

Park and Recreation Commission	Meeting Minutes
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Date: May 10, 2016, 6:00 P.M.

Place: Brookline Town Hall, Room 111

Commissioners Attending: John Bain, Nancy O’Connor, Clara Batchelor, Daniel Lyons, Jim Carroll, Antonia Bellalta, Jean Stameris

Commissioners Absent: n/a

Staff: Erin Gallentine, Parks and Open Space Director, Lisa Paradis, Recreation Director, Jessica White, Parks and Open Space Assistant.

TOPIC	KEY POINTS/DISCUSSION	
Chairman’s Welcome Approval of Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. Bain opened the meeting. 	
Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regina Frawley addressed the Commission. She came to thank the Commission and L. Paradis for the socials/cookout hosted by the Recreation Department at Putterham Library. She stated that “the seniors have a great time, are a great group and it’s a wonderful event on Good Friday to kick off our fall season”. 	
Putterham Golf Course/Driving Range Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L. Paradis printed out the planting plan for the golf course entry and passed it out to the Commission. E. Gallentine gave some location perspectives on the current slide. E. Gallentine asked A. Blair, Landscape Architect to take a look at the planting plan that L. Paradis had from the Driving Range Architect. E. Gallentine let A. Blair know that the goal of the Recreation Department was to screen the driving range, but have the plant pallet blend in with rest of the landscape, including the wooded areas on either side of the parking lot and club house. She stated that A. Blair has done a great job with this. E. Gallentine went through the planting plan with the Commission. E. Gallentine stated that the Commission should expect 5 years for whatever planting plan they approved to feel more established and start to provide a true buffer screen . The Commission discussed the planting pallet. N. O’Connor and L. Paradis discussed the timing of the project. E. Gallentine discussed the planting time frame. L. Paradis discussed irrigation and watering. N. O’Connor thinks it would be nice to have 	

	<p>this planting plan on an easel at the Golf Course so the public can see the planting plan and have an idea of what is happening with the project. L. Paradis stated that it is on the website. J. Carroll and L. Paradis discussed who would be planting the trees/ plants and warranties they have on the plants and trees. The Commission agreed that it looks great and L. Paradis wanted to thank E. Gallentine’s staff for their work. There is much work left to be completed for the driving range project and she stated that she would have to see what was left in retainage prior to releasing any funds for this effort. If the plantings do not commence in the spring they will commence in the fall.</p>	
<p>Recreation Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● International Yoga Day is coming June 21st. ● Recreation held the annual open houses at the Brookline Housing Authority in late April and early May. The attendance of the events were discussed. Together with the Steps to Success Team, Brookline Housing Authority staff and residents, each evening offered information, registration and refreshments for those in attendance. Those who attended secured summer camp enrollments for their children. ● There was staff training during the month of April. ● The couch to 5k has 21 participants and is taking place tonight. The age ranges of the participants vary. ● Youth wrestling has 17 participants. It is a brand new program. ● Summer enrollment is full, only a few spaces are available. The BEEP participant’s were discussed. The wait list was discussed. ● Part time office assistant position is open. ● The summer season allows for many part time jobs opportunities across each service area, Interviews are near complete and the hiring and orientation planning is underway. ● The tennis recycling bins were discussed. E. Gallentine discussed the wind screen that was put up around the Amory tennis courts. The overall feedback is that it is helpful and cut 	

	<p>down on the airborne clay dust that was a concern. E. Gallentine did have some individuals who live in the condo stated that it impeded their view into the park and were sorry about that. E. Gallentine stated that we clean as often as we can and do a thorough clean up at the end of the year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Waldstein is open and doing well. ● Three families came out for the annual Amphibian night at the golf course. It was rainy and cold, so more were originally expected. ● Save the dates are as followed: <p>Friday, May 13th is the final RAFT dance of the year Friday, May 20th is the RAFT and Recreation Therapy Red Sox Game Thursday, May 26th is the Lunch and Learn/ Women and Girls Thriving Initiative. Saturday, June 18th is Tee off at the Library Tuesday June 21st is the International Day of Yoga June 22nd-June 24th is the Summer Camp Staff trainings and open houses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Out of School Time Grant was discussed. The Recreation Department received a \$27K grant from NRPA and the Walmart Foundation to support healthy meals and nutritional education for families during out of school time. 	
<p>Appoint Emerson Garden Design Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Park and Recreation Commission went through the applications that were submitted to apply for the Emerson Garden Design Review Committee. ● J. Carroll moved to appoint the Emerson Garden Design Review Committee Members. Seconded by C. Batchelor A. Bellalta abstained from voting. 	
<p>Basketball Pilot Program at Pierce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● E. Gallentine presented slides to the Commission that displays the Pierce basketball court. The Commission previously voted to approve a pilot project to extend hours of basketball play at Pierce Playground following completion of the park renovation project, and needs to set a date to discuss and vote on the time and parameters of the extension. The intent of the pilot is to allow evening play hours and see if there is an ability to balance the recreational interests of the community and the 	

	<p>neighborhood concern about noise.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Matt Paluszek put together a list of times with dawn to dusk and what that means in terms of timing. M. Paluszek wanted to come this evening and have a conversation about the direction that the lighting pilot is going.• M. Paluszek addressed the Commission. He stated that what E. Gallentine has stated to this point is accurate. He passed out a flyer with notes he has taken chronologically along the way regarding the lighting. He stated that since he spoke to E. Gallentine a few week as ago he had received some comments from members of the community that he has been in touch with regarding this issue. In return he reached out to E. Gallentine. He stated that in his mind and everyone else that he has spoken to; the understanding of the intent of the vote from the Commission was to approve a pilot project that would light the basketball courts to allow basketball and other fitness activities to go on under a lighted basketball court. He reviewed the meetings that the Commission discussed the lighting. He stated that it was his understanding and the understanding of most of the people working together to support the idea that this could be a two-step process. The Design Review Committee and then the Commission agreed to a base project for Pierce Playground, that included conduit in the base project that would allow for professional grade athletic facility lighting should the pilot program be successful and the second would be a capital improvement item that could be approved and moved up on the list to be in sync with work that is going to be done now. Then at the meeting where the Commission approved the pilot project the idea arose that the pilot program lighting could be paid for by the operating budget and the understanding at that meeting (everyone he has spoken to)was consistent with what we have been talking about that whole time. The lighting will allow people to play sports. The understanding was there is no longer a need for a capital improvement project for this item, this will be done using the operating budget to have	
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	<p>appropriate and effective lighting. The pilot program will endorse the idea so that people can play with the lights on and decide on the hours that will be appropriate and allow this to be tested as a community. The approval for a pilot was to lite the courts so there could be basketball and fitness activity at later hours when it would otherwise be dark. He stated that is the understanding/expectation for what this pilot project is all about. He sees that is very different from just approving a pilot project to adjust the hours in which people are allowed in the park already. He stated that people upon hearing this find it to be very upsetting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• E. Gallentine stated that what she understood the Commission discussion, support and vote was:• Repair of the existing lights• Evaluation, redirection, adjustment, addition and/or enhancement of the existing lights with Safety/ LEDs/Flood etc. on poles serving the Pierce basketball court. <p>She agreed that she thought it was important to have adequate lighting for the pilot and stated that she thought her direction from the Commission was to use the existing poles to enhance lighting on the courts for the duration of the pilot so that they could have further conversations about the success of evening hours for basketball at the Pierce courts, adequacy of lighting and next steps.</p> <p>She has already reached out to the Highway Division and a Project Engineer about both redirecting and enhancing the existing lighting to allow more light on the existing court for the pilot program. She was under the impression that she was using her operating budget to hire the electricians to do the work, fix the lights, make adjustments to the angle of lights and add additional light fixtures that would work on the existing poles. There was also discussion about having a push button. She showed lights that would go off with the push button if they could set up the time clock successfully. The hope was</p>	
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	<p>that this would be a benefit to the abutters as well. E. Gallentine feels that is what she thought was her direction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● L. Paradis stated that the description of actions planned by E. Gallentine is exactly how she understood the conversation between the Commission and the proponents to lighting the basketball courts and the ultimate vote. There was no talk of new poles/conduits.● E. Gallentine did look into the cost of new athletic facility poles and lights and it was estimated at over forty thousand dollars● J. Bain agrees with E. Gallentine in her attempt to make the courts brighter. He doesn't see what the logic would be in spending forty thousand dollars prior to testing the extended hours. The pilot program could be successful or fail, he feels that you can't invest that amount of money prior to trying the change in use and continuing the dialogue with the community.● A. Bellalta and N. O'Connor went through excerpts from past meeting minutes.● N. O'Connor stated that she and the Commission agreed that fixing, adding and redirecting some lights would be enough to light the courts for the activity we are expecting. She feels it is a small neighborhood park and it will be the occasional pickup games and just kids in the neighborhood. She does not see the need for new lighting for such a small court space. While she hears what M. Paluzek is saying, it was not the intent, commitment or vote of the Commission. The Commission remains committed to the pilot and improved lighting. She thinks that the outcome will work and that the decision left to make is the timing of the pilot program.● D. Lyons stated that is exactly how he remembers it. He remembers there being a question of the time, but with regard to the lighting it would make no sense to ut up the 40 thousand for new and permanent sports lights and have the program fail. He stated that you could add lighting in a few spots or direct lighting and make that good for outdoor play. He stated that people play there now as it is, he	
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	<p>thinks that the intended approach will make it adequate for the pilot.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● M. Paluszek stated that context of the subject all along from the beginning of March by all the people who came in and favored it were extremely effective in making their point to the Commission. He stated that the context of the discussion was about sports lighting. The context of discussion was all the way through allowing for sports lighting for legitimate play on the courts. He stated that you don't put safety lighting at Waldstein Park and tell people to play tennis in there. He thinks it would be a liability to put safety lighting in and tell kids to play basketball.● M. Paluzek discussed how there was discussion of having an added capital improvement project item that would allow for the construction of the poles and moving it up on the list. He stated that there was talk about having a place holder. He stated that on the August Meeting there was discussion of having that place holder putting on the capital improvement project list to build those poles.● D. Lyons stated that the Commission listened to the proposal in earnest and has been very supportive. There were conversations that happened about possible funding mechanisms and if the pilot program is successful and new lighting warranted this could be an additional capital request. But, all of these are also requests and do not necessary make it into the Town's Capital Improvement Plan. He also stated that while the discussion was about possible funding options for the future, the decision was to enhance the existing lighting now as stated by the Commission and Director of Parks and Open Space. He added that this is not a change in direction or intent and stated that he thought everyone left the meeting understanding the approach and satisfied at the last meeting.● D. Lyons asked M. Paluszek if the expectation of everyone he is talking about himself included is that the Commission approved to put up \$40K in light funding for a pilot program? M. Paluzek	
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	<p>replied with a no. He stated that his understanding was at the last meeting the operating budget could be used to put in appropriate lighting that would constitute sports lighting for the courts. He stated that as of tonight he is hearing about redirecting lighting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• E. Gallentine stated that she is definitely looking into adding more lighting. She thinks that perhaps the problem is with semantics. She is working with lighting professionals to provide the best lighting outcome possible for the pilot. She has no reason to think that substantive lighting can not be achieved with this approach.• C. Batchelor stated that when she deals with sports lighting on other projects, if you have an old pole the vendors won't sell you a new set of lights. She stated that you have to get a new pole. She remembers hearing in the discussion, that this is a dense neighborhood and there was a lot of hesitancy about lighting the courts so that it looks like day time.• M. Paluzek stated that "it would not be sports lighting or professionally lit courts" were never stated, and if so a lot of people who were here would not have been satisfied or happy. Everyone in the end was happy we were going to have a lit court, that was the need, goal and it was achieved. He stated that what the Commission is talking about now is not a pilot program. M. Paluszek stated that the primary focus of the people who spoke out was the very late night activity.• N. O'Connor asked M. Paluszek if he is here tonight for us to vote on new lighting. She stated that she is not prepared to vote on new lighting. She stated she honestly felt that what we voted on everyone understood. She stated that we have a tight neighborhood and to expect anything more than what we are doing right now is not appropriate. She stated that it is her understanding that we were going to use what we have and make it work better. She stated that it's a difference of opinion and it's unfortunate.• J. Carroll apologizes if there are any	
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	<p>misunderstandings. He strongly encourages anyone who is interested in any type of program in any park to come before the Commission. He discussed previous petitioners requesting a change in use, such as skateboarding, the real time and length and effort it takes to evaluate impact and appropriateness. He can understand going through procedure, having your voice heard and feeling encouraged that what you are advocating for is being executed down the line. He apologizes if there is any misunderstanding, but from his perspective he was under the impression we would work with what we have and do the pilot program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● D. Lyons stated that the conduit is not to going in because we are not digging down in that court. He thinks with the 3 lights it is adequate enough for a pilot program and spending the money on sports light and new poles would be fool hearted.● E. Gallentine stated that at the time she did talk to the Deputy Town Administrator and said that the Commission was having a conversation about lighting and that it is something that we may add to the CIP. She did put that out there. M. Paluzek stated that there was discussion here having it as a place holder. N. O'Connor stated that there was a discussion but it was decided that we don't have to go to the CIP, we can make the lights work with improvements to what we have.● A. Bellalta stated that there is a misunderstanding, but the Commission is still supporting a pilot program. We can improve what it is there now and we can move forward with the pilot.● M. Paluszek thinks a whole group of people who are very active on this are feeling like they are being misled about what was agreed to. He stated that there was a capital improvement item that they were encouraged to support and that the lighting would be taken care of in the operating budget.● E Gallentine feels that he is jumping to this conclusion that sports lighting is going in there.	
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	<p>E. Gallentine stated that there are a lot of reservations from those in the neighborhood and it is important that this pilot be successful. E. Gallentine stated that you haven't even seen the improved lighting yet, let's give it a chance. J. Bain stated that what we are doing is one step at a time, that is how we do a pilot program. J. Bain asked M. Paluszek to let the Town adjust the lighting and see how it goes one step at a time. He stated that if the pilot program is successful there maybe an opportunity to change the lighting if that is even necessary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A. Bellalta agrees with J. Bain. She understands M. Paluszek's commitment to the kids and what you want to do for them. She discussed how the skateboarders have come before the Commission.• D. Lyons stated that there has been no discussion of new poles or sports lighting and the minutes reflect that. He stated that you were not promised new poles. He stated that we could redirect lighting, and then vote on the pilot program.• M. Paluzek asked if he is correct in understanding that this Commission voted on and approved a base plan at one point in time and that included conduits that would allow for poles to be built at some time if it was the right thing to do. E. Gallentine stated that was the intent. E. Gallentine explained why that the conduit is not going in. However if the Commission decided to put sports lighting in the future there is already overhead lighting and we can come in from School Street . E. Gallentine stated that we are not trenching that is why the conduit is not going in now, but that doesn't preclude us from putting new lights in the future. If the Commission decided to do so in the future. E. Gallentine stated that M. Paluszek is correct about that. M. Paluzek stated he remembers a conversation about mil and overlay and it was known from early on that is what will likely be done for the court. It wasn't going to be an major digging up on the court, and the conduit was approved. J. Carroll disagreed and said that while they were not	
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	<p>sure of the budget at the time the hope had been for a full reconstruction of the court.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Bain stated that he is sorry that he had this misunderstanding. M. Paluszek stated that by doing what you are doing you are setting the pilot program up for failure. • E. Gallentine stated that the Commission will still need to decide what they want to do for hours and when that will be placed on on the agenda. 	
<p>Park and Open Space Report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D. Lyons gave an update on the River Road Development/Zoning Project. Hugh Mattisson and several people have problems with the mass and the height of the building. They think with that size lot it should not be as tall and it seems that parking is driving the height. There was talk about getting rid of the parking, doing valet and doing parking across the street. He thinks that they could reduce height along Washington and rise a little along Brookline Avenue and River road, and that could be a compromise. The height of the Children’s building was discussed. Overnight parking was discussed. There are arguments about what to do with both sides, examples of those arguments were shared. • E. Gallentine showed pictures of River Road. E. Gallentine was asked by Economic Development to come up with different options for River Road to enhance tree planting. Alternative 1 is to keep trees on both sides of the street, alternative 2 is keeping the street two-way and having trees on the park side and alternative 3 has trees on the development side. E. Gallentine showed what it would look like if it was to be made one way and how the direction of travel would flow. • E. Gallentine gave a Lawton Playground update. A. Blair along with Elissa Yanovich from the GreenSpace Alliance came up with a Community Garden sketch. E. Gallentine showed the Lawton Playground Cost estimate and concept plan to the Commission. The raised beds were discussed. The water from this will be metered and paid for by the Town. 	

	<p>Fundraising for this project was discussed. This project needs a volunteer coordinator. The Larz Community Garden was discussed. The project potentially being put in the CIP was discussed. E. Gallentine will keep going with this and come back with more information for the Commission as it comes together. E. Gallentine suggested having a meeting on site to talk about this with the neighborhood.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A brief update of the Devotion School was given. A map of Harvard/Stedman/ the new building/the expansion/the current main building was shown to the Commission. She wanted the commission to see and be aware that the little league ballfield is going away, it will be a soccer field. She showed the tennis courts and path up to Babcock. The playground area was shown; knolls, tree and hard court area were discussed. The space that will allow access for a fire truck to enter was shown. She showed where the different play equipment will be placed. There will be a rain garden and school garden. <p>An Emerald Necklace update was given to the Commission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A Phase 1 ribbon cutting date was discussed.• Emerald Necklace bike/Ped Crossing project is underway• The Olmsted Tree society has done a great job at matching us dollar to dollar for work in the Emerald Necklace.• The art pieces that were vandalized at the Studios without Walls Art Exhibit was discussed. There was discussion around choosing a different venue and having the police pick up their patrol in that area to help prevent future vandalizing. This event lasts 4-5 weeks.• Riverway: Mike and Kitty Dukakis dedication update was given. <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Granite, pavers, railing2. Site improvements and grading3. Bank Stabilization, loam and seeding4. Planting	
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5. Funded by: Emerald NECLACE/Justine Mee Liff Fund, Brookline Community Foundation, Friends of the Muddy River, Brookline Green Space Alliance, High and Arlene Mattison, Tone of Brookline.

The project the Commission has approved was shown. The language has been tweaked to work better on the plinth. Pictures of the bank were shown. E. Gallentine thought about how we are going to do this gorgeous planting and the bank is in dire conditions. E. Gallentine discussed the work she will be doing in that area. The project scope has been expanded and the conservancy is paying for that work.

- The Interpretive/Wayfinding Signage project has been awarded to Boston Sign. There is a meeting next week.
- The outfield fence for the little the league field has gone in at Warren Field. The permanent fence that was advocated for by Brookline Youth Baseball was installed and has had some push back. The storage shed was discussed. The electric upgrading of the area was discussed.
- Brookline Avenue Playground project is moving along nicely. This will be going out to bid middle of June. If prices are not favorable we will repackage and send back out.
- Emerson and Corey Hill Design Review projects are underway
- The 9th school study continues.
- E. Gallentine thinks the Commission should think about a meeting with the GreenSpace alliance and Conservation Commission to discuss the work that is being done to date. This work would include getting all the deeds, titles, acquisition and history on every parcel that we own, and figure what the protected status is and where we go from there.
- The Rules and Regulations signage was discussed.
- Friends of Halls Pond are celebrating their 40th anniversary at Wheelock collage on June 12th.
- A wildlife management approach to goose control update was given
- An open space plan update was given. J. Stameris has been attending these meetings.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Master Plan for Griggs Park was discussed. It will be nice to have this plan and work on sections of the park. ● A St. John and Green Street update was given ● A Fisher Hill Reservoir update was given. E. Gallentine discussed having a soft opening in July. ● The tree by-law warrant article was discussed. The warrant article was brought before the Board of Selectman and Advisory Committee. It is being recommending it go to a Selectman Committee. She stated that Park and Recreation Commission should weigh in on what that looks like. ● The Public Art Working Group met and decided on locations for the first two art installations at Larz Anderson Park. 	
Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No New Business 	
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● J. Carroll moved to adjourn. Seconded by D. Lyons. All in favor 	r.

Next Meeting: June 14, 2016 Location: Town Hall, Room 111

A true record

Attest Jessica White

Date: 5/10/2016