### Park and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes 6/9/20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>KEY POINTS/DISCUSSION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chairman’s Welcome Approval of Minutes</td>
<td>J. Bain opened the meeting. N. O’Connor moved for approval of the May 12, 2020 minutes. Seconded by D. Lyons. All in favor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Comment</td>
<td>No Public Comment.</td>
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| Cypress Playground Update            | E. Gallentine reviewed the design review process for the Cypress Street Playground and introduced Scott Landgren, Landscape Architect, would be presenting the furnishings, fixtures and colors that the working group (A. Bellalta, N.O’Connor, W. Sheridan and staff) had been working on. S. Landgren has finalized some of the details for the seating specifications, the lighting and is currently working with internal Building Department and Engineering Division Teams for overall coordination. He will provide an update to the Commission, and after that the Commission will discuss the bid process, schedule and overall funding. S. Landgren presented the Commission the slide from the design review committee presentations that shows the various furniture elements, built in furniture pallet, granite blocks and sculptural seating etcetera. The construction bid documents that are currently out to bid were shared with the Commission. The materials plan for Cypress was shared with the Commission. A detail of the deck plan within the structural drawing was shared. The deck is raised up one step to provide access. There is a ramp to get one onto the deck at the corridor side. He stated that around that other side there is a step up on the two sides.
A final DRC slide of what was discussed for the pedestrian lighting was shared. The lighting style that was being working on by both Weston and Sampson and the Engineering Division was shared. These fixtures can be obtained by the Town, are a manufacturer that the Town regularly does business with and would conform to the Town standards and meet the original intent of the design.

A detailed slide of the seating platforms/seating composite was shared with the commission. Images from Weston and Sampson of a project in Somerville that shows concrete/composite seating were shown. Feedback on the seating is that they can get very hot and that should stay with a grey tone color. He stated that we won’t know until we have a contractor on board in terms of the vendor that will be chosen and specific color palette available, but there is certain grade specified. The final color can definitely be a grey tone color.

Café table and picnic table examples were shared.

The final playground design was shared with the Commission. A color scheme discussed along the way was shared with the Commission. An overview of the playground was shown. A variety of playground palette colors and the playground palette that was decided on was shared. Lots of colors were looked at for all the different pieces and basically arrived on a palette that was shared with the Commission. E.Gallentine shared that there was a desire from an abutter for the colors to be more subtle and natural. The working group had tried to take that into consideration, but still have a color selection that was fun, welcoming and playful. Previously there had been some brighter colors being considered that were removed from the color selection or changed to just accent pieces. He stated that one big change on this color rendering was the color of the large roofs. The color was changed to acorn so it would not be a dominant feature. The updated playground color surfacing was shown to the Commission. It has been simplified and it’s down to a blend of two colors. These colors were shown on a slide.
This keeps it subtle, simple and some type of blend. S. Landgren stated that you could consider replacing the pearl of the poured in place with the beige color to warm it up. W. Sheridan wants to make sure it does not look like concrete. It was discussed how the poured in place safety surfacing had been simplified and toned down to balance the colors.

- The basketball court colors were shared with the Commission. There were a lot of colors looked at, but stone grey and Olympic stood out as working with the overall colors throughout the site, but being more subtle than the previously discussed blue and maroon (High School colors). An abutter raised concerns about the blue and maroon and therefore the group worked to create a different option that was more subtle, but worked with the overall design. He detailed where these colors would fall in the design of the court for Cypress.

- A colors summary was shared.

- N. O’Connor thinks that everything looks so nice and doesn’t find it jarring. The court with so much room and blue accents will look so nice. She loves the idea of keeping the playground surfacing simple.

- J. Small addressed the Commission. His initial reaction is that it looks great, he wanted it to be natural and this mostly blue with grey and acorn looks good. He likes the idea of the roof being acorn.

- Antonia Bellalta stated that she thinks the circles around swings should be just a tiny bit bigger. S. Landgren will work on tweaking that.

- J. Bain said he would suggest flipping the colors so that the two end would be the grey and the middle would be the blue on the Basketball court. Others on the Commission suggested that perhaps the colors as presented by Scott were more subtle and perhaps more in keeping with the suggestion of the neighbor. J. Bain and E. Gallentine discussed the hours of the pedestrian lighting. J. Bain and S. Landgren discussed the texture of the surfacing of the seating.

- The current Cypress schedule was discussed. E. Gallentine stated that the High School Project is
over budget due to a host of reasons and they are requesting an additional 32 Million for project completion. The funding request includes the Playground renovation project. E. Gallentine stated that the playground is currently out to bid. She stated that they just found out last week that the vote is very likely to be deferred to November Town Meeting. She stated that knowing that they put out an addendum to the contract and have extended the date the contract will be awarded through to January 1, 2021. This allows the Town to hold the bid prices for a period of time if there is a successful qualified bidder within budget. She knows that there may be some increase in pricing, but thinks it could be favorable. There has been great interest in the project and they are hopeful for competitive bids and qualified bidders. The construction start wouldn’t be this August, but would rather be starting in March 2021. S. Landgren shared the current bidders list with the Commission. N. O’Connor stated that it’s exciting to see a bidders list with such interest from the contractors. She is on the High School Building Committee and has gone to the Select Board, Advisory Committee and the Building Committee hearings regarding the overage on the high school project. The Advisory Committee voted to defer the vote until next Fall’s town meeting. She expressed her dismay at the meetings on how discouraged the Park and Recreation Commission was about the possibility of having to defer and that their line item has disappeared. They asked the High School Building Expansion Committee to take a vote to support the deferral and they all voted yes except, N. O’Connor voted no. She thanked E. Gallentine for being on top of the bidding process. A. Bellalta thanked N. O’Connor for putting in a great pitch for keeping the money separate in the future. She thought it was important to state, some people did not even know it was two different projects. E. Gallentine thanked N. O’Connor for sticking with that whole process.

Jayne Singer addressed the Commission. She wanted to acknowledge and appreciate the
thought that was put into the Basketball court so that it’s a more subtle color combination. She stated she is appreciative of the tone down colors, but she is so struck by how large, metallic home. She stated that it is going from a small green natural looking space to a large technical complex space that she is not pleased with. She does appreciate the efforts that have been put in to not have it too bright, but she was anticipating something a little bit more natural looking and green, such as Emerson Garden. She knows that it’s too late, and although the wanted to express thanks for the toned down court color she would appreciate anything that can be done to tone down the metallic unnatural colors. She found that to be disappointing and overall is displeased with the playground design.

Future of Larz Anderson Ice Rink

- E. Gallentine stated that she is hoping to have an open and honest conversation about the rink. She thinks that it is time to really think and talk about what the community wants and needs in terms of an ice skating facility. A memo was sent to the Commission, permit holders and users regarding the major failure in the chiller. During their system diagnostic work, emergency repair technicians found that the chiller had breached causing the vessel to fill with brine. The breach was contained within the closed loop system; however the chiller was permanently damaged and ammonia has contaminated the brine that now needs to be removed from the system. She and Leigh stated in the memo this will mean the ice rink will be closed for the 20-21 winter season. She wanted to be honest and direct with everyone and doesn’t want people to think it was a lack of commitment to the ice rink. She is thinking about the town’s processes and public bidding and is concerned that even if funding was available tomorrow it would be very difficult to have all of the engineering, architectural and refrigeration engineering completed, bid and a new refrigeration system installed. She stated that we would be looking at the chiller and the evaporating condenser at the same time because they will both require a crane and going in
through the roof. She has checked with the Building Department and worked with American Refrigeration to understand the lead times on a chiller and condensers and the other work that would need to happen. It not only would involve the refrigeration and engineering services, but will involve some level of architecture services. The unit is old and shoe horned into the space and it needs compliance upgrades. It is a beloved rink, the town has had it since 1958, and her staff loves to be up there and are very committed personally. E. Gallentine and her family use the rink, but increasingly there is a lot of emergence repairs and if we go back to the 70’s there has been a lot of repairs fixing little pieces of the system. Types of these repairs were detailed. The 2018 repairs at the rink were detailed. She stated that this season was great at the rink, she is disappointed that this all has happened. In terms of effort, her Division has expedited significant emergency repairs in the last 3 years. She feels that we need direction in terms of what to do and she thinks the Commission and community need to think with long term vision while working with partner organizations. She is doing more research to look at the full history of the rink and that can be talked about as we look at next steps.

- W. Sheridan stated that she wanted to echo and emphasize what E. Gallentine has said. She stated that this really is a devastating loss to both the town and the community. It’s is a magical place and offers a rare place for outdoor winter activities and sports to the residents across the town. This rink is a major community asset. It is rare, unique, an envied community asset and its likely coming offline completely. It is a major town asset coming offline and we don’t have any plan for replacement and it’s unfortunate. The costs to losing this rink are not just financial, but it’s the impact of this loss to the users. There are 10,000 visits to the rink every year by residents, there are over 400 participants in Brookline youth hockey, we have Bay State Skating School, Soule, Dexter, adult hockey and Brookline High
School uses this for both JV Girls and JV Boys teams. The impact really is great with this rink coming offline this winter. She would like the Commission to think hard about this and try to decide if we invest in this existing asset or create a new type of structure at Larz Anderson with a cover and open sides, or do we find a new place to build a rink or complex. She struggles with continuing to put money into this, it is like a patch work quilt that will need the next something. She thinks we need to think, dream and plan big. She thinks now is the time and whether we form a subcommittee or a task force, she thinks we need to spend time as a commission/user groups/members of public to come up with a plan, dig deep and figure out what we do for our town.

- A. Bellalta asked if there is a round number for a new rink at all. E. Gallentine stated that there is huge spectrum of what they could cost in terms of a new covered rink. E. Gallentine gave a few examples and stated that it is all in what you design. A. Bellalta suggested looking at costs of all the different scenarios and the bigger picture. She stated that finances are a sensitive topic right now, it’s a big picture and wonders how we will tackle this.

- N. O’Connor agreed with everything. She stated that W. Sheridan, she and a few others have been talking about the rink for a while now and it really minimizes the season if you have bad weather. She asked how we get there? Do we do it with partner? Where do we do it? She wonders if it is enclosed. She stated that it’s a whole host of things to look at and wonders if we were to get Town support for the fix now that it’s really a bandaid to do the chiller and compressor and she isn’t sure what will happen next. She stated that if we build something what would that look like? She stated that there are so many needs in the community and she thinks we need a plan for all these missing amenities. She believes that we need to start planning and think about funding and a location. It does not help for December 1 this year, but she thinks we need to start a task force/working group and start this planning.
L. Jackson stated that this a terrible situation. She stated that W. Sheridan did a wonderful job sharing and she supports that there is much more than financial impacts. She reiterated the user groups that would be affected. She stated that there are 10,700 users per year at the rink. She stated it’s a great loss for the community and she thinks this is an opportunity to look big and see what we can do as a community to help serve a new rink/location. She believes that we need a recreation center.

L. Jackson wanted to present the Commission with all the financial information for the rink. She stated that the ice skating rink operates at a loss each year. She asked G. Kelly to present a high level overview of financials for the rink.

Gerry Kelly detailed expenses for the rink that included staffing, services, supplies and utilities. The revenue/operating loss of running the rink was shared. The average operating loss per year was detailed. E. Gallentine wanted to add that it’s not unusual to subsidize municipal recreation facilities. It is relevant to know that the Town will not lose money for not having a rink next year.

A resident Doulkas Janowski, parent of town hockey players, former past president Brookline youth hockey and a member of the Brookline High School booster club for ice hockey addressed the Commission. He stated that we have with the longest time worked with E. Gallentine to support and look for opportunities to further help Larz to subsidize a score board and have taken on costs for ice time to support the rink. He thinks the idea of building a new structure that would offer the opportunity for year round hockey is a great idea, but while the big picture is wonderful, it would take several years and leave everyone in a bad place for several years. He stated that we offer learn to play hockey for over 150 Brookline residents every year and have over 300 children involved in the Brookline youth hockey program. The High School programs leverage the ice for hockey and we run the risk of losing those junior varsity programs by not having that ice available. He thinks there are a lot of
opportunities to fund this, between rate ice increase and ice rental increases, but to take this away from several hundred residents is depriving them of this space and activity. He stated that we have recently seen a significant growth in hockey participants in Brookline. He stated asked for consideration of options to salvage this season.

- E. Gallentine stated that she doesn’t want this to be seen as anyone on the staff or Commission “taking away” the ice rink. We have been trying so hard to make it a better facility for everyone and invested a lot of time and money to do that. She stated that she doesn’t want anyone to think we are taking away anything. We understand and feel that this is devastating and need to figure out a solution.

- Bobby Allen addressed the Commission. He stated that youth hockey is the biggest renter of ice; it’s about 23 hours of ice a week they rent. He stated that 23 hours of ice doesn’t appear anywhere else around this area that people could commute too and it’s three times the cost. This will clearly change the way Brookline youth hockey is run; there will be cuts to this program. It will mean the end of JV Hockey and is disappointing. He stated while we can appreciate putting together a task force, he knows the grass doesn’t grow fast here and he stated that regardless of the fact that there are other competing needs, he thinks the stewards of these facilities need to fight for the rink. He stated that closing Larz Anderson this year means closing it period as far as he can tell. He stated that E. Gallentine has been great about communication regarding the rink. He thinks the Commission needs to be fighting for Larz Anderson. He stated that it’s the job of the Town to deal with competing needs.

- Gary Lowe, a parent of three Brookline hockey players and the Brookline youth hockey scheduler addressed the Commission. Loosing Larz will mean 40 percent of the ice at a yearly rate. He stated that Larz is challenging, in 2017 they lost 26 percent of larz ice time, in 2018 they lost 12 percent and last year 17 percent of the ice time was lost all due to weather or
refrigeration issues. He stated that it’s challenging but it’s a big chunk of what Brookline youth hockey is all about. He stated that they get requests from other youth hockey programs for use of the Larz ice. He would hate to lose it.

- Richie Sheridan addressed the Commission. He would like to say that everyone has done a great job on all comments from everyone so far. He thinks at the early stage where kids are trying out the sport at learn to play level, that is where they get a majority of those players to engage in winter activities and get parents up there to see Larz. Everyone is blown away by the site and he would hate to lose it. He stated that its intergral to them sustaining future teams and a one year loss will disrupt what they do as an organization. He appreciates the Commission bringing this up.

- E. Gallentine stated that we should be talking about a short term and long term approach, and she is wondering if we need to mobilize working group/subcommittee/full commission to do this quickly and start talking about all options and what that approach would be. She stated that if you wanted to go to Town Meeting/Reserve fund transfer that needs to be decided now.

- J. Bain thinks after hearing comments we should probably have a full commission task force with outside users to get input/support. He stated that sometimes it takes a crisis to realize what we have and realize what we don’t want to lose. He stated that we cannot let this die.

- C. Batchelor hasn’t spoke on this topic and she wanted to say that she loves the rink and uses it as a recreational skater. She knows that everyone is looking to find some place for a larger covered rink, but she thinks there is something magical about Larz. She loves to see people using the rink and the team sports seem to love it. She thinks that the greatest hope for the town to keep the rink is by having it stay at Larz.

- Michael Yannovich addressed the Commission. He wanted to reiterate what has been said and stated that it’s a gem in Brookline, people relate
Larz Anderson to the ice skating rink. He is the high school hockey coach and every year he has requests from coaches all around the state looking to schedule a game at Larz. He stated that there is a magic to playing in an outdoor rink when it is flurrying. He stated that it is a gem and that it would be terrible to loose. He stated the hockey relies on this rink rather than renting in neighborhood towns, it would be terrible to loose but understands the big picture. He knows how construction projects move along and thinks it will be years before there would be a constructed facility. He is hoping for an option and hopes there is way to get this rink up and running for all users. He wanted to thank everyone for speaking, for being recognized and hopes that the rink can be saved.

- J. Carroll stated that he thinks realistically looking to the Town for money at this time is something certainly worth doing but thinks we should all go into it with our eyes wide open. He suggested looking at the CIP and sees if there is some way to move things around to move the skating rink up.

- E. Gallentine stated that she will look reach out to the full commission with a recommended date that L. Jackson and herself could meet and talk about options. She stated that the information will be shared with the user groups.

- C. Batchelor wanted to say that if we are able to move ahead with repairs to Larz Anderson, she agrees they we should prioritize /fix everything going through the roof/ big ticket items. She thinks we should not do a band-aid, but total fix.

- N. O’Connor stated that it’s imperative they we have this working group start and get together ASAP. She stated that it needs to happen immediately and thinks we need to be super creative. She thinks that a short term fix is great but we can’t lose site of the long term fix. She stated that it’s important to work towards the end goals.

- J. Bain moved to approve to create a working group for the Larz Anderson Skating Rink. Seconded by N. O’Connor. All in favor.
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<th>Recreation Update</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Recreation is working very diligently to stay positive and focused.</td>
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<td>• L. Jackson stated that Recreation is working closely with Parks and Open Space to support their phased plan of opening up parks, athletic fields, and permits in general.</td>
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<td>o Athletic Field Permits open for youth (no games or tournaments) – June 15, 2020</td>
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<td>• We are working to keep all vendors abreast of the guidelines as they get released: Vine Ripe, Viking, Net Results.</td>
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<td>• She stated that they are offering summer camp.</td>
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<td>• Recreation has a phased plan reopening of business. L. Jackson stated that Recreation is bringing employees back to work first (Pre-phase Phase 1), then will allow the public into our facilities (Phase 1).</td>
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<td>o There are different phases for each facility, due to budgets, staffing, and Governor’s and DPH guidelines.</td>
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<td>o The only facility that is open to the public right now is the Brookline Golf Course.</td>
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| **Plans subject to change at any time**  
**Phased Plan** doesn’t align with Governors  
1. June 15, 2020 – Recreation Leaders return to work  
2. June 22, 2020 – Recreation brings more employees to work  
3. June 29, 2020 – Phase 1; Public welcome in person at Eliot, by appointment  
4. July 1, 2020 – Potential Phase 2: Pool and Soule may be operational (still running financials at this time)  
5. July 6, 2020 – Adjusted Summer Camp Program starts  
• She stated that Recreation is planning for a fall launch for Smart Rec to come on board.  
• L. Jackson is still supporting the EOC as needed.  
• Recreations leaders are being brought back and as camp directors/site directors. They will be coming back to work in that capacity and after camp is over will be returning to their regular...
- Summer camp will be offered on a limited variation of summer camps. We decided after many conversations with all partners: PSB, DPH, HR, etc… We have the support we need for a smaller adapted program.
  - Recreation announced this through social media on 6/8/2020.
  - Recreation is currently onboarding 44 staff to run Summer Camp & Environmental Camp
  - Recreation is currently prepping all supply orders and revamping policies and procedures for Camp
  - Over 1,000 people replied to the survey that was sent out regarding camp.
  - They are currently drafting a variance on the Governor’s guidelines
  - L. Jackson is currently working on plans to support Brookline’s vulnerable populations for Summer Camp Programming, van transportation included with less advantaged youth

- L. Jackson stated that Recreation received a $15,000 Summer Camp Grant from BCF this year, which we will utilize to support Steps to Success kids coming to Summer Camp.

- The Golf Course is running smoothly. The driving range was opened yesterday. The temporary GM is doing a great job. The Vine Ripe beverage cart has been approved to open and outdoor seating is now open. She did ask for numbers update regarding the comparison of numbers from golf from this year to last. L. Jackson shared some of the measurable data that she was able to obtain. The driving range right now is exactly where they need to be.

- N. O’Connor and L. Jackson discussed how people are being notified of camp openings. N. O’Connor wanted to make sure that those who registered/ vulnerable population will be given ample time to do so. L. Jackson doesn’t think anyone has ample time to sign up for camp, it will be first come first serve and that is why she is getting the notice out. W. Sheridan read the email out loud for the Commission that was sent out to the Brookline Recreation user’s list
serve. L. Jackson stated that she won’t be able to place everyone.

- N. O’ Connor asked L. Jackson how the pool is going to operate. N. O’Connor and L. Jackson discussed Eliot opening to the public and what the public will have access to in the building. There will be a modified staff schedule. L. Jackson discussed what a preliminarily variance discussion is.

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<td>- The phased approach for reopening Brookline parks and open spaces, in conformance with state guidelines, was shown to the Commission. What is included in Phase 2 specifically was detailed for the Commission. She wanted to let everyone know that it will take some time to open all the spaces. She stated that we are excited about park amenities and activities coming back on line, but wants to be cautious and thoughtful about the approach. She stated that the rangers will be out there, but one of her bigger concerns are the high school aged groups in competitive sports in large groups. She stated that it is something that should not be seen until phase three. She will stay in touch with her peers and the Health and Human Services Director about the condition and any changes that may be required over time.</td>
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<td>- A Harry Downs updates was given. She is hoping to open the playground and water play within the next week. There is a punch list, however all adjustments have been made on the play structures to make it complaint and intact with the design intent. The field work and comfort station work was detailed.</td>
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<td>- J Bain wanted to thank E. Gallentine for all the work she has done regarding the Brookline Reservoir. E. Gallentine was thrilled to open the reservoir and wanted to thank S. Landgren for all his hard work he put in and seeing the project through to completion. She stated that there is still a punch list that they are working on for this project as well, but she is receiving very positive feedback.</td>
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<td>- Phase II of the Muddy River Restoration work is underway. E. Gallentine stated that the dredging at Leverett Pond is scheduled to start in October. She stated that you will start to see</td>
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work associated with the Muddy River Restoration project in Brookline and it will be a big improvement for the park. She stated that simultaneously there is work being done with Marian Pressley to do a plan for the shore work around Leverett Pond.

- A Willow Pond update was given.
- Carlton Footbridge is being watched closely and hoping that the state will get that out to bid again.
- E. Gallentine is working with 700 Brookline Ave on a streetscape pilot tree planting. The developer is using Silva cells on one side and structural soils on two sides of the building. They are taking on maintenance responsibility of that portion of the Riverway Park and she is hoping to do more over time with partnerships.
- E. Gallentine gave an updated on the donated integrated accessible carousel for Longwood playground. Work on installation will occur at the playground over the summer. Likely in July.
- S. Landgren is working on the Baker Tennis courts reconstruction bid sets.
- E. Gallentine is looking to finish the Brookline Avenue project. She stated that we had wanted accessibility improvements into the Lynch Center, improvements to the parking lot and to add an accessible pathway along Brookline Ave within the park. She stated that we are looking to put that out to bid and make those important this year.
- E. Gallentine stated that we are looking at budget cuts for the upcoming fiscal year and a hiring freeze. She stated that we cannot fill the seasonal positions and it’s a huge impact on the capacity of the Division to complete its workload. She sees it throughout the Town right now in terms of what we have the capacity to get to for basic maintenance/care. She stated that we are working with reduced work force and that we are doing the best we can to get to everything. There will be a reduction in staffing, services, supply and capital equipment funding. There will be items not only in operating but capital funds shifting as well.
| W. Sheridan stated that in preparation for the meetings regarding Larz Anderson is there any way to compile a list of current projects and associated costs. E. Gallentine stated that she has that information.  
| J. Bain stated that the Town is fortunate to have two great directors and a good strong Commission. He is grateful for all the input from various expertise/from other staff and would like to close up by saying that he is personally grateful for all help he has been over though the years. |

**Other Business**

- No new business

**Adjourn**

- J, Bain moved to adjourn. Seconded by N O’Connor. All in favor.

Next Meeting: July 14, 2020 Location: WEBEX

A true record  
Attest [ ] Jessica White [ ] Date: 6/9/2020