

# MINUTES

## Recreation Commission Meeting 12/5/16

Call to order: Meeting called to order at 7:09 in the Selectmen's Meeting Room.

Recreation Commission Attendees: Paul Aries, Elizabeth Phillips, Joyce Cannon, Mitch Katzman, Lynn Connors, Bob Phillips and Sheila Moylan

Recreation Attendees: Nicole Banks, Taryn Crocker

Consent Agenda:

- a. Approval of Minutes – Nov 17, 2016
- b. Distributed Monthly Report for November 2016  
Motion to accept the Consent agenda made by Joyce Cannon, seconded by Elizabeth Phillips; passed unanimously

Commission Member reports: None

Public Comment: Court Surfaces Re-development Project

Paul Aries explained the role of Recreation Commission as a “recommending” commission to help give direction to the Recreation Director and the Board of Selectman.

Nancy Rodig: Requested information regarding what time the lights would be shut off for the night.

George Mathews: Expressed concern that court lighting would change the Downey neighborhood, add to light pollution, and potentially attract students to hang out. He stated there is not a lot of use currently of the Downey courts and asked about data on court usage. Preference is for no lighting.

Paul Aries: Westwood currently offers court space in excess of the per capita standards for communities of its size. The re-development plan is based on available data.

Anne MacKinlay: Addressed the postcard as “misleading.” Requested abutters be notified as they will be impacted. Stated that people who play tennis will likely be playing indoors and there is no need to spend money to light Downey courts.

Scott Sullivan: Worried about changing the character of the Downey neighborhood. In favor of re-surfacing Downey but not happy about adding lighting as it would add noise as well light pollution. Downey is a residential area with houses close to the courts, feels that WHS courts are a better option for lighting.

Theresa Matthews: Wondered if a study would be done of usage prior to planning the lighting. We would not want to encourage the use of courts for private lessons which financially benefit individuals at the Town's expense.

Karen Manor: Referenced an email that she sent from tennis pro at Dedham Tennis & Racquet Club that provided some information about lighting. In favor of lighting the high school courts to extend the play time for school teams. Her understanding is that the Selectman had promised that the courts at Morrison Park would be rebuilt.

Tom Resha: As a business person, he does not understand this process. Stated that he appreciated the process and the courtesy from Nicole Banks in all previous conversations. Feels that if a promise was made regarding Morrison Courts, it should be honored. He is not opposed to refurbishing courts but stated that he did not see any

coaches with the exception of the JV coach at the meetings, indicating an apparent lack of interest from the schools. He is opposed to 50' lights due to potential for light spillage. He has had to close in skylights at his home to negate the effects of existing lighting at the WHS multipurpose field. If lighting the WHS courts, prefers 30' pole option vs. 50' to reduce impact on neighbors. He stated that he has spent thousands of dollars to lessen the impact of the existing lighting. House is 250' from the existing lit fields. Win, win for everyone if they use the 30' lighting. He believes it is the right choice. If only one court could be lit, feels it should be at Morrison Field.

Nancy Rodig: Not in favor of lighting Downey courts. More often than not the existing courts are not in use, so she does not see the need for lighting, especially if the data is not available to back up this action. She spoke of weekend days and early afternoon court availability and courts under-utilized.

Nicole Banks: The lighted court at Morrison Park was eliminated due to the building of the Fire station and re-building of the court at that location is still in question due to space limitations. Project at Morrison will not move forward until 2018 when the East Street bridge project is completed. Downey courts under consideration as an alternative to Morrison due to delay in construction and possibility that court does not fit on the Morrison site.

Scott Sullivan: Inquired about budgeting process for the courts project.

Paul Aries: Explained process whereby a recommendation is made to the Board of Selectmen, the BOS submit projects for Town Meeting approval. If approved, project goes through bid process. There are multiple opportunities for public comment throughout the process.

Karen Manor: Concerned about safety if 30' lighting poles are used inside the court area.

Nicole Banks: Shared slides of several lighting options including in-court options. Nicole will reach out to the school department.

Theresa Matthews: Would like to see more polling of neighbors prior to decision. Wanted to know if the Recreation Commission would recommend lighting of courts if the neighbors rally against it.

Paul Aries: Any and all residents have the opportunity to come and make public comment or contact the Recreation Commission in writing as per the open meeting bylaws of the Town.

Bob Phillips: Asked for clarification about private lessons being held on the courts.

Tom Resha: Estimates that 85% of the people attending meeting are not in favor of lighting the courts.

Paul Aries: Recommendations regarding the refurbishment of the tennis courts at the high school and the basketball court at the Morrison need to go forward.

Nicole Banks: Morrison BB court needs re-surfacing. If down the line the court needs to be moved to accommodate a tennis court, we can consider extending the BB court to meet tennis court dimensions.

A discussion followed regarding need for additional basketball courts but need is for indoor court space. Paul Aries indicated that the Rec Department will be addressing the need for a Rec Center to meet that need.

Elizabeth Phillips: Supports lighting at Westwood High School courts to allow for extended play by school teams.

Paul Aries: Downey is more removed and it does not make as much sense compared to lighting the courts at WHS, the premiere facility.

Nicole Banks: Specific recommendations: 50' vs. 30' lighting poles, if safety concerns were addressed, the resurfacing the courts should be done at the same time as the lighting. If lights were added later, then it impacts

the court surface if you cut in lighting conduit and poles. The long term maintenance needs to be considered. WHS courts have not been re-surfaced for 12 years, long past the 5-8 year recommended industry standard.

- Recommendation for resurfacing courts and lighting using 30' poles for in-court lighting of six courts at the WHS. Recommendation that all lights be off by 9:00 PM and to have in-house control of lights and that we continue to work with the company we currently use. The 50' pole option has less light spillage but more visibility of the actual poles utilized.
- Recommendation for resurfacing for the WHS tennis courts, Downey tennis courts and the Morrison Park basketball court.

#### Director/Staff Report:

**Program Survey** - Taryn Crocker, Program Administrator, reported on the results of a program survey conducted in late Spring which provided valuable feedback and many favorable comments. In response to many requests, have expanded adult programming options and will be interesting to see if it is utilized.

The following action items were a direct result of survey responses and suggestions.

- Swim lesson observation rules were changed to allow parent/guardians to observe all lessons, with the understanding that they were responsible for controlling other children under their responsibility.
- Added a Fall program option Kids Triathlon
- Increased February vacation options
- Cooking classes and pastry classes added for Winter 2017
- Additional Yoga program for preschoolers

Suggestion was made to add a question asking about overall satisfaction with the Recreation Department. Possibly add a survey/feedback link for follow-up after each program?

**Solar Panel Project at WHS** - Nicole shared a memo regarding solar panel installation project at the high school. Once the panels are in place there will be a power down while connections are made during which a generator will provide power. Expect little to no impact on the Pool schedule. The Commission is hopeful that some reduction in energy costs can be directed towards the Recreation Department.

#### **Staffing update**

Business Manager – The candidate reviews are completed. Three finalists have been selected for staff interview and facility tour. Anticipate a recommendation on a final candidate and an announcement soon.

Aquatics Specialist – Nicole is working with Sue Perry, Aquatics Manager, to review and amend the job description and they plan to move quickly to fill the position once the Personnel Board and Board of Selectmen approve the job posting. Nicole reports that Sue has received two recent resignations for supervisors on the early AM shift, so possible that early AM hours could be affected.

Next Meeting: January TBD.

Motion to Adjourn: Bob Phillips motioned at 9:18 PM, seconded by Joyce Cannon. Unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Connors, Secretary