

Date: January 14, 2020, 6:00 PM

Place: Brookline Town Hall, Room 111

Commissioners Attending: John Bain, Nancy O'Connor, Clara Batchelor, Wendy Sheridan and Antonia Bellalta

Commissioners Absent: Jim Carroll and Antonia Bellalta

Staff: Erin Gallentine, Parks and Open Space Director, Jessica White, Parks and Open Space Assistant, Scott Landgren

TOPIC	KEY POINTS/DISCUSSION	
Chairman's Welcome Approval of Minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> J. Bain opened the meeting. W. Sheridan moved for approval of the December 10, 2019 minutes. Seconded by N. O'Connor. All in favor. 	
Public Comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Public Comment 	
Strategic and Athletic Field Master Plan Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> S. Landgren stated that Tom Diehl, GreenPlay LLC, is unable to make it tonight, he is delayed out in Washington State. S. Landgren stated that tonight T. Diehl was planning on going through the key issues Matrix. The Matrix was presented at the December meeting, since that meeting they have since worked on this spreadsheet and this presentation. It is not substantially different, it is just has some refinements. This Matrix has been sent out to all the Commissioners ahead of time, and S. Landgren asked if any of the Commissioners had comments about anything specific. W. Sheridan stated that it looks like to her that everything looks like a priority and nearly everything is an opportunity to improve. There is very little that is a minor or future issue, except one thing. She feels as though we need a priority of the priorities, when the entire spreadsheet is a priority. She stated it will not be that helpful otherwise. W. Sheridan stated that if this is comprehensive then it looks like everything we do is broken and needs to be fixed. S. Landgren stated that they are applying this rating scale based on what they heard on the public interactions, what they saw on survey and their own professional opinion C. Batchelor and S. Landgren discussed how 	

they have common results from consultant, staff and public input/comments and it seems that we are all on the same page and they don't vary. W. Sheridan stated that it is a good thing, but the not so good thing is understanding that we need to prioritize them and it is still not prioritized rather than stating everything is a priority. S. Landgren stated that we need a next step, number /order and category to get us going.

- W. Sheridan stated that the reality is if the staff, public and leadership teams, interviews and the community survey came back with consulting team confirming what we already knew it is helpful to know, but maybe not adding a lot of value.
- The preliminary recommendations column was discussed.
- W. Sheridan appreciates this matrix because you can see it all in one place and the community outside the Park and Recreation Commission and outside the public who took survey can see all this information/comments in one place and we are all on the same page.
- N. O'Connor and S. Landgren discussed "other city documents" in the Matrix.
- W. Sheridan would go back and ask them to prioritize the priorities and thank them for confirming what we knew.
- N. O'Connor wonders if we as a Commission could add a column, go through the spreadsheet and grade it. S. Landgren stated that it would be interesting for the Commission to do that work and then compare it to what T. Diehl returns back. L. Jackson thinks the idea was to get the consultant's recommendation and suggest that they need to prioritize.
- Mike Toffel addressed the Commission. He stated the first is it seems that this entire list is about doing more and in a somewhat constrained budget environment it would mean doing less of something else. He stated that there is nothing here about doing less of something. He would encourage the

Commission to think about shifting priorities. Secondly, in terms of the Commission doing their own prioritization it would be helpful to the public to have transparency around the criteria being used regarding prioritizations. He would urge them to come to a consensus on what the criteria is and he thinks it will lead them to a need for more specificity on the data. He thinks the criteria would drive the additional column. He would hope this is in the RFP, and you want to rely on the consultant's expertise.

- The Commission is requesting that the Consultant do the priorities and the coding/clarification of their criteria.
- D. Lyons stated that GreenPlay should take into consideration the financial situation the Town is in with all the over the overrides. M. Toffel suggested a funding mechanism, just saying more of everything isn't an answer.
- A. Mattison stated that several meetings she attended looks like they had more specific numbers of people that responded to the questionnaires. She stated that it seems like there is more information and using those four categories washes it all down. She thinks they could go back to more specificity and that would be much more useful to them than to make recommendations. C. Batchelor stated that the survey was more detailed.
- E. Gallentine stated that there are a lot of generalities. The recommendations are neither robust nor specific enough in several cases. She would like to see some more thought and content in the recommendations. E. Gallentine stated that herself and staff has only seen this spreadsheet, but that GreenPlay hopefully does have additional work planned for articulating the priorities in a clear, weighted (against our own priorities) and justifiable manner.
- E. Gallentine stated that the first preliminary recommendation section was generally fine, but as you move into the second section and it states "implement a tiered sports field

classification system to improve maintenance procedures of athletic fields, including resting fields, converting field and having lights”, she had some concerns. It reads as though the athletic field maintenance and management plan is a recommendation. Since very little information has been shared with the Town it is hard to know how this relates to the final plan/report. She is concerned that this is actually a deliverable and not a priority. She stated that this is the tier system that was talked about in terms of priority, permitting and care on athletic fields that are high level competitive fields to the lower non-conforming athletic fields like Boylston Street. That type of field should not receive the same level of rigorous maintenance as the other fields. She will ask for a draft of that for the next meeting, so that everyone can understand a little more what that looks like. She feels like it’s a deliverable of the plan, not a recommendation.

- W. Sheridan stated that they are confirming what we already knew, everything is mostly an A and how do you prioritize the priorities.
- E. Gallentine is looking for Green Play to dive deeper on some of these issues and wants to make sure the Commission is in agreement on those. For Example, it says expand program opportunities for families and goes into youth/teens, but we want to specify where we are deficient specifically for these age groups and permits. She not only wants them to prioritize these, she wants them to tell us what programs are needed.
- She stated that there are recommendations on field maintenance that should be part of the field maintenance plan and not necessarily a recommendation. She wants to make sure having a plan for these things isn’t a recommendation, it needs to be part of a plan.
- She stated that it also says to “update low scoring amenities”. She thinks that we need specificity on what they are and what the

priorities are around them. W. Sheridan stated that it seems like every single row could have a page dedicated to it and each grouping of category is then in order of priority. It's a lot of information collected from a lot of different areas all on one sheet. She very much appreciates it though.

- E. Gallentine discussed the beautification comments.
- E. Gallentine stated that there is also a recommendation to increase maintenance efforts, but where? Why? They need to tell us what the delta is. They are supposed to be assessing our maintenance program on the field and condition of the field, and tell us what the best standard would be and how to get there.
- W. Sheridan is in a hundred percent agreement with what E. Gallentine is saying. Her question is if go back into the RFP she wonders if they think this is what they were hired to give us. E. Gallentine stated that we have gone back to the RFP quite a few times and there is more to come from GreenPlay as it relates to the RFP and the Proposal. She stated that we haven't seen any drafts. She stated that one deliverable that is part of the RFP that they are not prepared to do are fit tests. E. Gallentine explained fit tests. E. Gallentine added that it was an excellent survey response. She is still hopeful we will get a useful document, but pointed out that there is going to be a lot of work to do for the staff and Commission. E. Gallentine stated that we will do the test fits if we have to and has outlined a methodology and list of sites to assess in a very conceptual way. The Commission is in agreement with E. Gallentine wanting to push for more detail for recommendations and for the next meeting they would like to see detailed flushed out recommendations that are prioritized.
- Kyle Williams addressed the Commission. He is hoping that you would also look into the level of service under recommendations

	<p>there are bench marks, i.e national standard/people per acre. He thinks that would be valuable with other recommendations to either national /standard/regional. This way if we are asking the Town for 50+ more acres, there is a reason why and what it provides. E. Gallentine agreed and stated that there are two things here one is the additional space required for the actual facility and that is what will be looked at in the first pass of test fits, but a feasibility study – to happen at a later date – would determine the constructability and cost of those facilities. She stated that we have updated the acres recommended for acquisition based upon national standards and the 2006 plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Landgren stated that in talking with T. Diehl they indicate they are working with lots of pieces, but the frustration is we have not seen any of it. He discussed members of the team and what parts they are working on. • A. Mattison stated that T. Diehl did mention the concept of having rated tiers and having a premium field. She asked if he plans on giving E. Gallentine any decision criteria. She stated that it's a new concept to Brookline and maybe that would be something that would work here. E. Gallentine stated that it is our expectation following the last group of meetings. 	
<p>Outdoor Facilities Use and Allocation Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The subcommittee worked on this policy and has gotten together numerous times. E. Gallentine and L. Jackson have had a couple meetings as well. The version in front of the Commissioners tonight is the latest working draft of the policy. She wanted to give the Commissioners an update on where they are around this conversation. There will be two more meetings at least, there have been 3 meetings to date. • L. Jackson walked the Commission through the changes/edits that have come out of the subcommittee and internal meetings. • The first changed was to the title. It is now called Town owned athletic fields and courts. 	

- The minor changes on page 2 were read out loud.
- The edits/changes to page 3 were detailed for the Commission.
- The edits/changes to page 4 were detailed for the Commission. Priorities 1 -5 descriptions were discussed.
- C. Batchelor and L. Jackson discussed “contracted partners”. W. Sheridan feels strongly that contracted partners should not be considered as a priority one, but in this it still looks like they are. L. Jackson stated that they need to be in order for Recreation to be successful. W. Sheridan does not believe for profit companies should get priority over 100 percent residency. C. Bachelor thinks the language needs to be worked on, maybe contracted partners programs. N. O’Connor discussed Viking Sports. L. Jackson stated that when you have a small department but you have a recreational need you can’t meet due to staffing issues, than you contract with someone but it is still part of the Recreation Department. She stated that they are recreation programs for the sake of priority and for the sake of charging, they truly are our Town’s recreation programs that we ourselves cannot offer, but there is a true need. W. Sheridan wants to point out that the way it is worded it looks like those contracted groups are priority one, she agrees we need the partnerships to offer the most diverse offerings you can give to the community. She thinks that the contracts are critical to the success of the Recreation Department, but her issue is with the wording on which those priority for profit companies, she personally doesn’t think those companies should have priority over 100 percent residency rate over Brookline youth sports/ groups. W. Sheridan wants to be very careful that acknowledging these partners are critical, but also be very careful about the language we use to give them priority access to a really valuable asset which is our fields. W. Sheridan stated that

people see that Viking Sports as a business and on the fields all the time, while the youth groups who are all residents can't always get on the fields. She stated without any evaluation/balancing we are giving it to Viking Sports because they will be a priority one. The Commission agreed to have a further in depth conversation about this issue at the next Subcommittee Meeting.

- The request for new organization changes was discussed.
- L. Jackson stated that page 8 will be the majority of the work that the subcommittee will be working on next. Synthetic turf has been added to the top and a grid was created for this page.
- The Commission discussed the use of the fields by the schools. The Commission discussed doing a cost analysis/cost recovery of the field use.
- W. Sheridan would like, as a Commissioner, to consider not becoming dependent as we increase the fees for priority 4 and 5. She stated that it's a significant amount of money potentially coming back to the departments that she feels is deserved. However, she wouldn't want Recreation to potentially become dependent on the funding source from nonresidents. She thinks you have to be careful on what exactly that money being used for. She stated that it could make it harder to then say no. She hopes we are thoughtful about where the money you bring in from the priority 4 and 5 groups is going. L. Jackson stated that the money does spread across the general fund when the transfer is done, she is not sure if we will get to a place where the money goes in direct line. E. Gallentine gave an example of how the new Ranger position funds were allocated. She stated that it was a direct transfer in terms of the budget decision that was made by Town Administration, but there is not a line item or direct bucket where it goes from Recreation to Parks. We budget for the value in our budget and the exact amount is pulled from

	<p>the Recreation budget to the general fund (which is what supports the Parks Division budget). L. Jackson would like to get there and would like to keep talking about this. N. O'Connor always wondered with the fees being collected what did this do in terms of programs/staff etc.</p>	
<p>Recreation Update</p>	<p>Administration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Warren is the new Aquatic Assistant Director. Recreation is looking to fill the vacancy for the Supervisor. • BREC is finalizing FY21 golf budgets – then all drafts in! • L. Jackson is working on new performance indicators with Town Hall. They are trying to align them with the Select Board overarching goals. Examples of Key Performance Indicators for Recreation were given. • FY20 capital renovation of the Eliot public bathrooms are complete • “Smart Rec” is the new software system for Recreation Department. Brookline is the largest Recreation Department in New England and she doesn’t think the public understands both just how large the department is and all we have to offer. She is looking to add a diversity and inclusion concept that she thinks Recreation needs to get better at. She discussed a soft roll out and the phasing of the new software, so that it’s not all rolled out at once on the customer and to help Recreation manage this new software. She would very much like to see a Commissioner being involved with the conversations, she thinks it would be helpful for a commissioner to be a lead and to be able to answer questions and understand it. She is putting together an internal committee, and believes that a Commissioner on board and a member of public would be a get asset. N. O'Connor is interested in being on the committee. <p>Rink</p>	

- RAFT+ Rink collaboration was a success. There were 25 kids that came to the rink to skate.
- 25% increase in revenue from last year in the month of FY19 December.
- All rink reservations have been sold
- The addition of blinds has helped groups change more privately
- The pictures have been printed and will be hung at the rink.

Teen Programs

There are internal conversations to review and change up the teen programs.

Teen program Highlights:

- CPR/Blast Babysitting (12) and Home Alone Safety (12) classes for next week at the library are full

RAFT Highlights:

- 12/13 Sixth Grade Dance (80+ participants). These numbers have been going down. W. Sheridan stated nothing has changed regarding the setting and programming of these dances. Personally she thinks it's not the dances, she thinks something needs to change, because the complaints she is hearing is it's been the same for years. N. O'Connor suggested having a dance leader. She thinks kids love to mimic and learn.
- 1/4 Skate Night at Larz (20+ participants)
- 1/10 Seventh & Eighth Grade Dance (60+ participants)

Aquatics

- James Warren, new Assistant Director - Aquatics
- Winter is off to a great start! Participation Winter FY20, 480 vs 376; \$72,000 vs. \$55,615
- Water Safety Class – 6 new instructors
- Currently Hiring – Full Time Aquatics Supervisor

Summer Camp Prep

- Recreation is Meeting with Summer Partners to ensure smooth transition into summer
- -Finalizing & submitting grant proposal to Brookline Community Foundation
 - Collaboration with Steps to Success &

	<p style="text-align: center;">Brookline Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requesting funds to cover total costs for 50 campers to attend camp. The history of how those funds came into being was discussed. ▪ -Seasonal hiring will start in February 	
<p>Discussion and Vote on Golf Course Green Fee Increase for FY20</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L. Jackson stated that she wanted to bring green fees rate increase forward to meet operational budget FY20. This request to raise green fees was a planned ask when preparing budget FY20 • L. Jackson stated that we need to meet the increase in operational expenses. The Golf Course is an Enterprise Fund and is not supported by the General Fund. The Golf Course has major and minor capital improvement projects. The Golf Course needs to meet operational expense increases including an increase in part time staff, utilities and adding a new Asst. Superintendent role. • The fees haven't been increased in 3 years. The request to increase greens fee \$1 (for budget purposes included carts). The fee increase would take effect April 2020. • L. Jackson is asking for a vote tonight of increasing all fees by one dollar so that she can meet the golf course budget. • L. Jackson stated that when presenting to the Advisory Committee they talked about how they come up with the fees and how they are based on market analysis. She has looked at several golf courses. She stated that in the Conversation with Advisory they felt it was appropriate to raise the fees, the golf course is well below the market. • C. Batchelor asked L. Jackson what the current fees are and what they will become after the fee increase. L. Jackson listed some of the current fees and what their increases would be. • W. Sheridan asked L. Jackson why we are only increasing the fees by one dollar, if the fees have not been increased in 3 years. L. Jackson 	<p>D. Lyons moved to approve the one dollar increase for all golf fees and revisit it for the next fiscal year at a later date for a larger increase. Seconded by J. Bain. N. O'Connor, W. Sheridan and C. Batchelor opposed.</p> <p>2- In Favor 3-Opposed</p>

stated that it is the recommendation they used to develop the budget for FY20. W. Sheridan thinks it seems modest and additionally the dollar increase for 3 hole (which is same for 18 hole), is significantly higher percentage increase per hole.

- N. O'Connor and L. Jackson discussed a few other golf courses she visited. She has done a full market analysis. L. Jackson discussed the weekend and weekday resident rate at Braintree.
- C. Batchelor stated that next time it would be helpful to have it a nice clean chart form with rates/comparison of courses.
- The George Wright Golf Course fees were discussed. D. Lyons stated that the Cape Cod Courses are a different animal, because they can charge lower rate in the off season and are way higher during peak season.
- W. Sheridan is concerned that there is clearly potential to increase greater than a dollar, and if we need this for operating that we should be studying it and discussing the reason for it being so modest. L. Jackson agrees, but we need to meet our budget for this year.
- M. Toffel stated that no one has discussed the non-resident fees, no one has looked at distribution of the competition and there has been discussion around the development needs of the course. He stated there hasn't been a lot discussed, but maybe it has been discussed before. He thinks you would at least have in front of you a 2 page analysis of the price change. He stated that he would ask the same question as W. Sheridan "Do you have enough information to make the decision?" . L. Jackson stated that all the capital improvement plans were discussed at the last two meetings. L. Jackson stated that those needs are way greater than a dollar, she stated that we have an approved budget for this fiscal year that needs to be met.
- L. Jackson stated that we have to be at a zero balance at end of the year. W. Sheridan stated that if we increase more than a dollar we

could do landscape improvements.

- C. Batchelor stated that she feels we are voting without enough information. She understands L. Jackson has information here tonight, but not in a form that the Commission can look at and be able to vote on.
- N. O'Connor stated that it would be helpful to know how much the Towns' nonresident rate is compared to other nonresident rates. N. O'Connor and L. Jackson discussed the golf course resident and nonresident rate.
- Performance indicators were discussed.
- N. O'Connor feels we need more, we need to see all the fees and she is not comfortable making this decision until the Commission has all the information.
- This Increase would take place for this spring - April 2020. D. Lyons wonders if we could vote for the one dollar now and revisit this in a few months. N. O'Connor would feel more comfortable making one vote and know what they are voting for. C. Batchelor stated that if she votes yes, she feels like she is voting yes without all the information.
- C. Batchelor would like to move the vote to next month and at the next Commission meeting she would like the Commission to be presented with a chart with all the fees and golf courses used to compare them to and the proposed fee. She appreciated the work but feels that if the Commission needs to vote on it than they need to see the facts.
- N. O'Connor would feel more confident having a clear picture of what all the fees are.
- D. Lyons moved to approve the dollar increase and revisit it for the next fiscal year for a larger increase. Seconded by J. Bain. N. O'Connor, W. Sheridan and C. Batchelor voted against.
- This increase was voted down and will be revisited in February.
- L. Jackson respects that it needs to be looked at and will present the Commission with the information that they are requesting.

Park and Open Space Update

- E. Gallentine discussed the list of work completed at the Brookline Reservoir. The winter work and spring work to be completed at the Brookline Reservoir was detailed. The Eversource conduit/pole relocation delay was discussed. The goal is to open when the Cherry Blossoms are in bloom this spring. She is speaking with the Friends of Brookline Reservoir group to see if they have any ideas about the opening celebration. The storm water and ground water filling the reservoir was discussed.
- A Harry Downes update was given to the Commission. The track, field and obstacle course are open to the public, but there are challenges on the playground side of the site. The playground was not installed per plan in terms of site grades. They are looking at accessibility, fall zones and the water plan. LSI has since revisited the playground to take additional measurements. A third party was hired-John Larue to assess installation of the playground and compliance with playground safety standards. The safety surfacing issues were discussed. The playground is not open and the Town is currently evaluating solutions. There will be a letter going to the neighborhood informing them of this issue. The Town knew there were grading challenges, but they were reassured that would be taken care of that in construction. E. Gallentine stated that the town of Brookline is not staffed to be out there to do the build with them, the contractors are responsible to build to the plan issued, there is a Town site engineer and a landscape architect there to check things all along the way. This team was vigilant and identified problems here early on. S. Landgren discussed structures that were taken out and redone. It is very frustrating and time consuming for staff.
- A Larz Anderson update as given. She thanked A. Bellalta and W. Sheridan who had volunteered to be on a working group to resolve the handrails for the Larz Anderson

project. They worked back and forth with herself, S. Landgren and KMDG to deal with the railings, what to do about the nonconforming component of the pedestrian bridge and how to simplify while providing elegant details on the Causeway. They have provided direction back to KMDG and the intent is to have bids ready to go out in March.

- Cypress Playground is at 60 % bid documents. Robert Kefalas will be the Project Engineer. Weston and Sampson will be with the project through construction. There will be an incredible amount of coordination that will be ongoing through construction. The ADA path from the corner of Tappan and Cypress down to the walkway has been approved officially.
- Willow Pond Feasibility Study- E. Gallentine stated that we are working on the final draft. The Town has asked for an estimate for design services for construction so it can be added to the CIP next year.
- An Emerson park water play update was given.
- Driscoll School and Playground Project update was given.
- Design Review Committee
 1. 2 Park and Recreation Commissioners
 2. 2 School committee members
 3. 3 Members of the public

The meeting and building schedule was detailed. For the Commission

- A Strategic plan update and Athletic Field Master plan update was provided on test fitting the various athletic fields and facilities on parcels greater than 2 acres in size. The fit test process is very much like what was just done at Newbury College. It will look at various templates to see if there is adequate size for certain facilities and amenities for discussion purposes. It is not a feasibility study. That phase would include looking at costs and constructability including regulations, permits, soils, ledge, access, restrictions etc... The fit test is the first level

of looking at the opportunities out there and what we might want to study further. E. Gallentine listed the parks and recreation facility needs. The Planning Department completed a large parcel study that looked at the whole town, and they looked at all parcels greater than 2 acres. E. Gallentine stated that they will be using their list. They will not look at residential or multifamily housing parcels. A list of open spaces greater than 2 acres were detailed for the Commission. She wonders if we could be using any of these open spaces on the list any more efficiently or maybe build out differently to get to a higher level field. The time frame for this was discussed. This will come back before the Commission in the future, it is an overlay. Putterham Woods was discussed. A. Mattison wonders if you should have a slide for municipal buildings looking at the schools, specifically the building themselves as community resources. E. Gallentine replied that was beyond the scope of what they had the time to accomplish at this point, but a worthy goal.

- E. Gallentine stated that we have a complaint from the abutters at Schick Park. She stated that the Neighbors are having troublesome activity in the evening and they want a picnic table relocated (E. Gallentine pointed out this picnic table). They would also like the picnic pavilion removed. They want to petition the Town to remove them. They feel that this is the reason why they are having bad behavior. The police has been notified. N. O'Connor thinks the shelter people want there, but she does think the picnic table looks like a hazard. E. Gallentine will remove the concrete picnic table and benches, but keep the shelter.
- E. Gallentine stated that there has been a complaint regarding Coolidge playground. The complaint is from a woman that runs a family daycare program and states that dogs are always in the playground. The request is to fence the playground. This is not an easy

	request because of the design. Images of the whole park were shared. E. Gallentine stated that this is potentially a significant intervention if we were to add perimeter fencing around the playground. She wanted to get a general sense from the Commission and the neighbors. N. O'Connor thinks it would be interesting to hear what other neighbors think about this. C. Batchelor and E. Gallentine will take a look into this request from a design perspective first.	
Other Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No new business 	
Adjourn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Bain moved to adjourn. Seconded by N. O'Connor. All in favor. 	

Next Meeting: February 11, 2019 Location: Town Hall, Room 111

A true record

Attest Jessica White

Date: 1/14/2020