. New bids came in April 16<sup>th</sup> and the project came back with an awardable bid that was within the budget. Sandra stated if the additional funds are approved at Town meeting they feel comfortable they would have enough funds to complete the project. Andy Sheehan, Town Manager, mentioned previous meetings back in February where statements were made regarding does the Town want to be in the pool business. He said they heard from many residents that the Town does want to support the pool and believes it is an amenity the community cares about and does not want to lose. He said the new bid results were presented at a meeting with the Select Board and Finance Committee on Tuesday night. He stated the decision was made to build the new Community Center around a 40-year-old pool, without including major renovations to the pool in the funding. The Town is now trying to address issues with the pool. He stated over the years the Pool Enterprise fund was not used on big capital investments, so there is a bit of catching up to do. He said shutting the pool could be a million-dollar undertaking, but you would end up with a flat surface to play soccer, basketball, pickleball or whatever you choose, but that didn't seem to be a particularly good option. To tear out the pool and build a new one would be a big challenge and the Town would probably end up with a smaller pool and it would be very costly. The decision was to rebid the project to address, the leaks, tile issues, ventilation, roof etc. The new number they presented to the Select Board and Finance Committee had a 12% contingency. After the meeting, a decision was made to increase the contingency from 12% to 17%. The plan is to deliver a highly functioning pool and the dollar amount they will be requesting is \$959,000. Victor Garofalo, Finance Director, shared the financial breakdown of the \$959,000. He explained how the first bid came in over budget and then how the rebid was handled and the numbers associated with it and the plan to address all the issues with the pool, along with alternates if there is funding available. He said they increased the requested amount so there would be a healthy contingency in case there are unseen costs that come up regarding the leaks.

The plan is to drain the pool only once, so they have set aside a very healthy contingency of \$418,372. The total cost to repair the pool is \$3,728,797. Victor presented the funding sources approved in the past and the article to be presented at this year's Town meeting for the additional \$959,000. If the contingency funds are not needed they would be returned to the Town.

Commissioners asked specific questions regarding repairs that will be done to the pool including the filtration system, roof, uv filter, skimmers and leaks, regrouting and tile work. Mara asked about the leaks. Sandra stated they had done leak detection before, but they are bringing in a fresh new team to take a look at the leaks with a very aggressive testing schedule. Previous testing did not show a specific leak, but there is still considerable water loss occurring daily. Granger asked if there is a 5, 10, 15-year long term investment plan for the pool for funds that may be needed in the future. Sandra said the plan is for an ongoing maintenance plan for the pool. Laurie asked about the pool leak and if the re-grouting will address the issues. Sandra stated if the article is approved the plan is to re-grout 100% of the pool and they are budgeting for 50% replacement on the tiles. She said it has been a difficult leak to find. Laurie said the other issue is the ongoing air quality issues. Sandra explained the operation of the air supply system at the pool and how it will be improved during the renovation project. She added a system can be overwhelmed if too many people are swimming at the same time along with not showering, so operational bather load may need to be addressed. Mara questioned if some of the Pool retained earnings should be used for the pool renovation project.

Victor stated the current plan is to borrow funds, but the pool enterprise retained earnings could be appropriated to cover some of the debt payments. He said the pool would be shut down for about 4 months for renovation, so retained earnings will be used to cover salaries and any other pool expenses. He said it is something that could be considered in the future.

Ben asked if all the work could be done in one shutdown. Sandra stated the initial schedule would be from mid-August thru mid-November. If any additional work is added, it would add to the timeframe but she didn't have specifics. She said she was aware of the timeframe sensitivity and swim team season.

Andy Sheehan, Town Manager, stated this is a borrowing project and they are issuing debt for it, so he is hopeful that all who support the pool will be in attendance to vote because a two-thirds majority is required to pass it. Dennis was in support of the project and thanked all those involved in moving it forward.

Mara made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support Article 34, a \$959,000 pool renovation project, at the 2025 Town Meeting. Laurie seconded the motion. Vote: Mara – yes, Laurie – yes, Bobby – yes, Granger – yes, Ben-yes Motion passed 5-0 in favor. Mara will speak in support of the article for the Park and Recreation Commission at the Town meeting. Dennis will be prepared to speak if needed.

Ben noted the Park and Recreation Commission had already voted in favor of the Fairbank Community Center and Haskell Field Landscape Master Plan CPC Article #44. Ben also noted that FinCom voted in favor of this article after learning of additional information. This article is currently on the consent calendar, but may be removed at the start of the meeting in which case it would probably be discussed on the second night. Mara suggested Grainger speak with Sandra Duran regarding the presentation. Grainger will be prepared to speak if there are any questions.

Commission discussed Article 14, the FY 25 Pool Enterprise Budget Adjustment. Dennis explained this article was more procedural and a method for handling the purchase of the UV filter and paying it out of the Pool Enterprise Budget, which caused an expense line to be over budget. This will move funds between accounts to cover that expense. Dennis added this action even if approved may not be needed, because there may be enough funds in the operating budget to cover the expenses.

Mara made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support Article 14 at the 2025 Spring Town Meeting. Granger seconded the motion. Vote: Granger – yes, Bobby – yes, Laurie – yes, Mara – yes, Ben – yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.

Mara mentioned Article 17, which is currently on the consent calendar. She stated it may have an impact on Recreation since it is asking for the establishment of a Fairbanks Community Center Revolving Fund. Dennis said he didn't think it had anything to do with Recreation, more the Community Center Building. He said once the Town Manager and Combined Facilities Director figure out the building rental policy, this will be the vehicle to hold revenue that comes in from rentals.

Granger made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support Article 17, which will create a Revolving Fund for the Fairbank Community Center building. Laurie seconded the motion. Vote: Mara – yes, Granger – yes, Laurie – yes, Bobby – yes, Ben – yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.

Ben stated Article 54 is a citizen's petition to decrease the CPA Surcharge from 3% to 1 ½ percent. Mara added the Town would not have the Featherland multipurpose courts, Feeley Field renovations, Haskell Field, Cutting Field and the LSRHS turf field without CPC funds. Dennis agreed it would be devastating if passed since Park and Recreation has benefitted greatly from CPC funds.

After discussion on the article Mara made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support Article 54 at the annual Town Meeting 2025. Granger seconded the motion. Vote: Mara – no, Granger – no, Laurie – no, Bobby – no, Ben – no. Motion failed 0-5. Granger will speak on this article if necessary.

**Date and Communication Plan for Field Assessment Survey** – Ben mentioned that Gale requested to move the meeting to June 2, rather than the end of May. Dennis stated he met a few weeks ago with Gale and Town staff regarding the Field Assessment. They will present a plan that is about 90% complete incorporate any feedback from the meeting with the Commission and user groups. Dennis suggested selecting a date before everyone starts summer vacation that works for the Commissioners and then advertise the date and meeting/forum so user group representatives and residents can attend via Zoom.

The date for the meeting is June 2<sup>nd</sup>. Dennis stated the goal of the meeting is to educate everyone on the Town's field inventory, who is using what and where the Town is deficient, the plan to address the deficiencies and the field maintenance plans.

Ben will send out a poll regarding available dates for the other June Commission meeting.

Dennis mentioned Recreation will have a summer concert on June 18<sup>th</sup> at the Fairbank Community Center starting at 4pm, food truck, ice cream truck and two bands will be performing. Recreation will

also be supporting the Locally Grow event the Town is sponsoring at the Fairbank Community Center on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

Commission discussed including funding for Community events in the next budget discussion.

Dennis mentioned he was installing a temporary fence at the Fairbank Community Center for summer camp. Four tents will also be installed.

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