

Park and Recreation Commission	Meeting Minutes
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Date: May 11, 2021

Place: Zoom Webinar

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

Commissioners Absent:

Staff: Alexandra Vecchio: Director of Parks and Open Space, Leigh Jackson: Director of Recreation, Jessica White: Parks and Open Space Assistant

TOPIC	KEY POINTS/DISCUSSION		
<p>Chairman’s Welcome/Approval of the Minutes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Bain opened the meeting. • J. Bain moved for approval of the April 9, 2021 Park and Recreation Commission meeting minutes. Seconded by. D. Lyons. All in favor. A roll call vote was taken. • J. Bain moved for approval of April 13, 2021 Park and Recreation Commission meeting minutes. Seconded by D. Lyons. All in favor. A roll call vote was taken. 		
<p>Public Comment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Bain discussed his most recent time at the golf course and the amazing food he tasted. He stated that Chris Yorti cooks to serve and everything looks great up there. D. Lyons agreed that the food was amazing. 		
<p>Larz Anderson Lagoon and Roadway Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. Vecchio wanted to take a minute and acknowledge that these projects are very significant, they take a lot of work, coordination and consideration. She stated that Scott has been leading all of them simultaneously and she wanted to acknowledge all his hard work and make sure the Commission knows he has been giving it his all. She is so just pleased to have him on the team. • S. Landgren discussed the demolition of the tempietto. <p>Larz Anderson Lagoon Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid Opening - August 19, 2020 • Post-bid opening delays due to selection of contractor • SumCo Eco-Contracting LLC • Mobilization - March 8, 2021 • Substantial Completion – November 30, 2021 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The project is all the structures around the Lagoon, the Tempietto, the Causeway, the footbridge and at the very end next to footbridge, the wheel wall structure that was its own project. The structures were all beyond repair and this led to replacing them all.• The drawing of the new footbridge was presented to the Commission. This varies the most from the original footbridge - the stairway's height has changed and the railings have been modified. The decorative pattern in the middle is code compliant and other than that it's a near-exact replica.• T. Brady had requested that the contractors remove some of the muck that has accumulated over the last twenty years at the bottom. It gives the pond more depth and will make it a better ecosystem in the long run.• S. Landgren stated that an unforeseen condition was found by the contractors. Exploratory work was done. A 16 ft long 2x4, with graduations every foot, was driven into this into area with little resistance down to 15 feet. S. Landgren stated that we originally anticipated that the pond clay lined with a 6-8 inch lining of clay there and have unfortunately come to find out that this clay was laid down by the last glacier. A map was presented to the Commission that showed this whole area under laid with Boston blue clay. The drawings were not set up to building these structures on top of the clay. The Town is working with SumCo the week before last to see if we could drill/drive helical piles on site to support the structures, and unfortunately found that they vary in depth. The refusal hitting is either bedrock or large hill boulders. This means that the helixes wouldn't engage into the soil that gives them their strength - there was not enough resistance and this had to be ruled out. He stated that we have to modify the design drawings. The plan is to go with a ductile iron pile system that these contractors can install. He explained the process. The modification of the footbridge by the structural engineer was shown to the commission. This is a change condition to drawings and the job itself. This is the same	
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story at the Causeway. There is a similar drawing that modified the footing profile and has layout of piles to support this structure as well. At the Tempietto, test fits were done the same day: what occurred there is that the profile of the clay gets shallower as you get closer to tempietto and deeper towards the footbridge. The only modification to the Tempietto structure itself is that the contractors are going to put down mud back underneath it while working underneath the clay layer so that it doesn't liquefy. It has changed the contractor's approach a little bit. The Town is waiting on pricing for both the footbridge and Causeway in order to let them proceed with the work. It will be an additional cost to the project that there is no value on yet.

- N. O' Connor asked if these additional changes will change the project in terms of available money. S. Landgren stated that we will have to react once we find out what the cost it. He stated that we are in a wait-and-see mode. A. Vecchio stated that we are waiting to make a game plan, but can't imagine not moving forward with this project in its entirety.

Roadway

- KMDG/Environmental Partners currently working on design
- Goal to bid for the construction this year.
- The driveway/roadway is being redone from entrance to exit. It is in poor condition and there are wash out areas. At the same time rink parking will be expanded.
- A drawing of scenarios for the grading to roadway, location of the walkway and how to deal with storm water was shown. The next 4 slides shown were of the critical sections as part of the decision-making process. There are cross sections pointed out to show walkway, swale and curbing, etc. in order for them to move forward. The different options were shown to the Commission. S. Landgren stated that tomorrow the test pit will be done to the soil to figure out which option will work best. The challenges here are the great lawn that is used for are auto museum/events, 4 significant trees along the edge and figuring it how you

	<p>not affect real estate of the great lawn and the same thing on the other side of the road. The directions that were given to the contractors were to not create a typical roadway so that it looked like any road - the directions were to maintain the country road feel to it after construction. This is why there is not curbing everywhere.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S. Landgren discussed all possible swale locations. All of these options are being looked at simultaneously while waiting for the information from tomorrow’s test pits. • Slide of the thoughts that KMDG has been giving to curbing was shown to the Commission. The parking lot will be curbed, which will help define for snow plowing and control drainage inside it. • N. O’Connor stated that with all swales/ run off and direction of water, she wants to make sure this doesn’t affect the neighborhood. She wonders where the water will go. S. Landgren stated that currently there is very little catch basin of the drainage now, it is not curbed so it runs off in all different direction. The objective was to take an approach that would control the drainage in a responsible way, while using green modern infrastructure and low impact techniques that will blend with the current setting. The drainage will be much more controlled. • J. Bain and S. Landgren discussed the locations of the current catch basins. • The overall plan and a zoom-in on the parking lot and woodland plantings was shown. • Images of different grasses used to stabilize the swales was shown • Images of concepts to blend the woodland bio retentions were shown • Images of the concepts for the front entry grove were shown. • S. Landgren stated by the next meeting there will be close to a finished project to show to the Commission. 	
<p>Cypress Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bid Opening – June 2020 • Heimlich Landscaping & Construction Corp 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engineers Estimate: \$5,546,188• Low Bid: \$5,263,523• Total Project Budget : \$5.5 million (Construction, Construction Oversight, Furniture, Signage)• Post-bid opening delays due to project funding as related to the overall High School project• Received approval very recently with anticipated start of construction March-April 2021• Anticipated completion August 2022• The plan is to seed and complete the field this fall. This allows for a full growing season of this fall, spring and summer.• N. O'Connor and S. Landgren discussed the project of intercepting on the storm drains that come across the field and diverting certain storm event into the infiltration chambers. It doesn't function as a pool - it actually infiltrates. They will be filling that hole with these chamber systems and stone. It will divert water underneath the field.• The contractors have been stripping the field of all topsoil.• The granite blocks on site were brought in for the project. S. Landgren discussed the elements of the design that implement these granite blocks.• A. Vecchio and S. Landgren have been working with the high school, and the high school stated that they can't function without at least part of the park. They needed enough area for the kids to eat lunch. A space at Cypress with tents put up on it was shown. This was a change order for the contractor.• S. Landgren discussed the field work. The school will have the field till the end of the school year and then the final work will commence.• N. O'Connor asked S. Landgren with the "swimming pool" and all of the engineering fetes can we guarantee it will drain well. She is looking to maximize the best functioning field we can get. He stated that it will have all the things that you can design for a natural turf athletic field. He stated that the field is overused/multifunctional and it will degrade in	
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	<p>a quicker manner. The soil used on the field was discussed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • W. Sheridan asked if there was any potential that it could overflow on the field. S. Landgren stated that it is an overflow from the storm water system, but designed to only let so much water in and will not flood out the field. 	
<p>Parks and Open Space Update</p>	<p>Evening With the Commissioner & Directors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday May 12th 6 – 8 pm • Zoom Info and other details are located on the Town Website. • Learn about DPW initiatives and projects, share ideas and input, and ask questions about DPW services <p>Public Works Week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 16th – May 22nd • Two parklets are opening next week – one in Brookline Village and one in Coolidge Corner. This is an open space that people can come and enjoy, you do not need to be visiting the restaurant. It is a pilot project and A. Vecchio is looking forward to feedback. W. Sheridan and A. Vecchio discussed signage that makes the public aware that these parklets are open to anyone, not just for patrons of the establishments. • The Parks and Open Space Division are also organizing two clean-ups and planting events: one at Coolidge Corner Library and one at Emerson Garden. <p>Community Preservation Act Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPA has passed in Brookline • Adoption of the CPA will allow Brookline to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conserve lands that are important to Brookline residents’ quality of life ○ Build and restore essential low income and affordable housing for seniors ○ Purchase property for public recreation, such as soccer and baseball fields ○ Preserve historic buildings and land for needed housing & community uses ○ Make natural and historic sites more accessible for walking, biking, etc. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • J. Carroll and A. Vecchio discussed the Taxation threshold. • N. O’Connor, J. Bain and A. Vecchio discussed a “Day of Service” that happened in that past. This is when large companies donated their times to the Town. 	
<p>Rink Feasibility Study Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A. Vecchio stated that we recently put out an ice rink feasibility study RFP. This is to look at the possibility of establishing an ice rink at a few different locations and solicit community feedback into that process. This is just the design portion of it. There were 6 bids received. A. Vecchio listed the names of those that bid. The selection Committee makeup was detailed. She wanted to thank those that served on the committee. The committee decided that 4 of those bidders should be brought in for interviews. She listed those firms that interviewed. She stated that each group had their strengths and weaknesses. KMDG was decided to be the best group for this. They have an architect who specializes in rinks, and they have a unique understanding of the landscape. • Peter Senopoulos addressed the Commission on behalf of the Jamaica Hills Association. The Jamaica Hills Association sent a letter in mid-March to the Commission and wanted to make sure it was received. P. Senopoulos read the letter out loud for the Commission. He stated that this is an important issue for the neighborhood. He stated that there are a lot of sentimentality about that open rink, it is unique. N. O’Connor thanked Peter for coming. She stated that this is a feasibility study. There will be 4 public meetings/task force meetings and Park and Recreation Commission meetings. • W. Sheridan wanted to make clear that the Commission received the letter when it was sent and all had the opportunity to read it. She stated that at the end of the day she believes that we all want the same outcome, which is to maximize the value of this park that is beloved to all residents and for many different reasons. She welcomes and encourages him to become part of the process. W Sheridan stated that P. 	

	<p>Senopoulos’s comments about the rink being beloved has been heard during the public meetings for the task force. She stated that there are however an equal number of residents that wish it was covered and enclosed. She stated that we ae going to make our best effort to hear all the community voices and come out with the best outcome for the greater community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandy Batchelder addressed the Commission. His concern is that the feasibility study will be wide open when it comes to choices of what will go there. He would like to feel that it is open-minded, and the task force will consider not just the alternatives given to them, but consider anything else that may come up. • N. O’Connor stated that the Commission knows how beloved this rink is, it will be a great project. 	
<p>Recreation Update</p>	<p>Recreation Update-Admin The Smart Approach to Cost Recovery - Project update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Currently in Phase 5, adopting CR ranges on each service category, slowed down the process to spend more time in discussion in terms of “rentals” and “beginner/intermediate” service category cost recovery ranges. There is a plan to connect this week, so L. Jackson will have more of an update next month. ▪ Personnel Update <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Amanda Wong – NEW Aquatic Director EKAC. L. Jackson provided The Commission with A. Pierce’s professional background. N. O’Connor stated that she is thrilled for Amanda. She has known the family for many years and knows she will do a great job. ▪ Gina Tzizik Soule Director – Resignation, effective 6/30/21. L. Jackson stated that she is an exceptionally talented leader and educator. She is a positive role model and is an all-around amazing human being. <p>Facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All Recreation buildings have been re-keyed/security update 	

- Energy Audit – still underway for rink
- Pool Filtration – Weston and Sampson is putting together feasibility study with Charlie Simmons and Tyler R.
- Tennis- Amory Courts have clay and Net Results is rolling today with an anticipated open date of Friday; Waldstein is open. The delay from the vendor delivering the clay was discussed.
- CAPRA – New general policies will be coming to the Commission in a couple of months to give input and to sign off on.
- N. O’Connor asked if the Tappan Pool entrance is moving along and wondered if L. Jackson knew if the community room construction started. L. Jackson will follow up with N. O’Connor on an update.
- W. Sheridan stated that she has real concern about rental category specifically as well. She knows L. Jackson will be bringing back more information to the Commission, but she just wanted everyone to know that this was a significant hiccup for her and appreciates L. Jackson pushing the pause button to make sure we get this right.

Programming Update

- A spreadsheet was shown to the Commission that listed all the Spring programs and their enrollment numbers. These are Recreation specific. W. Sheridan stated that this is Recreation soccer, but it takes a village and it is all parent volunteers. She thinks we can do better as a Commission acknowledging and thanking the volunteers. She stated that the same applies to lacrosse, you are registered through Brookline Recreation but it is entirely volunteer-based. W. Sheridan stated that these are Recreation-specific programs, but there are many other programs that provide recreation needs /services that are not on this list and thinks that in the future it would be great for the Commission to know those vendors and numbers. This would provide a picture of why the fields are so filled. J. Bain suggested an appreciation day for all these volunteers. N. O’Connor asked if it would be possible for Viking to consider a girls’ softball program.

	<p>L. Jackson will take that under consideration. W. Sheridan stated that we already have quite a number of programs and may not be enough fields.</p> <p>Brookline Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Brookline Day 2021 – September 26, 2021▪ We will be begin internal planning and shooting for first week of June 2021 to market the Brookline Day Road Race. <p>After School Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 16 full time students enrolled for the month of May, 16/20.▪ April Vacation week was full with a waiting list, 25/25.▪ There are no problems with filling these programs, the numbers are there. <p>Therapeutic Recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first session of the hiking club on Saturday mornings went really well.• Walking Club at Chestnut Hill Reservoir has been successful (when the weather cooperates).• Special Olympics Track and Aquatics are now in training season. The track team is looking forward to an in-person meet at Milton Academy on June 19th. Micah would like to thank all of our volunteers that have made all recreation programs (both virtual and in-person) successful. L. Jackson has received numerous compliments on how professional all the volunteers are. <p>Environmental Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Outdoor Supplemental Science Program continues<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Searching for pond bugs at Olmsted Park & fishing at the Brookline Reservoir▪ June- our Family Fishing Clinics and the Family Campout at Larz Anderson Park!<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Registration opens this Thursday <p>Golf Course</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Golf Course revenue \$219,927.86▪ April began transition of food and beverage to Hemlock Grill. - Open on Driving Range each evening; indoors this week	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Offering food indoors as of Wednesday, 5/12/21▪ Small projects to enhance the experience, ex. Painting▪ The golf course is offering clinics: L. Jackson listed these various clinics.▪ J. Bain discussed the very smooth transition between the two vendors at the golf course.▪ J. Carroll stated that there is much activity when he drives by. He wondered about the structure at the turn, he thinks it's in a state of disrepair and wonders about that plans for it. L. Jackson stated that the roofing and shingles have been upgraded, she is happy to hear recommendations for future improvements through email. J. Carroll wonders if there are plans for the bocce courts. L. Jackson stated that it is being debated at this time. L. Jackson discussed how C. Yoti is looking to secure new chairs for the outdoor eating area, and he plans to help out when he can. N. O'Connor didn't think that there were any upgrades to the facility by the vendor that is contractual. L. Jackson stated that they are not obligated, they want to help where they can. All improvements go through L. Jackson. Chris Yorti is attending all leadership meetings at the facility. <p>Parking Lot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ End of year closing financials▪ Golf Course Master Plan – RFP Project Update She has looked into golf course master plan. They have decided to do a full RFP for the master plan- it is in draft stages. Once the draft is complete, it will be distributed to the Commission to provide feedback to L. Jackson. She has the best interests of the Commission and Community in mind.▪ Golf Course Clubhouse Master Plan – Project Update. This is not in the budget till FY22. The golf course master plan will start in May. She isn't sure if it will come out as an RFQ or RFP. N. O'Connor wants to make sure we mention that when the golf course mater plan is underway that there is a golf course clubhouse master plan to follow. Leigh shared topics for future Commission meetings:▪ Summer Programs Update	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brookline Day Planning Update ▪ Fall Programming ▪ Vendor Program Update 	
<p>Soule Program Update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● G. Tzizik stated that overall it was a successful year at Soule. It has been a tough, scary year for families and teachers. ● A rendition of Soule made by one of the kids from last year was shown. <p>Enrollment Trends</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● MARCH 2020: 43 Families enrolled for fall 2020 ● Soule closed March 15-October 15 2020 ● OCTOBER 2020: 17 Families enrolled ● MAY 2021: 48 Families enrolled ● FALL 2021 IS 70% enrolled <p>COVID Restrictions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● NO families allowed in the school- even for transitions ● MASKS for all staff and students over 2 years ● ALL materials/toys cleaned after each use ● Cleaning the rooms is a major factor ● Creating individual workboxes for sensory material ● Limited numbers of children (10 vs 20) ● No special instruction-outside vendors or field trips <p>TEACHER TRENDS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● March 2020: 12 Full-time staff ● 2 Part-time staff ● 5 Classrooms open ● October 2020: 5 Full-time teachers ● May 2021: 8 Full-time teachers ● 3 Subs & Part-time <p>COVID Changes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No Mixing staff or children ● They went from 3 teachers per class to 1-2 teachers ● Soule has closed 2 classrooms for a day for COVID illness throughout the entire pandemic. ● Pictures/background of the current teams/teachers were shared with the Commission. ● The art program is at the center of learning at 	

	<p>Soule. Soule created a beautiful study for Angelica to work in, and this year she goes into each room, each week and does a project in the room. The work has been incredible. Every week Angelica sends out 5 page report to families of what they are doing. Examples of these projects/reports were shown. This was a way to connect with the families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The classrooms have not changed, they are using all the same material and the teachers have done an incredible job providing normalcy. A big goal for Soule was to provide normalcy. The kids were so adaptable and they were so happy to be with their friends. Slides of everyday life as Soule were shown.• She stated that in January she started to work with the teachers on the idea of dealing with stress/the underlying stress everyone is feeling. G. Tzizik stated that she read the book <u>Permission to Feel</u> and she created some training. She discussed some of the ideas that came out of this training. A list of books that was added into in the school was shared with the Commission. The teachers were tasked to create their own feeling boards. An example of a breathing ball was shared. She stated that it is a combination of concrete and abstract ideas presented to the kids, and shared with families and each other's. She thinks it is important to look at how stressed people have been.• Examples of mandala makings were shared.• G. Tzizik stated that we are thinking a lot about helping kids with imagination, Critical thinking and becoming independent. COVID changed a lot of things, but it did not change who Soule is as a school.• She stated that in November one of the families had recommended Soule to a group called the Bright Start Conference. It is based in Geneva and they has asked her to do a presentation. She put together a Soule study that demonstrated how the environment has changed over the years at Soule. The foundations works with a region of the Middle East. She gave the talk- there were 800 people mainly in Saudi Arabia and Jordan in attendance. The presentation was also	
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	<p>translated to Arabic. She is happy to share that with the Commission. She stated that it is nice for her to see where we started in 2009 and where are now in 2021. She thinks we are still here for the community, still enrolling but she doesn't have a pulse on people feelings. She does see interest but also sees a lot of fear. There is hesitancy that she detects. Soule is talking on how to prepare for that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• J. Bain wanted to express how impressed he is with her expertise. He is always impressed by her professionalism and her administrative skills. He stated that she is very much loved by the community, she will always be remembered- there will never be another Gina. He appreciates her dedication and sincerity to the job and wanted to thank her for all her work for Brookline.• D. Lyons stated that his only regret is that his children didn't have the opportunity to attend Soule, he would have loved to have seen his kids go to the program. He stated that she will be missed for years to come.• Gina Tzizk stated that she will miss Soule and is writing a thesis on spirituality and children.• N. O'Connor stated that her grandchildren/children have gone to Soule. She is very familiar with the evolution of Soule. She stated that what G. Tzizik has done for this program is beyond words. Recreation has been so fortunate to have Gina there creating this program. N. O'Connor stated that she has done so much for the program and wanted to thank her so much for that. She wishes her luck in the future and knows she will do great things.• W. Sheridan stated that all her kids have gone through Soule. She feels so fortunate that her family got to experience access to quality preschool- that has a direct link to success in life personally, academically and in building relationships. She stated that not only does she feel fortunate her kids got this experience, but several of her Brookline friendships evolved from preschool drop-off/pickup. She had G. Tzizik breathe life into her program and that impacted the educators that worked for G. Tzizik in such a positive way. She thanked her	
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	<p>for all she has done and for building this amazing place.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gina thanked everyone. It has been a labor of love for her. She lives and breathes this stuff. It has been a joy for her to be part of it, watch it change and appreciates all the support. She will work hard as she transitions out, and feels confident that Soule is left in a good position to be solid moving forward. The foundation is solid enough and things are set up for next year. She hopes to keep in touch. 		
<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. A roll call vote was taken. 		

Next Meeting: June 8, 2021

Location: Zoom Webinar

A true record

Attest Jessica White

Date: 5/11/21