

Parks & Recreation Department

*Dedham Recreation Center
269 Common Street
781-751-9250*



*Robert L. Stanley
Director*

*Debra Anderson
Assistant & Program Director*

*Tracey White
Administrative Assistant*

June 21, 2021

Lisa Moran- Chairwoman
Chuck Dello Iacono– Vice Chairman
Alix O’Connell – Secretary
Jonathan Briggs
Lisa Farnham
Robert Stanley – Director
Debra Anderson – Asst. Director
Tracey White – Assistant to the Director

Chairwoman Moran opened the meeting by welcoming Alix O’Connell and Lisa Farnham to their first in person Parks & Recreation Meeting as members of the Commission.

C. Dello Iacono asked for a moment of silence in honor of Francis O’Brien’s passing.

Public Comment None

Minutes will be voted at the July Meeting.

Mini Food Pantry: Director Stanley stated that the Town Manager asked them to speak to the BOH and that Kylee Sullivan, the Health Director, stated she was fine with the mini pantry.

J. Briggs asked about the size. A. O’Connell asked about the design.

Sandra Sicard stated the pantry was about 2’ x 3’ x 2’, and that it is painted a blue color now. It had signage that states to take what you need, donate what you can, etc. with see thru doors.

J. Briggs asked about the see-through doors and about what if any issues with UV light.

S. Sicard stated that the doors are plexiglass. There would be no issues with packaging.

Motion to approve the mini pantry at Condon Park made by C. Dello Iacono with a second by J. Briggs. All voted in the affirmative.

Emergency Transfer for Safety Netting: C. Dello Iacono spoke about safety concerns at Rustcraft and Paul Park and the need for safety fencing. Mr. Dello Iacono stated he received an email from a Churchill neighbor. He stated that this request has gone through the Capital Request process in the past and has not passed.

L. Farnham asked what the cost would be.

C. Dello Iacono stated that it was quoted at \$30,000, about two years ago. We would need a professional to come in and do a review of what amount of safety netting and where it would be most needed and beneficial.

A. O'Connell asked what the dimensions would be, where it would be and what the plan would be. She stated that unfortunately being an abutter to a ball field, foul balls may be an issue.

C. Dello Iacono stated that the gentleman stated that it was baseballs and not softballs that were the issue at Churchill.

J. Briggs stated that there was no back up data for an emergency funding. There have been no complaints from any youth leagues. He also stated any information is anecdotal and there is no backup to ask for \$30,000.00. A former Finance Committee gentleman stated he felt no need as a he has been part of baseball for 50 years and never has there been an issue with anyone getting hurt at Rustcraft field.

C. Dello Iacono stated the only way to get more money into the budget is to ask for an emergency transfer. It was brought up during the election cycle, so I believe and have witnessed.

Director Stanley stated that Memorial is the most dangerous of all the fields, as there is so much going on those fields. There is a certain amount of liability going onto any fields.

L. Moran stated there is soccer and baseball at the same times at Rustcraft and there has been no issues that she is aware of. She is there every day of the week during games. She has spoken to the President of Dedham Youth Baseball, and nobody has ever come to DYB with issues.

Director Stanley suggested a sign that states beware of flying balls. L. Moran stated that may be beneficial. The Director stated he will work with A. O'Connell on wordage.

Heath Purdy asked to possibly move the bleachers between the baseball fields at Rustcraft.

Tara Murphy stated that signage would be terrific, as soccer parents do not even pay attention to the fact that there are baseball games going on.

Discussion on the gate being open between the parking lot and the soccer field, Director stated he would like the gate closed, as there is no summer soccer.

No vote was taken.

Permits

Dedham Youth Field Hockey would like to have a Clinic for three different dates.

C. Dello Iacono asked if it was a for profit organization.

It was answered that it is working on being a 501C3.

Dedham Pop Warner, Dedham Youth Baseball and Dedham Girls Softball asked for permits.

Sal Ledda has a Soccer Camp, from 9-12 and 5-8 on Gonzalez Field.

C. Dello Iacono made a motion to accept all permits other than Pop Warner, with a second by J. Briggs, all voted in the affirmative.

J. Briggs made a motion to accept Dedham Pop Warner, with a second by A. O'Connell. All voted in the affirmative with C. Dello Iacono abstaining (as he is a coach for the program).

Heath Purdy stated that there may be a need to change a baseball field to 70 – 90 as soon as next spring. Collins may be the only field that this may work with.

L. Farnham asked if it would be cutting into the soccer field.

Discussion on the number of teams and when it would be possible.

Sal Ledda gave kudos to the Director and the Parks Department for how terrific the fields look this Spring. He has heard so many compliments from people at the fields.

Heath Purdy also commented on the fields at Capone.

Dolan Racks at the Dolan Center

J. Briggs stated that he and A. O'Connell have been working with a young man to achieve his Eagle Scout Project. Kayak racks was a very well-organized event and would love to thank Brendan Stamm of Troup One.

Spring to Fall there are eighteen spots to rent. Would like to offer for free this season, and possibly a safety class from LL Bean & a sticker, to recognize someone's spot. We need some signage to explain the rules and to number the racks. Will need a sign off on liability. He is waiting to hear back from Town Counsel.

A. O'Connell stated that rental stickers are important, stored upside down, and locked and when they must be removed. She will bring to Town Counsel for approval. Shoot for a July 1, 2021, date.

Assistant Director offered to put out an email & FB blasts to notify residents of the offering.

Discussion was had regarding how people would rent.

L. Farnham asked if this was just a pilot program.

C. Dello Iacono asked about what liability is for the Parks & Recreation Department.

J. Briggs stated that it is in the document that was handed out.

Director stated that LL Bean is not renting kayaks or canoes this season.

J. Briggs stated that it is not and was not cost effective even for the Parks & Recreation to have only a couple of kayaks for rent and to have an employee there all day.

L. Moran stated it was great and asked about if any winterization was needed for the racks.

It was answered by J. Briggs that there was not.

Finance Report

L. Moran stated that the Director will give us a financial report quarterly.

Director Review

Chairwoman Moran stated that the Director should put together a list of things that were accomplished and goals for the year ahead.

Committee Updates

Dedham Square Improvement Committee – A. O’Connell stated that recommendation to tear down the Police station and make a green space.

Master Plan – A. O’Connell - Community Outreach meetings are being held at various locations and Zoom as well.

Policy - A. O’Connell – regarding signs at the baseball & softball fields, all face into the fields. Gonzalez is very difficult as it is only on one fence. If they face outward, they may have content issues.

C. Dello Iacono stated that it should not be on a permit, it is individual.

A. O’Connell stated that she could not find anything throughout the State.

C. Dello Iacono stated that all signs need to be voted on by this Board.

L. Moran asked about the signs on the concession stands at Memorial & Rustcraft.

Discussion was had regarding the need for updating the signage.

C. Dello Iacono stated that those monies were to support the Pathfinders Programs, and they need to go out to bid.

Open Spaces - J. Briggs stated that maps that are accessible are being worked on.

L. Farnham stated that she had contact with someone who offered to do some of that work for free.

J. Briggs asked to pass that information along to him.

L. Moran has coordinated to have Dedham Television to film videos of the Commissioners promoting the various fields and other facilities.

Assistant Director Report

- Meetings with Summer Staff
- Three full (20 people) lifeguarding classes
- Clippers started today.
- Yoga in the parks program happening.
- All Day Program will be starting.
- Swim & Gym Staff will rotate with groups.
- Only Lifeguards and WSI will be in the pool.
- Karate will start next week.
- Partnership with the Police for evening parks program.
- Tennis lessons (Youth, Adults, Academy & Cardio).
- Free Playgrounds – Paul Park, Condon & Paul Park.
- Water Aerobics – Thursday nights.
- Diving Program
- Fall Programs

L. Moran asked about Fall programs and when will we have information out for the Fall - what is the goal for time period.

D. Anderson stated that it will be done for July.

L. Moran stated that email blasts should be done early.

D. Anderson said that it will be done for early August.

A. O'Connell made motion to accept the Assistant Director Report; J. Briggs made a second to the motion. All voted in favor to accept.

Director Report

- Parks Department has worked so hard: came in over weekends to complete work, difficult to get to the elementary fields.
- Irrigation has been off at Gonzalez due to construction issues.
- Finance Director did a mini audit/wanted to see how things are worked through our department.
- Dolan Center - bidding Process going on now. Hopefully, that will go forward soon.
- Can not use the Bandstand anymore, as it is not handicap accessible.

A. O'Connell stated that the Friends of Dedham Sports - would like to know the process for donating.

Director Stanley stated to have the group contact him.

C. Dello Iacono stated that this group would have to come to board and make a proposal and then must speak to the Director and then go to the Select Board.

A. O'Connell stated that she had heard from Sarah MacDonald about the elementary school fields and a committee between the School Department and the Parks & Recreation Department.

It was answered that there is an MOU between the Schools & The Commission.

Director stated how pleased he is to have the Pool Director back.

C. Dello Iacono voted to accept the Director Report. A. O'Connell made a second to the motion. All voted in favor to accept.

Old Business

C. Dello Iacono stated that Permits needs to go back to have deadlines, must go through the proper process and that we need tighten up the process. A representative from each league needs to be at the meeting. It needs to be more efficient.

J. Briggs stated that the Workout equipment is at Gonzalez already and the DPW Director, Joe Flanagan has been extremely helpful with some of the work. There is a piece that needs to be corrected. It would be great to have shade structures and some tables. thank you to Livable Dedham.

New Business

C. Dello Iacono asked about picnic benches at Franklin Square, in the area between Church & School Street.

A. O'Connell stated that there is a Title search being done as to who owns the property.

C. Dello Iacono asked about bicycles around the Gonzalez, as the senior citizens are using it to do walking clubs.

Discussion of what can be done, possible signage.

L. Moran stated that she spoke to Mr. Mucciaccio about Dedham Day, and he stated that he is concerned about selling all the Deeds.

C. Dello Iacono Rolling Flag Day is this Sunday, June 27, 2021, at 5:30pm.

Chairwoman Moran asked about the possibility of a Dog area at Rustcraft.

C. Dello Iacono stated since Covid dog ownership is through the roof, people claim that their dogs are service dogs, when they are not.

Discussion of what possibilities may be in the future.

Monday, July 12, 2021 - will be the next meeting.

Monday, August 16, 2021 - will be the August meeting.

C. Dello Iacono made a motion to adjourn, with a second by J. Briggs. All voted in the affirmative.