

Parks and Recreation
Meeting Minutes
March 1st, 2021

Call to order 7:31 PM

Members Present: Keith Bilafer, Mark Morin, Bob O'Shea, Michelle Lauria, Doug Thornton

Audience: John Zobbi, Dan Daly, Abby Besse, Kara Minar

Minutes Approval for 2/16/21 – Motion to approve with wording clarification regarding review of 2 articles - Keith motioned, Michelle seconded, vote **4-0**

Mission (5:35)

- Create and Deliver Programs to the Community
- Provide direction/scope for operation/maintenance of existing resources
- Manage programs/use of recreational resources & plan for future resources
- Follow best practices to address capacity issues
 - o Optimize existing capacity (Maintenance Plan, Schedule Forecast, Budget)
 - o Find additional capacity even if less desirable (rotation plan with Devens)
 - o Plan for long term capacity acquisition (OSC, Capital plan, more with Devens)

Discussion and modifications of items. Michelle added jurisdiction wording, discussed Ann Lees. Keith getting closer to joining Michelle's camp. Bob, "like[s] the idea we have control over" what we work on, discussed ConCom jurisdiction. Mark issues have been "pretty well addressed already". Doug asked about budget plan in the interim until all jurisdiction is figured out. Doug is going to vote against because "the day-to-day operation is still what we need to be focused on". Michelle commented the mission statement is "the direction we are heading". Dan wrote a new item "provide advocacy for recreation on behalf of the residence of the town to the town's board and leaders". Motion to approve the following mission statement items, Michelle motioned, Keith seconded, **vote 4-1**

- Provide advocacy for recreation on behalf of the residence of the town to the town's board and leaders
- Create and Deliver Programs to the Community
- Provide direction/scope for operation/maintenance of existing resources under Parks and Rec's jurisdiction or by agreement with other entities
- Manage programs/use of recreational resources & plan for future resources to be under Parks and Rec's jurisdiction or by agreement with other entities
- Follow best practices to address capacity issues
 - o Optimize existing capacity
 - o Find additional capacity even if less desirable
 - o Plan for long term capacity acquisition

Public Communications (33:52)

o Sub-committee Chair(s)

Athletic field subcommittee - Dan forwarded revised charge to Bob. Charge is to take existing data and create final report. Michelle agrees with the charge. Discussed motion to accept draft charge and get new members. Doug asked if we should find the people for the subcommittee before the vote. Bob is

in support of the charge, but says “what they recommend is not the only thing Parks and Rec will do.” Dan commented that he does not have the most recent data.

Michelle motion “to accept the draft revised charge of the athletic fields subcommittee as revised on March 1st”, Doug seconded, vote **5-0**. Charge is attached.

- Liaison Communication (SB, Schools, PB, Finance) (47:00)

Kara – no update at this moment, looking at finalized budget received recently

Abby – Doug mentioned the MIAA season, fall 2 and spring; Abby spoke of fall 2 track, 30+ people given it is conditioning for spring track, 7 week season down from 12, prorate user fee to \$165 down from \$200, all meets at home; spring season not yet decided, 3 lax teams, but school committee has not been briefed yet; Abby will get athletic director to update CivicRec; Dan reiterated the importance of scheduling saying “this is the frying pan portion of the liaison job”

- General Public (59:00)

John Zobbi presented his Eagle Scout project proposal. He is proposing to construct Bat Boxes near fields around town, this is especially relevant here in Harvard where we do not spray for mosquitos. 6 locations suggested: Depot, Ryan, Waite, McCurdy, town beach, and Ann Lees; 4 bat boxes \$175 \$40-\$45 each; John showed schematic; boxes will be 10 to 15 feet up; 4 for 6 fields; could build 6; Bob mentioned you may need ConCom approval if putting on trees near wetlands; funding comes from us Keith motioned to approve 6 bat boxes with location to be determined later / mark seconded, vote **5-0**

Program Updates

Beach Operations (1:11:10)

- BHRA Agreement

Pond Committee has not signed the contract, they have 4 concerns: 1) they were not involved in the drafting of the contract from day 1, 2) they want to protect the noise on the pond, 3) they need to be involved because they do not want ‘outsiders’ using the pond, 4) they want to be able to break the contract at any time. Michelle has been working with BHRA, and suggests breaking up the contract into two separate contracts. Bob wants it on record that people who live on the pond must recuse themselves from any vote that limits the number of people allowed on a Great Pond in the state of Massachusetts. Bob suggests taking Pond Committee off the contract and asked Michelle to ask town administrator if there is a legal reason to keep them on.

- Lottery

Lottery starts March 1st and goes to end of month

- Parking Stickers

Commission reviewed 4 proposal for stickers inside the windshield; Bob suggests we will get as many complaints about inside the windshield as we do about the bumper; Michelle suggests we try; Doug says “price is a little better but not a bargain”; Michelle motioned “to allow me to purchase inside windshields stickers as well as boat stickers in the same amounts as ordered last year”, Mark seconded, vote **5-0**

Fields (1:32:10)

○ Generic ball field NOI Status

ConCom hearing March 4th; contingency in MOU; MOU brings size up to 200 feet; we can mow to 215'; Bob says about managing Ann Lees, "it's an all or nothing for me"; Doug mentioned last meeting's vote which was Keith motioned "if we do not have a signed MOU from ConCom by March 1st, we will treat Ann Lees like other fields where we do not have jurisdiction"; Keith says HAA is working with vendor; Keith motioned "to extend the date to March 5th", Doug 2nd, vote **4-1**

○ Infield Plan / Status

Quote came in for much more than we expected, Bob says it is an 81% increase; Last year work was \$18,360 this year quote is \$25,800; Doug says paying half of 25K is out of the question, but maybe half of 8K is more possible especially since we may be owed 3K

○ Field Rotation Plan

Keith showed plan of rotating out a field each day, Upper Depot twice per week:

Harvard Field	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Harvard Park			DEVENS				
Charlie Waite		DEVENS					
Upper Depot	DEVENS				DEVENS		
Lower Depot				DEVENS			

Dan asked on status of Devens, Bob says we have a quote, Dan asked if it is in the budget, Bob says we are not at that point yet; Bob asked Abby to take to the school the question of bussing kids to Devens, she questioned how long is temporary; \$25/hr times 3 hours times 5 days; Doug says we don't have enough data to commit to Devens, asked when we need to commit, Hilary Andrews says she needs to start on the license as soon as possible for a mid-March start, an April start has more time; Keith says HAA has not been told; Bob suggests spending one more meeting cycle working on plan

○ MOU with the school/DPW/Library

Bob states timing is not right to get it done for spring

Track and Commons

- Snowshoe program status – offer to house it elsewhere next year
- Scout Projects

Event Requests and New Business

- Projects tab in CivicRec

Adjourn 10:30 – Keith motioned / Doug seconded vote **4-0**; Next Meeting: March 15th

Harvard Parks & Recreation Commission
Athletic Field Planning Subcommittee
Revised Charge – March 1, 2021

In October, 2018 the Parks & Recreation Commission voted unanimously to create a subcommittee to explore the usage patterns, capacity, scheduling and maintenance of the Town's athletic fields in order to identify potential improvements in management, availability and planning. This revised charge refines the subcommittee's mission.

The 2016 Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP), in which Goal 7 identified and set forth the need to maintain, expand and improve playing fields, and further specified objectives to a.) Improve field maintenance; and to b) Develop more fields to allow rotation and prevent overuse. Nevertheless the 2016 OSRP identified no existing public lands for their "recreational potential" as future playing fields.

Given the Parks and Recreation Commission's responsibility to manage and regulate the use of the Town's playing fields, the Athletic Field Planning Subcommittee is charged to:

- Identify, define, document and report the need for athletic playing field capacity based on historic and expected usage trends
- Conduct open meetings and pursue public input
- Document findings as may be deemed relevant
- Issue a final report to the Parks & Recreation Commission with options and recommendations with regard to the above

The Athletic Field Planning Subcommittee will be appointed by the Parks & Recreation Commission and shall consist of the various interested parties who use, manage or plan the Town's Athletic Fields, represented by 7 voting members from the following:

- One member of the Parks & Recreation Commission
- One member of the Select Board
- One member of the School Committee or Harvard Public Schools' Administration
- Two Harvard Athletic Association Board Members
- Two Members-At-Large who are residents of the Town of Harvard

It is recommended that the Subcommittee be provided funds from the Parks & Recreation Commission to cover costs associated with community outreach and preparing its final report.