

Park and Recreation Commission	Meeting Minutes
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Date: January 11, 2022

Place: Zoom Webinar

Commissioners Attending: John Bain, Nancy O’Connor Clara Batchelor, Wendy Sheridan Ames, Antonia Bellalta and Theresa Mooney

Commissioners Absent: Jon Pan

Staff: Alexandra Vecchio: Director of Parks and Open Space, Jon Lewitus: Assistant Director of Recreation, Jessica White: Parks and Open Space Assistant, Michael Bartlett, Parks and Open Space Operations Manager, Scott Landgren, Senior Landscape Architect, Justin Lawson: Golf Course General Manager

TOPIC	KEY POINTS/DISCUSSION
Chairman’s Welcome/Call meeting to order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. Bain called the meeting to order. J. Bain took time at the beginning of the meeting to recognize the talented members of the Commission and their level of expertise in their job field.
Approval of November 29, 2021, and December 14, 2021, Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N. O’Connor moved for approval of the November 29, 2021, Park and Recreation Commission Minutes. All in favor. Seconded by C. Batchelor. A roll call vote was taken. N. O’Connor moved for approval of the December 14, 2021 Park and Recreation Commission Minutes. Seconded by C. Batchelor. All in favor. A roll call vote was taken. N. O’Connor wanted to make one change in the Food and beverage vote. The vote was listed as being 4-3 and she would like it changes to 4(favor)-2(against)-1 (abstention). It was clear in the minutes but wanted to make this clear.
Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Public Comment.

<p>Recreation Update</p>	<p>BREC Staff Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Eliot- Currently have 5 full-time Recreation Leaders. Applying for ARPA Funds to bring back 2 Rec leaders-FY23 ➤ EKAC- Aquatics Supervisor. Lifeguard shortage. ➤ Jack Kirrane Ice Rink. Staff shortage. ➤ Soule Early Childhood Center- Hired one more full-time staff: Jose Corrales and one more part-time employee: Dylan O’Dell. <p>Program Registration and Special Events</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Spring registration opened 1/11/22 at 9:00 am ➤ Summer camp registration is visible 1/12/22; opens 1/19/22 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Summer hiring will begin very soon. ➤ Owl Prowl- 1/21 & 1/28 ➤ Moonlight Family Snowshoeing- 2/11 ➤ Maple Sugaring- 3/12 <p>Spring Programs 2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Athletics ➤ Specialty Programs ➤ ASP ➤ Vacation Weeks ➤ Therapeutic Recreation & SOMA ➤ EKAC <p>Athletics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Winter 2021-2022-Currently being run ➤ K-2 Basketball, Joel Noe Rec League, Travel Basketball, Dodgeball, Pickleball, Tae Kwon-Do, Archery ➤ Spring 2022 ➤ Archery, Dodgeball, NFL Flag Football, Field Hockey Clinics, Lacrosse, Pickleball, Soccer, Tae Kwon-Do, Track & Field, Ultimate Frisbee, Wrestling. ➤ Potential: Softball and Volleyball <p>Specialty Programs</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Blast Babysitting & CPR Certification➤ Home Alone Safety➤ Chess Wizards➤ E-Sports League➤ Lego Engineering: Winter Session and two 1-day sessions➤ Spring session of supplemental science➤ Shovel Our Snow-referral program <p>After School Programs and Vacation Week Programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ ASP is fully staffed with 8 part-time employees. All 5 days are sold out with 40 spots.➤ ASP curriculum is fully STEAM-based, integrating science and the arts.➤ Teachers have moved forward with adding emotional wellness into the curriculum for K-4th graders.➤ We ran a successful December vacation week program that sold out with 40 kids. <p>Therapeutic Recreation and SOMA-Special Olympics Massachusetts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ Micah Barshay continues to deliver high-quality programs.➤ SOMA basketball season is underway. 54 athletes with 25 amazing volunteers! They practice at Winsor school.➤ Sensory Friendly Swimming has been a great success in bringing younger participants into RT.➤ Sensory Friendly Skating at Larz Anderson-1/21/22➤ Spring season will be busy with On the Town Trips (OTT), Forever Young, Hiking, Walking Club, SOMA Aquatics, and SOMA Track & Field.➤ Currently working with BHS students in the AV club on creating a Recreation Therapy marketing campaign. <p>Evelyn Kirrane Aquatics Center</p>		
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- First staff in-service training of the year was held on 1/5/22 discussing policy and procedure (Covid)
- In the process of onboarding and training newly hired lifeguards.
- Registration for spring programs will open in February.
- Dolphins swim team will compete in their second in-person meet this weekend in Milford.

Jack Kirrane Ice Rink

- **Current Services Offered**
- Public Skate- Averaging 120 users per time slot on weekends and 40 users per time slot on weekdays.
- Private Rentals, Bay State Skating Lessons, Men’s Hockey League, Adult Drop-In, Sensory Friendly Skating.
- **Partner and User Groups**
- Brookline High School, Brookline Youth Hockey, Dexter High School, Park School.

In Summary

- **Current Services Offered**
- Public Skate- Averaging 120 users per time slot on weekends and 40 users per time slot on weekdays.
- Private Rentals, Bay State Skating Lessons, Men’s Hockey League, Adult Drop-In, Sensory Friendly Skating.
- **Partner and User Groups**
- Brookline High School, Brookline Youth Hockey, Dexter High School, Park School.
- J. Bain and J. Lewitus discussed a van that has been at the MT building, the J Bain would like it moved up to Eliot. J. Bain thanked J. Lewitus for both a great presentation and for his continual hard

	<p>work and dedication.</p> <p>➤ N. O'Connor thanked J. Lewitus for a great presentation and she looks forward to seeing that community room. She stated that in terms of programs, the field hockey clinic and the softball league and volleyball for middle school sports, the school department had a softball team and baseball team for the seventh and eighth grade but it fell off probably 30 or 40 years ago. She stated that a group of parents got together and we're pushing for various sports to get kids involved in sports before they get to the high school, one of them was field hockey, and another one was volleyball. She stated that they may do still indoor volleyball at the middle school level, but the field hockey fell away. She is glad to see these are back. She stated that it is hard to participate at the level that Brookline participates in when you're just starting it for the first time as a freshman. She is thrilled to see the coordination with the high school. She thinks coordinating these athletic programs, with the high school coaches and getting the interest is very important. She stated that the other thing that was suggested in the past was to bring in the coaches and some players into the elementary schools. J. Lewitus stated that Recreation has a great relationship with Pete Rittenberg, the Athletic Director at the high school. He stated that it is a recreation mission to</p>	
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	<p>more involved and partner with the high school.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ W. Sheridan Ames believes that are paid positions that are part of the Brookline educators union contract for the coaching of the middle school sports, which includes girls and boys basketball, indoor soccer, and coed volleyball. But beyond that, she thinks a lot of the elementary school kids have been forced to go to softball clubs or area field hockey clubs for training. She feels that offering a reasonably priced, local opportunity for kids is really important so that those kids don't get priced out of participation. She is thrilled to see that Recreation is collaborating with the PHA, she thinks it is overdue. She stated that we all know that transportation is a huge issue when it comes to participation. In addition, the cumbersome application process for funding is just another piece of the puzzle that she would love to see. She knows that Recreation is constantly working on that, and she appreciates the efforts there.➤ T. Mooney stated that J. Lewitus mentioned that the lifeguard staff count was down. She is curious if Recreation is pursuing alternative options for hiring. She wondered if he considered raising the hourly wage. She stated that the pool schedule is quite condensed, particularly for the family pool. J. Lewitus stated that the short answer is yes. Recreation has	
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	<p>raised the starting salary to \$18, which is above the market to get more lifeguards. They are also offering a certification course for anyone who wants to come and become a certified lifeguard. Recreation will pay for the course with a six-month commitment to the pool. They have reached out to local colleges, universities, and have worked with the high school swim team. He has reached out to his colleagues and other recreation departments around the state to see what they have been doing. It's been a massive problem, all avenues are being explored. He stated that during COVID a lot of the certification courses stopped because a big portion is person in-person which they did not do for COVID reasons. He is hearing that a lot of people said well, they're not offering the certification courses I can go to Dunkin Donuts or works in a different sector that pays more with no liability. He stated that the past month has been a little better because college-age students were home, but now they're going back to school. He stated that in terms of the schedule, they are week by week right now because of the lifeguard and staffing scenario.</p> <p>➤ A. Mattison wanted to start by saying how impressed she is with that presentation. She stated that it is a richness that these kinds of programming/programs are offered to the community. To her, it is deep and varied</p>	
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	<p>and it is just an opportunity for so many different kinds of activities. She wanted to comment on how amazing Stephanie Springer is, she is terrific and she is so impressed with the environmental programming that she has seen. She thinks it is very important to look at these things not only of what we would like to offer but maybe what we might like to be able to do if we had more fields or if we had ideal situations that we don't have. She stated that maybe part of that conversation should always be what we can use that's available from other communities or private resources. She stated that instead of hearing that people are so dissatisfied with the condition of our fields, for example, or that we might have to go to artificial turf, she hopes that we have a full discussion about what is practical to offer.</p>	
<p>Select Commissioners and Members of the Public for Design review Committee for Golf Course Master Plan</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Lawson stated that tonight we are here to establish the members of the Design Review Committee which would be comprised of four park and recreation commissioners and three members of the public. The members of the public were invited to write letters expressing interest in serving on this committee that will help put together a master plan for the golf course, itself, addressing accessibility, aesthetics, and functionality. • J. Bain and J. Lawson discussed the 	

	<p>activity up at the golf course this past weekend that brought snow. He discussed the cross-country sledding and skiing that took place at the golf course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• John Bain, Theresa Mooney, Antonia Bellalta, and C. Batchelor have agreed to serve on this Golf Course Master Plan Design review Committee.• J. Lawson discussed the 4 members of the public that expressed interest in serving on this Design Review Committee. Please find Carol Hillman, Joh Parla, Kevin Holfroerty, and Phillip Bell letters of interest here:• A. Bellalta asked if there were any other letters of interest from direct abutters. J. Lawson stated that the only abutter is John Parla.• J. Lawson explained the notification process.• J. Bain would like to put forward Carol Hillman, John Parla, and Phillip Bell as the members of the public to serve on the Golf Course Master Plan. This will require a vote from the Commission.• N. O'Connor stated that she agrees with J. Bain's assessment, it seems like a good makeup of folks to her.• J. Bain moved to appoint Carol Hillman, John Parla, and Phillip Bell to serve as the members of the public on the Golf Course Master Plan Committee. Seconded by N. O'Connor. A roll call vote was taken. All in favor.	
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Punch Bowl Outdoor Dining Permit Extension

- A. Vecchio stated that as a refresher for the commissioners, this agenda item was brought up under new business at last month's meeting. Punch Bowl was looking for an extension to their outdoor dining permit along River Road, and the Commissioners asked for a little bit more information. A. Vecchio stated that 48 outdoor seats were issued for the sidewalk or parking lane. There was one issue for a roadway, and that was Punchbowl on River Road. Also, Healthworks was allowed to set up an outside tent for classes in the Babcock Street lot. This was all part of the response to COVID: getting people outdoors and trying to support businesses to be able to bounce back from everything that's occurred with the pandemic. She stated that 17 of those sidewalk parking lane locations opted to remain open through the winter months, which was classified as through March 31, 2022. Later this year, those spaces will be under the purview of what are now outdoor dining regulations, which have been established by the Select Board based on the success of the programs in 2020 and 2021. She knows that other questions that were asked were how much revenue has been generated by this and where's that revenue being used. She stated that there hasn't been any revenue generated. This was a COVID response measure by the town to

	<p>help support local businesses. She stated that moving forward effective March 31st, there will be a fee for either an annual permit on the street, a seasonal permit on the street, an annual permit for sidewalk or a seasonal permit for the sidewalk. She stated that the Parks and Recreation Commission does have jurisdiction over River Road. It is her understanding that those special case permits will be thought about collectively in terms of what the policy is moving forward. She thinks that there would be a larger public process around what happens with that. She stated that tonight we are just talking about a temporary extension. Thus far, their outdoor dining permit did end on December 31st. DPW, fire, and police have all permitted that road to remain closed mostly because it would have been more confusing to people and probably cause more accidents if it had re-opened to cars. If the special use permit doesn't get approved by Parks and Recreation Commission, Transportation Board, and Select Board moving forward, then that road would be opened back up to traffic. She wanted to remind folks to think about this as a special use permit. She is going to propose through November 15, 2022, which is the end of the outdoor dining season for this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jennifer Ziskin addressed the Commission. She is the owner of La	
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	<p>Mora- she has been in Brookline for over 18 years. She and her husband opened the Punch Bowl in April in the new Hilton Garden Inn. They tried to get outdoor dining at Lamora but it wasn't possible (it is a state highway). She discussed how her other restaurants have suffered during the pandemic. She discussed how outdoor dining has saved one of her restaurants. She stated she is trying to be as creative as possible to keep the businesses alive. She had signed on with the Hilton Garden Inn before the pandemic hit. The Claremont Corporation is a family-owned development company and has been an incredible partner. She stated that she would have never opened a restaurant during the pandemic, but they have been so easy to work with. She stated that River Road was closed with the building of the hotel for a couple of years, and as a result, people developed different traffic habits. It dawned on her that the outdoor space of River Road would be a great place to be able to have outdoor dining. It has been game-changing for the Punch Bowl. There is no way the Punch Bowl would have survived the summer without having the outdoor patio. There is a third-floor Terrace at Punch Bowl and the hotel but it's very tricky to use for dining because it's on the third floor and it's very hard to have kitchen access there. There can't be any</p>	
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	<p>propane up there unless you build in gas lines. She stated that the outdoor dining has been game-changing and she is so appreciative to the Town of Brookline for allowing the Punch Bowl to be able to utilize River Road. She stated that none of her restaurants would be alive without community support. She thanked several Brookline Staff members for all their help.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• J. Ziskin showed the Commission some pictures of the outside space. She stated that they have been really lucky to have River Road and all of the neighbors along River Road. She stated that when this presentation was given back in March, she had letters from all the neighbors and hotels, which were extremely supportive. She discussed how outdoor dining has provided a much safer environment. She feels that this outdoor dining has beautified things. It is right on the Emerald Necklace, so different people have biked by, seen the outdoor space, and have come to the restaurant because of that. There is a small patio that can be utilized outside of the River Road accessibility, but River Road does create this wide-open space for Punch Bowl. She feels that it adds to the community as well. Signs have been made because the hotel agreed to put up some different amenities for the public and she feels that the closing of River Road and utilizing it for outdoor dining	
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	<p>have prompted more awareness of these amenities. There is a bike fixing station, a water fountain, and the creation of public seating. There has also been an addition of being able to use the restroom at the hotel. J. Ziskin showed the Commission a view from the third-floor terrace that shows how beautiful the dining experience is for the outside and the community. She feels that the outdoor dining is extremely beneficial to the restaurant, but it also really beautifies the back of River Road. She stated that having outdoor space and parks for people to come and meet and congregate is important. The Punch Bowl loves hosting community gatherings and she looks forward to being creative and thinking about some of these different events that Punch Bowl can do with the community as well.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• C. Batchelor stated that she has biked along the area and stopped for coffee. She asked J. Ziskin if there would be any outside seating if she lost the use of River Road. J. Ziskin stated that she would have about five to seven tables crunched up on the patio right outside the door. However, the use of River Road quadruples the space. A. Vecchio and C. Batchelor discussed how the current permit does not have fees. The extension that's being proposed would be for the remainder of the outdoor dining season through November 15, 2022, and	
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	<p>then the plan by that point, based on her discussions with the Planning Department, staff, and DPW is that there will be some process in place for people to weigh in on what the long term use of River Road looks like. It's about more than just the Punch Bowl restaurant and their use of it. Also, to think about the possibility of figuring out what that fee should be for the permit and then figure out how that would that fee be used. Since this location is the only one that falls under the Park and Recreation Commission jurisdiction, she feels that it would be appropriate to consider how any funds raised are going back to support the park itself and support some of the maintenance around the grounds itself as well. C. Batchelor and A. Vecchio discussed how the transportation board will take a closer look at the transportation side of things if this road were to open back up to traffic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• N. O'Connor stated that November 22nd does not seem like a temporary permit to her. She stated that it's 11 and a half months which seems like a lot. A. Vecchio stated that there is no fee established for this particular situation. There are five special cases for outdoor dining permits, this being one of them, where the permit fees that have been established by the Select Board are not applicable in this case. It would require those fees to be established and she	
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	<p>believes those fees go into place for those sidewalk and parking space outdoor dining effective April 1, 2022, because they are established. She thinks the concern by the planning staff and transportation staff is that it will not be established for these special case scenarios by April 1st, especially if they wanted to do a longer and more visionary public planning process. This is where the suggestion arises of getting through the outdoor dining season of November 15, 2022. At that point, there will be a fee structure in place, there will be an understanding of what the public wants to use this space for, and there will be a proposal as to where those funds can be used. N. O'Connor stated that to her it seems like a very long time. To her, it is quasi-parkland and under our jurisdiction. She knows that the restaurants have been helping a lot of people out in terms of outdoor dining and providing meals/ takeout. She is unsure what to do with the whole thing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• J. Bain stated that 11 months is a long time without a fee. J. Bain and J. Ziskin discussed the contributions/ work she has done with other organizations in town. He would support this extension.• A. Vecchio stated that this parkland is being used as a road that people drove over so it was not being used as a park in the typical sense. She stated that if the Commission is reluctant to approve	
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	<p>through November 15th, it will put additional stress on staff who have to develop this new policy and regulations. The extension for Punch Bowl could go until the end of March and then at the end of March if the policy is not drafted, this would move to an open road and there would be cars going through there again until we were able to figure out the other plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• W. Sheridan Ames thanked Jennifer for not only the presentation, but for bringing a well-loved family restaurant to Brookline. She would say as a parent of three kids who are actively involved in sports and recreation in Brookline, that La Morra never once said no to an ask of a gift certificate or contribution to a silent auction. She realized this new project is ambitious and it's a heartbreaking story of what restaurants, in general, are going through right now. She personally fully supports extending this until November 15 of 2022. She stated that if we need to create another subcommittee to consider how to use this space, she knows it will not going to be completed by March. She would love to see if we could sort of form a group to look at this space if it's not a road and maybe look at it as a shared space post-November 15th. It could be a pocket park or an interesting vibrant community space that coexists with a restaurant that also serves the public. She understands	
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	<p>that Alexandra's staff is also stretched thin, but doesn't see why we would turn this back into a road and then decide we want it as a park. She thinks it's a lost opportunity, both for the restaurant and for parks and open space if we do that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A. Bellalta stated that she has personally benefited from the Punch Bowl and La Morra; just living in this neighborhood she sees how much they have done for the community. Also, she thinks the pandemic is a game-changer right now with all the policies and everyone is helping each other out to survive. She feels that this restaurant is a tremendous asset to the town. It's always busy and she discussed her son's rehearsal dinner she had. She agrees with W. Sheridan Ames that having another decision that fast by March is not possible and she doesn't want to make any crazy changes. She stated that while going through the design process of the hotel, everyone wanted this restaurant to be accessible to the larger community and she thinks this is done that much better than if it just had five tables on the sidewalk. She would fully support extending it till November. She would make one suggestion to Jennifer, she thinks that the public amenities seem hidden, and she would like Jennifer to think about that and make the restaurant and public space a mix. J. Ziskin wanted to stress that we want it to be a community space.	
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- N. O'Connor stated that November just seems so very far away. She is not looking for tons of work or another subcommittee but wants to acknowledge that this is something new that was born out of COVID. She stated that economic development has been great in helping local businesses. She is unsure of what to do but wants to think outside the box and have it makes sense. She understands nobody has time but that's not a good excuse either. She would love to see it not be a road and it sounds like Jennifer would be interested in other activities potentially to go on there. She wants to make it community-based on some level on some days. She wonders if we are thinking that fees won't be charged until after November 2022. A. Vecchio stated that if that's the vote that we take tonight and it is approved, then yes, the permit would be extended through November 2022. She would strongly encourage the commission to come to some resolution even if it is short-term on this evening. She stated that in all likelihood there would be a gap in what would be accomplished before then, but at least that would provide some resolution for Jennifer and the business to continue for the next few months and use that space that currently isn't being used and has been closed to cars.
- C. Batchelor stated that it is really important that we study things quite

	<p>carefully to know what the value of this land is, what we should charge, how it should be handled, how it supports the bike path and the amenities that the hotel promised. She doesn't see this happening before July or August and also no one knows what is happening with COVID. She is in support of extending the permission without a fee until November and then hopefully by then all the parameters have been studied and a reasonable and equitable fee is established. She stated that there's very little wear and tear as running a restaurant on a paved surface. She would support it as it's currently proposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• J. Bain and A. Vecchio discussed how the Select Board has not made any decision on this special case for the Punch Bowl, but for anything that is outdoor dining on the sidewalks or in the parking spaces they have come up with a structure, a fee, and are supportive of expanding that.• A. Bellalta suggested having a midway point if people feel that November is too far away. N. O'Connor stated that she would be happy to look at it in July and then potentially push it off another quarter, with the option to keep on working on it or begin working on it. It sounds like nobody has the time for her. She is sympathetic to all sides and she is unsure of what the answer is. She just feels that we need to start looking at this.	
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	<p>A. Bellalta agrees and feels that the area is better served as a public amenity than being crammed up against the building with five tables. She stated that during the design review, that was so much about the traffic coming and going from the building, and with a little sidewalk it never felt like the right outdoor restaurant amenity for your Brookline. She understands that there are some concerns about parkland and fees, but as a designer, she would push for providing a real space that benefits both Punch Bowl, the hotel, and parkland.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• W. Sheridan Ames stated that it seems like there are two issues here. The Commission could take a vote to extend the use of this space till November 15, 2022, or we could also take a vote to extend the permit until November 15, 2022, but reserve the right to revisit the possible institution of a permit fee beginning next month. She thinks that the bigger picture is not only about the permit, it's how do we as a Park and Recreation Commission in town want to potentially use that space. It may not be for a restaurant. It could be a pocket/ joint space, or even an art exhibit that is done along the river. She would be comfortable personally making a motion to extend a no-fee permit to November 15, 2022. She would also feel comfortable extending the permit to Punch Bowl through that time, but at a	
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	<p>halfway point revisiting the potential for fees. This way they know they can use the space through November but fees might be instituted at some point along the way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• W. Sheridan Ames made a motion to approve the extension of the outdoor dining permit at Punchbowl through November 15, 2022, without a fee. Seconded by C. Batchelor• C. Batchelor likes extending it to November and likes what W. Sheridan Ames said about we may not want it to be a restaurant. She is in favor of extending it to November 15th, but during that time when Punch Bowl has the right use of it, they need to understand that during that time the Town will be studying the use of the space. A. Vecchio wanted to clarify that is one hundred percent what the Town is saying would happen, during that time while they are using this space and people are enjoying it both all town boards and the various Commission would have to go through, draft the language and it would go through each of those for a public hearing for public comment. Then a determination would be made before that November deadline. That amount of time is allowing that public process and staff process to occur.• A. Mattison stated that she is in support of the restaurant. She does think that it is a little unfair to the other restaurants in	
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	<p>Brookline for them to have to start paying a fee. It doesn't seem right for some restaurants not to have to pay a fee to operate on town land. She doesn't understand why the Park and Recreation Commission can't assess a fee over the summer and still be doing long-term planning to look at best uses. She does empathize with this awful situation for restaurants during COVID, but at the same time is very protective of parkland. She was part of the hotel planning and in her opinion, to some degree, she does not think that the hotel has kept up its end of the bargain as well as it commitments it made to the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• N. O'Connor would like to offer an amendment that we consider some sort of a fee as of July 1, 2022, having the ability to be there through the end of the year but charging a fee July 1st.• W. Sheridan Ames seconded N. O'Connor's amendment to her motion to revisit the potential fee for the permit beginning July 1 till the end of the permit on November 15, 2022.• N. O'Connor stated that if the motion fails then it goes back to the original motion. A roll call vote was taken. W. Sheridan Ames- Yes A. Bellalta- No T. Mooney- No J. Pan- Absent C. Batchelor- No N. O'Connor- Yes J. Bain-No	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4-2 Amendment has failed. • W. Sheridan Ames made a motion to approve the extension of the outdoor dining permit at Punchbowl through November 15, 2022, without a fee. Seconded by C. Batchelor. W. Sheridan Ames- Yes J. Bain- Yes A. Bellalta- Yes T. Mooney- Yes N. O’ Connor- No C. Batchelor – Yes • The vote passed 5-1 • J. Ziskin thanked everyone. She means it when she says she is committed to the community and parks and open space and plans on doing community events and supporting the community in any way that she can. 	
<p>Green Dog Subcommittee Appointment and Vote</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The agenda item was voted on at the last meeting and three members of the public were chosen to serve on the Green Dog Subcommittee, one of which was Wynter Duncanson. Unfortunately, after we notified Wynter that she was selected for the subcommittee she notified us that she's moving out of Brookline. She is no longer a resident that can serve on the subcommittee so a replacement is needed. She stated that Wynter Duncanson was someone who we wanted to geographically diversify the committee. She was located in North 	

	<p>Brookline and used a lot of North Brookline Parks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• N. O'Connor stated that the next person she had on her list was Nina Makhortova and she was also from the north Brookline neighborhood. She has children that used playgrounds, play organized sports, and are part of the green dog program. She would move that the Commission considers her. The Commission received all the resumes last month and Nina seemed to be the next in line.• N. O. O'Connor moved to appoint Nina Makhortova to the Green Dog Subcommittee. Seconded by J. Bain. All in favor.	
<p>Turf Field Management Plan Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A. Vecchio stated that we would like to provide the Commission with a turf management plan on regular basis, but she thinks it is particularly appropriate at this time considering the discussion the Commission started last month regarding synthetic turf. She stated that this will be an ongoing discussion on each of the Commission's agendas as we move forward.• M. Bartlett introduced himself. He stated that there have been a few changes since the last time the Commission saw it. Internally, an athletic turf management plan was started many years ago and it was finally finished in 2020. Michael Bartlett, Operation Manager, and David	

Croteau, Athletic Field Supervisor put this plan together. He stated that we then did an athletic field needs assessment that many Commissioners participated in, and eventually the athletic turf management plan was rolled into that. Some changes to the management plan were based on some of the feedback from the needs assessment.

Please see the attached presentation here.

[HTTPS://WWW.BROOKLINEMA.GOV/DOCUMENTCENTER/INDEX/2080](https://www.brooklinema.gov/documentcenter/index/2080)

- W. Sheridan Ames thanked M. Bartlett for that thorough presentation. She hates to say but this is sort of information she thinks we all hoped for like three years ago as part of that GreenPlay work, but she appreciates the department spending the time to do this. She struggles with settling for average but feels that our hands are tied and she thinks that everyone is doing the best they can. She stated that as a supporter of recreation, and active and healthy lifestyles, she doesn't want to see programs have to cut back on usage and she knows it's in direct conflict with the fields. She stated that we have real mental health problems with kids right now, and she wants to get every kid that wants to participate in a recreational level out there. She feels that synthetic turf solves part of that conflict. She stated that we've talked about this over and over and she thinks we should be looking at possible places where

	<p>maybe a field can be converted and understanding what the impact of that is both from environmental impact and how it addresses the usage or over usage of natural turf fields. The only other thing she wanted to make note of is she noticed on M. Bartlett's chart was a big drop in the evaluation numbers at Downe's grass from the spring to fall evaluation. She stated that it is kind of a disappointment that the field is relatively new and it is well compacted and full of weeds. She stated that it is very clear it's on M. Bartlett's radar, but hopefully there's something that can be done to address that. M. Bartlett agrees with W. Sheridan Ames, especially when it comes to synthetic. He is a turf guy, not a synthetic person, but in this case, the situation that we have here with usage in Brookline is that we need synthetics. He stated that we need to have the ability to take some of those permanent hours that we're putting on natural grass and move them on to synthetic so that we can give the natural grass time to rest. He agrees that no one wants to hear about tier 4 or 5, he would like to stay at tier 3. Synthetic is not very popular but it's a road to go in that direction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• N. O'Connor thanked M. Bartlett for that presentation. She stated that it's always enlightening and there's so much information to be had. She stated that our fields are very well used. She stated that	
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	<p>to Wendy's point in regards to synthetic turf, it is not popular with many or with some but it's something that she thinks we need to be considering. It needs our toolkit because she feels that we want to rest our natural grass fields to maintain the better level they need to be rested from time to time. She thinks there's a balance that we need to try to find and think she thinks we're up to the challenge. She stated that the work that the crews do is pretty amazing. She wants to second Wendy's comment about the need for synthetic turf and it is not everywhere in town, of course, but she thinks it's important.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• J. Bain thanked M. Bartlett for his presentation.• Laurie Lasky addressed the Commission. She thanked M. Bartlett for a great presentation. She stated that she is one of those people who had a lot of issues with synthetic turf, but she loves this town and the parks and open spaces. She feels as we move forward and fill that need, we need to look at adding some more synthetic turf. She stated that messaging and communicating is going to be vital and it has to be careful in bringing the community along and try to get some people to understand the breadth of the issues. She knows that the Park and Recreation Commission is committed to recreation and these beautiful parks and it is the only way to keep them healthy	
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	<p>and to keep them well. She thinks that message hasn't come out very often, strongly enough or enough when these issues have been at the front. She stated that she has a couple of dogs and is a Green Dog participant. It seems to her that the Green Dog fields used to be closed more readily with wet/damp conditions. She wonders if there has been some shift in the approach to how often or the criteria for officially putting up those sandwich boards and closing the green dog fields. M. Bartlett stated that there positively has been no shift whatsoever. The staff goes out, visits, and walks all of those properties. It could be that it was missed it or somebody hadn't got there yet, but one thing we know for a fact that comes from all the universities is if you play sports once on a field where the soil has a lot of water in there, you are doing damage that one time you play and causing compaction. She wonders if there is a way to go out to the fields we know have drainage problems and make them a top priority. M. Bartlett stated that it is already being done and is a top priority.</p>	
<p>Parks and Open Space Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A. Vecchio wanted to commend the whole parks and Open Space team in general for what they've been doing for the past years during this pandemic, but particularly in this past month. There have been a lot of folks out COVID exposures and dealing with staff 	

	<p>shortages unrelated to COVID as well. She thanked everyone for all their hard work through the snowstorm. She stated that the team's great work that they do in the community means a lot to her and she knows it means a lot to all the Commission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A. Vecchio provided the Commission with a Larz Anderson Park update. There are some structures in place- images of the finished footbridge structure were shown. It still needs a railing installed around it, and the new design calls for an accessible pathway that runs behind the footbridge so that there are no stairs and that still needs to be paved. All the perimeter paving around this and elsewhere around the park will happen when it warms up. The railing is much safer and keeps to the integrity of the design. The Causeway is very close to being finished except for the paving. She discussed the site cleanup that will be done. Images of the Tempietto were shown. Everything in the slides except for the concrete foundation structure around was all precast. It was done off-site and then placed at Larz. The stairs will not be placed until the spring. They'll be doing some work to make sure the Tempietto is weathertight. The floor surrounding the fountain in the center was discussed. Images of the concrete heating blanket were shown and discussed. She stated that the goal is to	
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	<p>have all the structures complete for the US Open and then this space officially opened up to the public as soon as possible. The hard deadline is July 1st.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● A. Vecchio stated that everyone received information regarding the Community Preservation Act Committee that's being developed now. Brookline adopted CPA, and this sets money aside to help with a myriad of different projects, but at least 10% of the funds that are set aside through CPA have to be used for open space protection and recreation. They are looking to have different boards and commissions appoint someone to serve on this committee - someone from Conservation Commission, someone from preservation, somebody from Planning Board, someone from Brookline Housing Authority, and then the Parks and Recreation Commission, This vote will need to happen at the February meeting. It will be a bit of a time commitment for the initial startup and then moving forward, probably involve a once-a-month meeting. The bylaw itself doesn't necessarily call out what the time commitment is. A. Vecchio stated that anyone can reach out to K. Brewton to get more information. N. O'Connor sent the Commissioners an email that had the bylaw, as it was outlined per the warrant article that was voted on by the town meeting and K. Brewton's comments, which included an	
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	<p>outline of the number of meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A. Vecchio stated that Robinson Playground was going through an assessment to look at the soil conditions there to see if there was anything that was prohibitive to us moving forward with the design plans for that construction project. She stated that we are still waiting for the official report from the consultants, Weston and Sampson. However, they just gave the Town an update last week and it looks like they will not have a reportable condition here. This essentially means that there are no major red flags, and the project should be able to move forward as expected. She stated that we are in the process of getting those construction documents prepared, putting them out to bid, and are certainly trying to move that forward as quickly as possible. 		
<p>Other Business</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No New Business 		
<p>Adjourn</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● J. Bain moved to adjourn. Seconded by N. O’Connor. All in favor. 		

Location: Zoom Webinar

A true record

Attest **Jessica White**

Date: 1/11/21