

**Date:** April 26, 2022

**Place:** Zoom Webinar

**Commissioners Attending:** Clara Batchelor, John Bain, Antonia Bellalta, Leigh Jackson, Theresa Mooney, Nancy O’Connor, John Pan, Wendy Sheridan Ames, Alexandra Vecchio

**Commissioners Absent:**

**Staff:** Scott Landgren

TOPIC	KEY POINTS/DISCUSSION
<p><b>Chairperson’s Welcome/Call meeting to order</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meeting commenced @ 6:00 PM</li> <li>• J. Bain welcomed everyone to the special committee meeting.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review, discuss, possible vote on Article 23</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N. O’Connor stated there was recommendation from the Capital Subcommittee with a 6 - 0 favorable action. The Advisory Committee voted 22-0-2 in favor.</li> <li>• M. Toffel said the Advisory Comm. made minor changes to the amendment adding climate change as an additional source of expertise on the task force and added date by which select board would assemble the task force - late June. It was suggested that the Select Board appoint the Task Force, they should draft guidelines rather than policy. There would be no follow up by a public body to create the policy. Urgency to create the Task Force is the Driscoll School construction. Article 24 would delay that decision with the moratorium. It may take until September until we can find the right expertise to appoint on the Task Force.</li> <li>• J. Bain has Select Board agreed to assemble this Task Force. He is not sure the Commission can round up expertise.</li> <li>• A. Vecchio responded not officially. They are meeting tonight to hear this discussion.</li> <li>• A. Vecchio stated the Advisory Committee is proposing that the Select Board make recommendations for this Task Force with consultation from the Park and Recreation Commission, the Advisory Council on Public Health along with staff involvement from Recreation, Parks and Open Space, DPW, Public Health, School Department.</li> <li>• L Jackson added A. Vecchio is putting together a list of professionals.</li> <li>• C. Banks noted that Heather Hamilton was ok with Select board appointing Task Force. Advisory Committee did not think it was appropriate for the Task Force to come up with a policy for the Commission in favor of the Parks and Open Space and Recreation Departments doing so relying on recommendations of the Task Force.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J. Bain mentioned the Task Force will vote who will be chair.</li> <li>• C. Banks added with input from Parks and Recreation and Advisory Council for Public Health - a joint effort.</li> <li>• N. O'Connor stated her concern about the short time frame but is in support of Advisory Committee's suggestion of the Select Board appointing the Task Force working with Public Health, Schools, etc. Report needs to be in by September/October. N. O'Connor moved that the Commission support the Advisory Commission recommendation on Article 23. J. Bain. 2<sup>nd</sup>. Roll Call: W. Sheridan Ames, C. Batchelor, A. Bellalta, T. Mooney, N. O'Connor, J. Pan. Unanimously passed</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review, discuss, possible vote on Article 24</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N. O'Connor stated the Advisory Committee voted to refer the subject matter of Article 24 to the Athletic Field Surface Task Force that would be appointed pursuant to Article 23. She supports that motion.</li> <li>• W. Sheridan Ames suggested two votes. One for Article 24 and one supporting referring it to Article 23 if necessary.</li> <li>• C. Batchelor moved to vote no action until we get more information.</li> <li>• C. Richmond referred to prior presentation/article on PFAS. He noted the Advisory Committee on Public Health voted no action on Article 23 and in favor 4 – 1 on Article 24. With that expertise, we have enough information to pause and have a moratorium. Also, concerned with burden on staff with Article 23.</li> <li>• A. Vecchio mentioned the report was released and was included in today's meeting materials.</li> <li>• C. Richmond recognized hard work of DPW and the Commission regarding artificial turf.</li> <li>• A. Bellalta concerned about the pressure of how fast we are moving on this issue, the volume of information that needs to be digested, and the burden of staff involved particularly with the Driscoll School construction. Recommends we don't set a dead-stop deadline.</li> <li>• C. Batchelor clarified that we take no action on Article 24 until the Task Force's study/recommendation (Article 23) is complete. Article 24 puts a 3-year moratorium when we just approved a 3 or 4-month study that will help us decide to put on the moratorium. In other words, vote no action on 24 having accepted 23.</li> <li>• A. Fischer cautioned to put a hold on Article 24 until we know what the research says - Article 23.</li> <li>• H. Bohrs referring to a past presentation on PFAS, said the Advisory Committee's discussion was about the health aspects of turf fields and it should be part of the Task Force's conversation. He supports having the Public Health Commission be part of this panel.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• L. Lasky asked how realistic is it that this will happen with an unrealistic time frame driven by the Driscoll project. She asked for no action on 24.</li> <li>• M. Toffel responded that the urgency is created because Article 24 seeks an immediate moratorium which would affect Driscoll. If we exempt Driscoll, the Task Force would have more time to do its work.</li> <li>• C. Batchelor moved for no action on article 24; J. Pan 2<sup>nd</sup>.</li> <li>• Roll Call: N. O’Connor, W. Sheridan Ames, T. Mooney J. Bain. – all in favor. A. Bellalta – no. 6 favor – 1 no.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review, discuss, possible vote on Article 26</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J. Bain commented we have yet to have our questions answered so suggested the commission is unable vote on Article 26.</li> <li>• D. Brown addressed concerns of the commission. How can anyone expect a volunteer board to come up with policy that would be implemented by Recreation Dept? She wants to ensure L. Jackson has staff and expertise for this position. The expectation is not about the commission going out to recruit. She has identified funding sources. This will increase the budget \$1.35 million to provide summer camp for 500 kids. L. Jackson will need additional staff, administrative costs, and equipment. She may identify potential funding sources prior to the next meeting.</li> <li>• J. Bain agreed something needs to be done but without the data in front of us to digest and discuss, we will move for no action. He was hoping to have commissioners’ questions answered prior to this meeting so there could be a vote. Comments may be too late for the May meeting. He brought up the subject of low-income versus financially struggling families who still may not be able to afford to participate in recreational activities</li> <li>• D. Brown responded there is some language in the article about “extenuating circumstances” and is intended to capture those persons.</li> <li>• J. Bain asked D. Brown to prepare the article, clearly in writing, so the commission can digest and vote intelligently. A no-action vote does not mean it is dead. We can still bring it up at the next meeting.</li> <li>• C. Batchelor proposed we vote no on J. Bain’s motion and then postpone the discussion to the May meeting, rather than no action.</li> <li>• L. Jackson will check if there is time for supplemental vote at the town meeting</li> <li>• J. Bain stated a no action vote – neither for nor against - is appropriate until we have an article in place that we understand. He withdrew his motion.</li> <li>• W. Sheridan Ames expressed concern with the language “the commission will fund raise, the commission will devise</li> </ul>

	<p>programming, the commissioners will design and produce annually”. Change language to “the commissioners, with support from staff in the Recreation Department”. She recommends pausing the vote on 26.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A. Vecchio stated the purpose of this evening’s meeting was to get written commentary on the warrant articles to the town administrator by the May 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline. With the next Park and Recreation Commission meeting on May 10<sup>th</sup>, we would miss that deadline. There is still an opportunity for a commission member speak on a warrant article on the floor of the town meeting. We will revisit Article 26 at the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting with the understanding that it will not be included in the written materials that to out to the town meeting on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.</li> <li>• N. O’Connor asked if they could meet the supplemental deadline?</li> <li>• J. Bain agreed it could.</li> <li>• N. O’Connor said she doesn’t feel this should be in the form of a by-law. We need to have a strong policy that would create public engagement, identify families who were interested in participating, identify a strong stream of revenue source, etc. ARPA funds are not guaranteed but must be requested from the Brookline Center. We get far less than 50% of ask - not \$500K.</li> <li>• J. Bain moved to hold vote until May 10th commission meeting asking Debra to provide language, address Nancy and Wendy’s concerns. He is also in favor of a policy versus a by-law.</li> <li>• Clara 2<sup>nd</sup>; Roll Call: N. O’Connor, W. Sheridan Ames, C. Batchelor, T. Mooney, A. Bellalta, J. Bain. Unanimously approved.</li> <li>• D. Brown will reach out to the commission members and provide a revised Article 26 by May 5th so members can review prior to the May 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.</li> </ul>
<b>Adjourn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• J. Bain moved to adjourn.</li> <li>• Meeting adjourned @ 7:15 PM</li> </ul>

**Next Meeting: May 10, 2022**

**Location: Zoom Webinar**

**A true record  
Attest: Laurie Ferrell**

**Date: April 26, 2022**