

Virtual Meeting 6:32 pm

October 21, 2025

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

Director, Park and Recreation: Dennis Mannone

Guests: Andy Sheehan, Town Manager, Victor Garofalo, Asst Town Manager/Finance

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

**Public Comment:** None

**Director Update:** Dennis asked the Commissioners if they had any questions for him. Mara asked about the porta-potty situation at Cutting Field. Dennis responded an additional porta-potty was added for the remainder of the season and will be serviced weekly. Mara asked about the RFP for the Open Space and Recreation Plan that Dennis sent the Commissioners. Dennis stated Adam Burney, Planning Director, will be handling responses to the bids. Ben asked about the scope of the project and questioned if Sewataro was included. Victor, Asst Town Manager/Finance, confirmed Sewataro could be included under the other parcels of interest statement. Mara offered to send an email to Adam requesting information on the scope of the RFP, if Sewataro is included and any additional questions from the Commission. Victor offered that if there is a change to the RFP, an addendum would have to be done prior to the closing date. He said the scope can not be changed after the RFP is closed. Mara asked the Commissioners to review the RFP and let her know of any questions by Sunday and then she will send an email to Adam on Monday. Laurie asked for a quick update on the pool. Victor stated the pool renovation is on schedule and that most of the tile work is completed. Lap and dive pool will be filled soon with the water tested by the Board of Health. The plan is to open the pool December 1<sup>st</sup> or end of November if the work is completed earlier. A decision was made to replace all of the cove base around the edge of the deck, but that may not be completed by Dec 1<sup>st</sup>, since additional materials had to be ordered. Filters have been installed and the two items remaining, which are part of Phase 2, are the Pool Pak and the Thermaduct systems, which will be installed in May. Victor added that at this point the project is under budget. He said the true costs won't be know until the work in May is completed.

Granger asked for an update on the open Recreation projects. Dennis and Victor provided an update on the Haskell playground, Feeley Field and clarified the project phases, timelines, and budget allocations. In regard to the playground, Dennis said a few pieces have been ordered, but haven't been received yet. The contractor has some fixes to complete on the playground surface before the first phase is considered finished. Victor offered he had signed the contract with Gale associates for design of Feeley Field Phase 2. Dennis added funds have already been approved for construction, so he is hopeful the project could start late spring of next year. He clarified there was never a planned Phase 2 for the Haskell playground renovation. The work to be done was fix the PIP to address the cracks and some other safety concerns. The outdated structure that was removed was never planned to be replaced. If funds allowed, some sort of spinner or additional shade structure was discussed for the open space.

Commissioners discussed delays in CPC projects, with Victor explaining that submission deadlines are set in the fall due to the Town Warrant requirements which are the end of January. Granger emphasized the importance of clear communication with Town about the CPC projects progress and

timelines and the need to educate stakeholders about realistic timelines. Ben raised concerns about staffing limitations affecting projects, while Bobby questioned the logic of submitting multiple request at one time. Victor offered one of the challenges was contract approval. He clarified the Town now has a new standardized procurement process that was implemented on July 1<sup>st</sup>. He said youth baseball submitted a field maintenance project and explained they could donate the funds to the Town, but could not hire their own contractors. He explained that projects under \$10,000 could proceed without formal procurement, but still needed to ensure best value. Victor added that the Town is now using a standard contract for each vendor. This makes it easier for legal to review and streamlines the process.

Victor took a moment to inform the Commission why at times it takes so long to complete Town projects. He explained if Town meeting is in early May and a CPC project is approved, the funds don't become available until July 1<sup>st</sup>. The deadline for CPC projects is usually mid-September, so he said it would be difficult to get the funds in July and the design completed to come back to CPC for construction funds the same year. This is why he and Dennis decided to put the request for design funds for Davis and Broadacres in this year to help move along the development of these locations otherwise it could take two or three years for construction to start.

#### **Liaison Updates:**

*CPC:* Mara asked how all the CPC project requests compare to the overall Town budget for CPA. Granger responded they were under the annual budget. Victor clarified that all the projects submitted exceeded the annual budget, but there is a large undesignated fund balance that could cover the submitted project costs if approved. The Commissioners also discussed a potential new all-persons trail in Hop Brook, which Laurie said the Rail Trails Advisory Committee has discussed. She thought it would be something the Commission would want to take a position on and will add it as an agenda item at a future meeting.

*Rail Trail Update:* Laurie informed a past Rail Trail meeting included discussion on Parkinson field, the driveway and parking. In addition, safety at the Rail Trail crossings including additional signage.

*SPSC:* Mara reported that Karen Jones has been appointed the liaison to the Park and Recreation Commission.

#### **CPC Project Submission Discussion:**

*Smile/Lyons Playground Phase 2:* Mara presented the CPC Article for the Haskell Playground. The article states there will be a replacement structure for the one removed earlier this year, installing additional pour in play surface, and adding additional shade structure and trees. Mara showed pictures of potential play structures with concerns about the structure and access. She noted the difference between universal access and the standard ADA requirements. The Commission discussed playground design requirements, with the thought to shift from ADA compliance to universal access standards for the Smile Playground project. Victor explained that the current design submitted was meant to be ADA accessible, not universal, but he could request updated designs from the contractor. Commission discussed gathering residents, Commissioners and a Council on Disability representative to review and finalize the playground design before the CPC presentation in December. Victor will request new design options with universal access. The Commission decided to review the new options from Victor and then invite the public to provide feedback at their January Commission meeting allowing time for interested parties to review the options before the Town meeting presentation. Victor stated the design can change as long as it doesn't go over the amount requested in the CPC application. He said he will go back to the contractor and come up with some designs with universal access. Then go to CPC with the understanding that what is presented in the application may not be the final design, but the amount of funding requested will not change from the initial request.

Andy Sheehan, Town Manager, offered that the preliminary design of the playground was sent to the Commission on Disabilities for feedback. He was also expecting feedback from the Park and Recreation Commission and possibly members of the general public. The final design will be a result from the feedback from all the parties. In terms of universal access, that was something new, but helps in deciding the approved design in whatever funds are approved.

Victor stated he thought it would be good for the Commission to at least vote to support the CPC application with the understanding that the design could change to allow universal access.

Dennis agreed it was important for the Commission to vote because the existing playground structure that was removed was not universal design and that is a change. He felt the change would cost quite a bit more money and more space might be required. The Commission discussed the potential cost and space limitations of implementing universal design, with Granger suggesting that all PRC facilities should aim for universal access.

Granger made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission support the Smile Playground Phase 2 CPC project with the goal of universal access and the expectation that there is further PRC and Community input to finalize the design. Laurie seconded the motion. Vote: Granger-yes, Laurie-yes, Bobby-yes, Ben-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.

#### **Break in CPC discussions to receive an update on the Select Board Conversations relating to Sewataro.**

Lisa Kouchakdian, 30 Meadowbrook Circle, Sudbury Select Board, in attendance to inform of recent Select Board conversations on Sewataro regarding the licensing agreement that exists between the Town and the camp vendor. Lisa said the Town or camp operator can request an extension of the agreement on January 1<sup>st</sup> of 2027 which is a little over a year away. The Select Board Chair thought it would be prudent for the Select Board to review the agreement and give some direction to the Town Manager to review the current agreement and give some feedback to the Board. She noted that neither Andy or Victor were employed by the Town when the licensing agreement was signed. She suggested the Commission watch the September 9<sup>th</sup> Select Board meeting to review the Select Board's discussion on the topic. The Select Board plans to receive feedback from the Town Manager and staff on potential options for the property's future use. Laurie highlighted the importance of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, which is expected to be completed by December 2026 and expressed concern that discussion about Sewataro not distract from this ongoing project. There was agreement that any decisions on Sewataro should not interfere with the development of the Open Space and Recreation Plan.

**Return to CPC Discussion:** The Commission discussed plans for developing recreational spaces, focusing on Broadacres and Davis Field properties. Davis was discussed as a priority due to its standalone nature and long-standing development discussions. The Commission discussed potentially delaying Broadacres/Featherland development to align with the Field Needs Assessment and Open Space and Recreation Plan results. Dennis stated submitting both CPC field requests would be good to get the plan for development of these fields in the pipeline. He thought Broadacres could be done sooner since the infrastructure is better, with the rail trail and some bathroom facilities nearby at Featherland. The designs would allow for Community input, Commission input on the designs in addition to the Filed Needs Assessment survey results. Once the designs are approved, then he would go back to the CPC for construction costs. He is hopeful that development of these fields would free up some space at Haskell.

Dennis noted that Davis is also an important piece of property. It has been looked at in the past for development, but a design is needed to move forward. This field is a bit out of the way, and doesn't have bathrooms or other facilities. User groups are also not eager to use it due to the distance and lack of facilities. After discussion, it was thought moving forward with Broadacres should be considered first, which aligns with the Field Needs Assessment, while delaying any big decisions on development at Davis due to its remote location and lack of infrastructure.

Granger Suggested creating a timeline for Recreation projects emphasizing the need to address current priorities such as the field bathrooms, Haskell playground, pathway and the pavilion, Feeley Phase 2, while planning for future developments. The Commission discussed the ongoing and upcoming construction projects and stated the importance of community input and the Open Space and Recreation plan for guiding future decisions. Victor and Dennis outlined plans for design and construction on Feeley Field, Haskell Playground, the Haskell bathrooms, Broadacres and Davis Field, emphasizing the importance of starting projects by July 1<sup>st</sup> to meet funding deadlines. Ben expressed some concerns about moving forward with projects, particularly regarding jurisdiction and any design changes based on the results of the Open Space and Recreation Plan. After some discussion Ben agreed that advancing projects now would be beneficial for taking advantage of future opportunities. The Commission stated the need to address jurisdictional issues and the importance of having the Recreation projects ready when the Open Space and Recreation Plan is finalized. Mara stated she had sent information to the Town Manager in the past regarding Park and Recreation properties and the need to specify what was under the jurisdiction of the Park and Recreation Commission. They agreed to seek clarification on this issue.

**PRC representative at Select Board Joint meeting on 10/22/25:** Mara stated she was unable to attend the Select Board meeting on 10/22/25 and asked who was planning to attend for the Commission. Victor said information was taken from the Field Needs Assessment and added that to the capital plan. Projects have assigned years, but the years are not necessarily the years the project will be completed, they just didn't want to miss out on identifying projects mentioned in the Field Needs Assessment.

Granger said he would be in attendance and Laurie will also try to attend. Laurie will be the PRC representative since she is vice chair. Ben will also try to attend.

**Leash Law sign approval for Town Recreation properties:** moved to next meeting.

**Assign Liaison to Lincoln Sudbury School Committee (LSSC):** Mara made a motion to nominate Bobby Beagan to be the Park and Recreation Commission liaison to the Lincoln Sudbury School Committee. Seconded by Laurie. Vote: Laurie-yes, Granger-yes, Bobby-yes, Ben-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0. Mara stated Charles Morton is the LSSC liaison to the Park and Recreation Commission. She will send a message noting that Bobby Beagan is the liaison to the LSSC.

**Review and Approve meeting minutes:** Mara made a motion to approve the Park and Recreation Commission minutes from September 17<sup>th</sup>. Granger seconded the motion. Vote: Granger-yes, Ben-yes, Laurie-yes, Bobby-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed 5-0 in favor.

Next meeting is scheduled for November 17<sup>th</sup>. She asked the Commissioners to review the Open Space and Recreation Plan RFP and send along any comments. She will send the comments to the Planning Director on Monday. The CPC article review will continue at the next meeting starting with

Davis field. She will send a copy of the information on field assessment planning future to Commissioners for review. Granger stated he would send information on the CPC projects to the Commission, Dennis and Victor. Mara asked if there was a need too add a Council on Disability Liaison to the next agenda. It was decided to discuss at the next meeting.

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