



Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Steve Nelson, David Norden, Kevin Sullivan, Bill Gaffney, and Carl Foss.

Staff in Attendance: Parks and Recreation Director Brendan Egan and Assistant Director Kelly Lehman.

Commissioner Nelson called the meeting to order at 6pm in the Main Hearing Room at the Town Hall, 29 Center Street.

Boy Scouts from Troop 103 joined the Commission to help open and close the meeting. They started with a presentation of the flags and leading the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Participation

None.

Director of Parks and Recreation Report

Parks and Recreation Director Egan presented the following report:

Massachusetts Recreation & Park Association (MRPA) Conference

Director Egan updated the Commission that the Burlington Parks & Recreation Department received multiple awards at this year's MRPA Conference. On Tuesday, March 28th, they received the MRPA Agency of the Year Award for Design of Facility for the accessible Treehouse. Joshua Simonds was able to attend for the awards presentation. Overall, it was a great evening and staff was extremely excited to receive the award and extremely appreciative of the MRPA members who nominated the department. At the awards dinner, Emma Jones was also recognized for her work in TR and being named one of NRPA's Top 30 Under 30 young professionals. Emma Jones is a leader in her field and looked up to by her peers for professional advice and assistance with programing and more. The department is very fortunate and thankful to have Emma Jones as part of the team not only leading the TR Division but also for all the other talents and help she brings to the department. The department is very fortunate to receive two awards from MRPA which is comprised of about 180 cities and towns.

Dog Park Bid

The bid for the addition of K9 grass to the Dog Park closed on March 30th. One bid was received from local contractor Cella Construction. Cella Construction is the original contractor responsible for the initial build of the park. The Town is reviewing the bid to ensure all is in order and we hope to present the bid for approval at the next meeting.

Athletic Fields

Due to the weather, staff is ahead of the game for athletic fields. The high school baseball and softball teams have started practice in the outfield on the grass. Temperature has been cooperating and with the expected rain this weekend, the grass should benefit and begin to grow. Staff placed a turf blanket on the high school baseball infield for about a week and a half and it has since been removed. The grass is greener than other surrounding areas, proving the turf blanket does make a difference. Spring fertilizer and over seeding will begin in the coming weeks. They are still proceeding cautiously with the grounds.

Commissioner Sullivan extended a congratulation on the awards. Director Egan thanked Commissioner Sullivan. He also added that there was a last-minute cancelation of one of the sessions at the conference and they reached out to Assistant Director Lehman and Emma Jones, who presented at the Northern New England Conference on the hiring and employee incentive program we initiated las summer. Assistant Director Lehman and Emma Jones were able to present the initiatives again at the conference with short notice. The session was well attended, and many approached asking if Assistant Director Lehman and Emma Jones could speak with their staff regarding the efforts. The department is continuing to be leaders in Parks & Recreation in Massachusetts. Director Egan noted he is very proud of the staff and the fact that they are looked up to for creative ideas and accomplishments.

Commissioner Norden also extended a congratulations. He added the department can think outside the box especially with the treehouse and other creative ideas. He noted to keep up with all the efforts and congrats to the department and staff.

Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation

None.

Chairman's Report

None.

Subcommittee Report

None.

New Business

FY24 Capital Request for Simonds Trust

Director Egan noted this is in regards to the annual disbursement from Simonds Trust. There is no figure at the current time, but the Commission will be updated when available. Director Egan requested the Commission vote to accept from the Trustees under the Will of Marshall Simonds an amount, to be determined, to be used for various programs and events at Simonds Park. This is the first reading which will be at May Town Meeting and the second reading at September Town Meeting.

Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to approve a warrant article for May Town Meeting for an amount to be determined. The motion was second by Commissioner Norden.

Vote 5-0-0

Renovate Pickleball

After discussion in February, Director Egan spoke with the contractor who provided the original quote, and they took a second look at the current street hockey surface area. They noted surface has small variations, no large cracks. The thought is to put a new latex paint surface down to repair the small variations. Players still used the courts in their current condition during the trials and there were no complaints. There are some fencing issues that need repair, but there is not a need to completely remove and replace the surface. Director Egan recommends that the street hockey area is resurfaced with a new latex, pickleball textured surface, install the net posts, sleeves and anchors, and repair sections of the fencing. The Acoustiblok panels would be moved up to the court as well. This effort would be in place of excavating, removing, and replacing the existing surface on the street hockey court. This effort is a less expensive renovation coming in at \$50,000. About \$31,000 for the new surface and to install net posts & anchors as well as \$18,000 in fencing repairs. Director Egan requests the Commission to adopt a motion to amend the previously approved Warrant Article from \$84,000 to \$50,000.

Commissioner Sullivan made a motion to amend the previously approved Warrant Article from \$84,000 to \$50,000. The motion was second by Commissioner Gaffney.

Commissioner Nelson invited to public to join in discussion.

Donna O'Brien of Church Lane thanked Director Egan for all the work with this effort. She asked to confirm if the funds in discussion would be used for the lower court as to ensure pickleball would be moved to the upper court and street hockey to the lower court. Director Egan noted the surface at the lower court would be painted and the posts would be removed. Donna O'Brien also asked if there would be a chance the courts would be returned to pickleball in the future. She also noted this is an issue in many towns. Director Egan noted he would not recommend it while he is here.

Diane Leva of Church Lane thanked the Commission for the efforts. She added that something needs to happen as this is the fourth year of the noise. She asked if more Acoustiblok panels would be added when pickleball is moved up. Director Egan noted they do not have plans to. He added they have looked at the fencing and are looking to potentially overlap some of the paneling. Diane Leva also noted that she agreed this issue is becoming more widespread and they don't want to miss the opportunity to move the court.

Donna O'Brien asked if the court could be locked to ensure players couldn't start too early in the morning or late in the evening. Director Egan noted it wouldn't be locked every night as they would have to fund an employee to lock it. They will lock the court in the winter and the lights will automatically shut off at 9pm. The signage will be updated with a 9am

start time. He also noted they have not stopped looking for a new location for the court and are still hoping to find one. Donna O'Brien asked if the security camera in the area has a sight line of the court. Director Egan noted the camera picks up motion of those walking to the court in the daytime.

Commissioner Sullivan noted that he is optimistic this will be a relief for the neighbors. He noted during the trial it was better, even without the sound dampening panels. The court is also up higher above the sightline of their homes.

Commissioner Gaffney noted he is slightly surprised that players are parking in the neighborhood, and he is hopeful they will begin to park in the parking lot when the court is moved. He also noted he appreciates the neighbors attending as it is important to hear from them.

Commissioner Nelson noted the Commission is committed to finding a new location for the courts but is hopeful moving the court will improve the current situation.

Diane Leva asked if all the funding is approved, when the effort would begin. Director Egan noted it wouldn't start until the fall.

Vote 5-0-0

Old Business

Graffiti

Director Egan updated the Commission that the culprit of the graffiti at the treehouse was identified, and the culprit has admitted to the graffiti. They are putting together a cost of materials and labor to provide to the police department.

Commissioner Norden asked if the security camera was helpful in identifying the culprit. Director Egan noted it was.

Commissioner Sullivan's Last Meeting

Commissioner Nelson noted it was Commissioner Sullivan's last meeting after 23 years of service. He extended a congratulations and a thank you for all his efforts. They will be recognizing him at another date.

Commissioner Norden added the Commissioner Sullivan is the reason he joined the Commission and noted he has done so much for the Commission for years and it shows how much he cares for the town. The residence and town employees all recognize the efforts.

Commissioner Foss noted that when he was appointed Commissioner Sullivan was the Chair of the Commission and was very welcoming, helpful, and patient. He noted he appreciated all the efforts and how much has been contributed to the town.

Commissioner Gaffney added as a family friend and from a town perspective it is notable all that Commissioner Sullivan has done. He wished him good luck and noted he appreciated all that has been done.

Commissioner Sullivan noted he gained so much from being a commissioner and truly enjoyed it. He noted the Parks & Recreation Department brings joy to people and he was able to piggy backed off the efforts and is very thankful.

Director Egan added they have known each other for almost the full time Commissioner Sullivan has served. He noted they have worked through so much and on behalf of the staff they appreciate the service that he has given to the department and town throughout the years. Many don't know the behind-the-scenes efforts Commissioner Sullivan helped with. He also added Commissioner Sullivan is an example for people who want to serve the town. Commissioner Sullivan gave himself to the town and attended and participated at events and town efforts. All his support is extremely appreciated.

Executive Session

Not Required.

Agenda for Next Meeting

A new member will be joining at the next meeting. Another reading of the Public Participation Policy will be read/discussed at the next meeting.

The Boy Scouts from Troop 103 lead the Commission in a closing circle.

Adjourn

VOTE: 5-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 6:44pm

Next meeting will be TBD

Respectfully submitted,
Emily O'Donoghue
Recording Clerk