

**Medfield Parks and Recreation Minutes**  
**Pfaff Center 9/17/08 7:30 PM**

**Attending:** COMMISSIONERS: Lisa Louttit, Mel Seibolt, Toby Burrell, and Steve Farrar.  
DIRECTOR OF PARKS AND RECREATION: Jim Snyder  
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Paula Carroll  
COMMUNITY MEMBERS: Mike Driscoll, Josh Murray, Wayne Moss, Nancy Coakley, Kathy Mills, Kip Mercer, Barbara Androlonis, and Nick Brown (*Director of Youth Lacrosse*)

**1. Motion: Approve 9/2/08 Minutes. Vote: Motion carries (4-0).**

**2. Review Medfield Youth Baseball & Softball Proposal for Softball Field Conversion**

**Opponents:** Josh Murray, a member of the men's softball league, pointed out that teen youth baseball would only use a major league baseball diamond for 5 weeks, 12 games a year. Currently, the men's softball league plays for 15 weeks, over 100 games a year. Jeff Tapley's contention that Medfield does not have enough sports programs for teenagers is inaccurate, as the high school provides a multitude of opportunities for teens to play sports. Also, Jeff's current offer to allow the men's softball league to still utilize the proposed new baseball field will most likely be rescinded as soon as the sliding and running on the new grass infield causes wear and tear on the grass. Thus, the men's league will definitely be decimated because they will lose this field permanently. Baseball can eliminate the need for the field by simply having more players on each team.

Nick Brown, Director of Medfield Youth Lacrosse, has approximately 225-250 boys and 180 girls participating in his lacrosse program. The boys participation is consistent and not declining or growing. However, the girls participation is growing and expanding dramatically every year. Field space is at a premium in town and in addition to using the McCarthy softball field, lacrosse has to rent out soccer fields just to keep the program running. If Medfield Youth Baseball is allowed to convert the McCarthy softball field, they will be empowered to monopolize the field for their exclusive use. They will excessively fine any sport that causes wear and tear to the field (which is every sport) or outright refuse to allow certain sports (eventually all sports) to use the field. Due to wear and tear, Lacrosse will never be able to use the proposed new baseball field. Lacrosse, which is servicing over 400 children and growing, will have to greatly decrease the program's size, and many children will be left out and suffer as a result.

**Proponents:** None - MYBS was not represented at the meeting.

**Lisa Louttit:** Permanently changing the field is a great unknown – once it's changed it's changed forever. It is a shame to displace the men's league and youth lacrosse for a much smaller teen baseball population that uses the field a few short weeks a year. Also, Parks and Recreation permanently loses the revenue stream that is generated currently from field rental fees.

**Mel Seibolt:** There are several open lots of town property in Medfield: 3 acres on Ice House Road, 10 acres of the Hinkley parcel (NOTE: this is not the Hinkley Pond property). More land could be relegated by the town to the jurisdiction of Parks and Rec for creation of brand new fields.

**Jim Snyder:** Baseball has a small number of games and small window of usage. It does not seem right to displace the long established, much larger and busier men's softball and youth lacrosse leagues.

**Steve Farrar:** Instead of displacing long established, growing and thriving leagues, it's best for MYBS to consider creating a brand new field at a different location, such as on a piece of the 10 acres of Hinkley parcel.

**Toby Burrell:** MYBS does desperately need another baseball field, without a doubt. But they only need the extra field a mere 5 weeks a year. Thus, to permanently change the field is not the right solution. MYBS needs to pursue a different location to create a brand new field, such as the Hinkley parcel.

**VOTE:** There are four commissioners present: Lisa Louttit, Steve Farrar, Toby Burrell, and Mel Seibolt. Two of the commissioners have a conflict of interest and have to withdraw from voting: Toby Burrell was formerly president of MYBS, and Mel Seibolt currently serves on the board of MYBS. Thus, Lisa Louttit and Steve Farrar are voting.

**The vote is to accept the proposal of MYBS to reconfigure the softball field at McCarthy Park to a regulation size baseball field:**

*All In Favor = 0*

*All Opposed = 2*

The proposal to reconfigure the softball field at McCarthy Park to a regulation size baseball field has been rejected.

### **3. Update on Skate Park**

Jean Bourdon, citizen organizer of the skate park initiative, has received a lot of interest in the park from high school aged children. She is looking into a more expensive concrete (not asphalt) slab and more challenging jumps, scoops, etc. The burden to raise all funds for the skate park is relegated to the interested citizens of Medfield.

### **4. Report on Fall Fest and Fireworks**

The September 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Fest and evening fireworks were a tremendous success! The board is enormously thankful to Jim Snyder and Lisa Louttit for all their dedication and hard work. Their fundraising persistence and attention to a multitude of details made the event a smoothly coordinated, large scale success. It was a fantastic night!

### **5. Update on Internship Proposal from Richard DeSorgher**

The Medfield High School political science class interns will be introduced at the Wednesday, October 15<sup>th</sup> meeting which starts at 7:30 PM.

### **6. Discussion on Contract with BH+A for Site Study at Hinkley Pond**

**Opponents:** Green Street is too busy and too residential to accommodate a commercial enterprise. Abutter Kip Mercer is concerned about the façade of the proposed new building – i.e. will it be an attractive brick building or a metal shell? Kip also pointed out that the playground area where the building is slated to be constructed is the most popular play area in town for pre-schoolers and the walking trail in that area is also very popular. Kip and Kathy Mills inquired about placing the building at another location, or remodeling the existing Pfaff Center.

**Proponents:** The Pfaff Center is too small to accommodate all the demands of our ever expanding Parks and Rec programming. The Fire and Police Departments are slated to tear down the Pfaff Center and use the parcel as a parking lot as part of their expansion which has been approved and funded – they are awaiting Parks and Rec to find a new location. Thus, we can't stay here. Even if we could stay on this parcel of land, we'd have to tear down the Pfaff as updating, expanding, and remodeling the Pfaff would cost more than double the cost of building a brand new, larger building. We can't destroy fields to place a new building at Metacomet Park. The problem with McCarthy Park is its remote, desolate location, especially with regards to our summer camp programming. A bus and/or vans would have to be acquired to transport the children back and forth to the pond, which is a large additional expense that would make the camps very costly. Our only other parcel of land is the Hinkley Pond property.

The building façade will be pre-fabricated, cost efficient, and not fancy.

Abutter Barbara Andrulonis perceives that the new building could be an asset to the neighborhood. Currently, Hinkley Pond is the year round unmonitored, unsupervised, site of teenage partying and dates/rendezvous. Neighbors are regularly calling the police to break up the parties. Piles of alcohol bottles and cans are discarded on the ground. If Barbara does not clean up the loose trash they leave behind on a regular basis, it eventually blows into her yard (food packaging, smoking paraphernalia, condoms, and feminine hygiene products have all made their way into her back yard). With no trash receptacles/dumpster at the site 9 months a year, Barbara has to put this trash in her own receptacles. A new building would not necessarily be a detraction or devalue the area. It would deter teenage vandalism, partying, and many of the escapades transpiring at Hinkley Pond most evenings, and give quick, convenient access to so many families that want to participate in Parks and Rec programming.

Toby Burrell has invited the citizens of Medfield to come to the walk through with the architect and construction manager. The date and time of the walk through will be posted on the town website at [www.town.medfield.com](http://www.town.medfield.com).

## 7. Commissioner Reports

**Mel Seibolt:** We should definitely hire one full time person and a seasonal part time helper to meet our landscaping, irrigation, and chemical needs. Toro equipment is highly recommended and our equipment requirements could be leased for approximately \$4,000 per month. Other factors to iron out include trash removal and sharing of DPW equipment/tools resources.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

**Next Meeting:** Wednesday morning, October 1<sup>st</sup> at 7:30 AM. The schedule for the next several weeks is as follows:

PM - Wednesday, Oct 15  
AM - Wednesday, Oct 29  
PM - Wednesday, Nov 12