

Medfield Parks and Recreation Minutes

Pfaff Center 11/19/08 7:30 AM

Attending: COMMISSIONERS: Toby Burrell, Lisa Louttit, Mel Seibolt, and Tom Caragliano.
DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION: Jim Snyder
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Paula Carroll
COMMUNITY MEMBERS: Jean Bourdon and Jack Bourdon.

1. Motion: Approve 10/29/08 Minutes. Vote: Motion carries (3-0).

2. Unfinished Business – Medfield Youth Baseball Field

MYBS has proposed converting the McCarthy Park softball field to a dual-usage softball/baseball field. The contractor who built the high school field has offered to convert the field at a greatly discounted cost of \$1 per square foot (the high school field was \$3 per square foot). Conversion requires a new back-stop with larger roof, fencing in front of the benches, and purchase of a temporary mound with temporary bases. There may be the possibility of installing an artificial surface; if not then the infield will need to be skinned.

The Parks and Recreation commissioners feel MYBS will be better served by building a brand new baseball field. Toby will suggest to Jeff Tapley that MYBS postpones their request for a year. At that time, a warrant article for funding combined with MYBS fundraising efforts could generate the money necessary to build an entirely new baseball field. In the meantime, baseball can gain extra playing time by scheduling games on Sunday. Also, Millis has advised MYBS they have fields available for use, and Dover may too. MYBS could temporarily use those out of town fields.

3. Skate Park Update

Although Jean Bourdon has determined that based on current economic circumstances, all fundraising for the skate park must cease until late winter, she would like to clarify some issues. 1) Jean wants to ensure a project manager is appointed by Parks and Recreation to oversee the installation of the skate park, as she and her committee do not have expertise in the skate park construction process. Parks and Recreation does not have anyone to serve this role. Perhaps a resident with construction expertise or local construction business owner would volunteer to serve as project manager. Tom has someone in mind and he will contact this person for Jean to see if they are interested. 2) As Jean will be fundraising to maintain the park after it is built, she wants to know who will do the physical work of maintaining the park. This has not been decided and will have to be determined. 3) Jean is looking for the letter from Steve Farrar confirming the commitment Parks and Recreation has made to find a suitable spot for the skate park on a parcel in one of our properties. Steve will be sending that letter to Jean soon.

4. New Building Update

The next step in the process would be to have BH+A perform a ledge probe. However, prior to that, the commission determined that parking lot water run-off and conservation issues must be investigated. Toby will have the project manager at BH+A proceed with investigating these two issues prior to the ledge probe.

In the meantime, all our designated properties should be deeded/allocated to Parks and Recreation via town hall. The commission will accomplish this ASAP.

5. Budget

Jim met with Mary Alice Whalen of the Warrant Commission this week. At this point, a level funding increase of 3% is anticipated. However, this increase could be less, or even become a budget decrease/cut, depending on how finances evolve during the next few months. A 3% increase amounts to approximately only \$10,000. Costs need to be cut and landscaping is the area with the most cost savings potential. .

The contract with Shady Tree Landscaping expires June 30, 2009. (*Shady Tree's annual contract is \$103,000, but depending on the amount of annual vandalism, up to \$10,000 can be added to that cost. Moisture Teck provides irrigation services. Thus, grounds maintenance currently costs approximately \$109,000-119,000 per year.*) The ideal situation would be to hire one full time, chemical licensed, landscaper to work for Parks and Recreation all year round. During the summer seasonal part-time employees would be hired to assist this person. Equipment would be leased. Upon conducting extensive interviews with several towns, Mel Seibolt has determined that almost all of the surrounding Parks and Recreation Departments employ their own landscaper – they do not contract out their landscaping, as it is prohibitively expensive. During these unpredictable financial times, the town of Medfield is discouraging the hiring of additional employees. However, that is the route that would clearly provide a very substantial cost savings. Mike Sullivan will be contacted for further guidance in this area.

Another alternative is to separate our landscaping needs into categories and put bids out for portions of the services. Thus, instead of one contractor (Shady Tree) providing all the landscaping services, two or more contractors could be managing our landscaping. However, this may be considered bid-splitting, and that is against the law. Christine at town hall will be contacted for further guidance in this area.

If bid-splitting and a hiring freeze are prohibitive issues, and we need to continue to contract with an outside vendor, perhaps a reduction of services – i.e. fertilizing less, etc. – will have to be considered.

Due to time constraints, further budgetary issues, such as program fee increases, Pfaff Center rental fee increases and policy re-structuring, and scholarship policy re-structuring were not able to be discussed. Jim will meet with the board of commissioners on Friday evening, November 21st at 7:00 PM.

6. Employee Non Compete Agreement

Many Parks and Recreation program instructors are also working for the Kingsbury Club. Jim and Lisa will evaluate the pros/cons/feasibility of some sort of employee non-compete agreement.

Meeting adjourned: 9:35 AM.

Next Meetings:

- Special Budget Meeting - FRIDAY evening, November 21st at 7:00 PM at the Pfaff Center
- Regular Commission Meeting - WEDNESDAY evening, December 3rd at 7:30 PM at the Pfaff Center.