

**Burlington Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2021**

Commissioners in Attendance:

Chairman David Norden, Vice Chairman Steve Nelson, Commissioner Paul Raymond, Commissioner Tom Murphy, Commissioner Kevin Sullivan

Staff in Attendance:

Director Brendan Egan, Acting Superintendent of Recreation Maintenance Bill Baker, Program Coordinator Kelly Lehman

Chair Norden called the meeting to order at 3:04 pm.

Chair Norden announced the virtual meeting reminder pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting law imposing strict limitations of the number of people who may gather in one place. This meeting of the Recreation Commission is being held via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. Voting will be done by a roll call vote.

Director Egan announced that residents who would like to attend or listen to the meeting may do so live via the BCAT Government cable access channel; or by dialing 408-418-9388 with the meeting number 179 324 0030.

Minutes:**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Norden asked for a motion to approve the minutes of January 13, 2021.
Commissioner Murphy made the motion seconded by Vice Chair Nelson.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Murphy – aye
Commissioner Raymond – aye
Vice Chair Nelson – aye
Commissioner Sullivan – abstain
Chair Norden – aye

VOTE: 4-0-1 (Commissioner Sullivan absent on January 13)

Public Participation

No public participation

Parks & Recreation Report

Presented by Director Egan

New Maintenance Facility: Work continues to progress steadily. The site will be powered permanently soon. They are waiting for Eversource to connect the main power. They are currently working on interior items; installing dura rock in the bathrooms; and sheet rocking the mezzanine and other areas. The windows are in and are undergoing air and water tests to ensure they are sealed properly. Finish carpentry has started, and the floors are scheduled to be in by months end. Some garage components

are still delayed due to the pandemic, and progress on outside curbing was impacted by the recent snowfall. Director Egan will be scheduling a tour of the facility for the Commission.

Rahanis Parking Lots: Director Egan has been working with Engineering on repaving the parking lots at Rahanis Playground. The Mill Street parking lot will be rectangular and will include a simple rain garden buffer between the edge of the parking lot and the stream where water can flow through grasses and rocks to help slow, filter and drain the water. The parking spaces will be re-defined in both the Mill Street and Patriot Road lots and the final number of parking spaces is yet to be determined. This project is part of the Town's paving contract. When Director Egan receives a drawing, he will share it with the Commission. The project will most likely be done in two phases and will work around the Department's summer programs. The Conservation Department is on board with the project.

Community Theater Group of Burlington: The **Community Theater Group of Burlington (formerly Burlington Players)** contacted Director Egan about making improvements in their courtyard. They have set aside funds and would like to pay for it themselves. The group spoke about starting fresh with the planter beds, removing the tree against the building, paving the sidewalks, repairing the railings on the deck outside the front door and adding a ramp to the front entrance. Director Egan asked for a detailed plan from the group and has spoken with Kevin Keene from the Highway Department about paving the sidewalks. He setup a meeting for next week to discuss the project further and will update the Commission at a later meeting.

Mary Cummings Estate Park Property – Marvin Field: There has been a question as to who owns Marvin Field and if the Town of Burlington had taken it by eminent domain in the 1960s. The City of Boston responded to our request to research it. They referenced a lawsuit that the Attorney General was involved in, but the result was never recorded. Town Counsel is making a further inquiry into the document to ensure the validity.

Director Egan believes that the Trustees for the City of Boston are concentrating on the maintenance of the remainder of the park on Blanchard Road and the long term care. Town Administrator Paul Sagarino had been working on renewing the agreement for the use of that property. Since the pandemic, there have been other priorities for the City of Boston. The agreement expires this year, so we need to work on the extension to the 10 year agreement.

Commissioner Sullivan asked Director Egan what the date was of the agreement. Commissioner Sullivan is concerned if the lease isn't renewed and there's an issue or injury on property. Director Egan thinks it was Fall of 2011. Director Egan will follow up with the lease date and inform the Commission and bring it up with Town Counsel.

Regan Playground: A pole with a guy wire was installed in November. The Parks and Recreation Department purchased the lights, bracket, and all the electrical equipment. The town electrician, through the Facilities Department, will install the weather head, meter box, conduit on the pole, the shut off and the lights and bracket. Once installed Eversource will come out to connect the main power.

Recreation Maintenance Report

Presented by Acting Superintendent of Recreation Maintenance Bill Baker

The crew has been busy with snow removal and clean up after the past 4 snow falls. They have also been clearing fallen trees and cutting down dead trees in Simonds woods; and cleaning up the basketball court at Overlook Park to possibly put in a pickle ball court in the future. They have also been repairing picnic tables at the shop; going to the Ice Palace weekly moving all the snow from the Zamboni and keeping up with trash around town.

Commissioner Sullivan inquired as to the plan for snow removal on Varsity Field. Acting Superintendent Baker indicated that there has not been any discussion. Director Egan added that he spoke to Kevin Keene, Highway Dept., to see if they will be clearing the field and he indicated they will not be clearing it. The School Department has been maintaining the field since its installation. Commissioner Murphy will check with the Athletic Director.

Commissioner Sullivan asked Director Egan about last year's warrant article to re-surface the tennis courts. Director Egan indicated it will be going out to bid this month.

Program Coordinator Report

Presented by Program Coordinator Kelly Lehman

The spring brochure is ready and will be sent out digitally. Postcards will be mailed to residents to give information on how to find the brochure. The postcard will also have a QR code on it and residents will be able to scan the QR code which will direct them to the brochure. The brochure will also be posted on the social media platforms. Residents who want a printed version of the brochure will be able sign up to have one mailed to them.

Spring programs offered are very similar to last fall. There will be some hybrid programming, some in-person programming, outdoor programming as much as possible, some exclusively virtual programming; and exclusively in-person programming.

Commissioner Sullivan asked if there will be paper brochures for summer programming; what the rationale is for moving to digital brochures, and if there would be more participation if the brochure was paper. Program Coordinator Lehman explained that digital brochure is more financially feasible and provides more flexibility to adapt to the programming changes that have been inevitable due to pandemic guidelines. Program Coordinator Lehman added that the majority of the community is much more comfortable registering and working with the on-line brochure due to the changes we have all undergone over the past year.

Director Egan spoke to the last minute changes the programming staff has had to deal with over the past year and re-printing costs they have incurred due to the pandemic guidelines. There will still be a paper copy of the brochure for those residents who request it, but the postcard with the QR code provides more flexibility, allows for last minute changes and is easy to use. The brochure has hyperlinks and is interactive.

Commissioner Sullivan asked about the brochure printing budget of \$16,000. Director Egan explained the costs of printing 9,500 postcards for three times a year and 10,500 printed once a year; plus the cost of paper brochures.

Chair Norden asked how many online brochures have we done and if postcards have been mailed in the past. Director Egan stated this is the fifth time doing a digital brochure and the first time mailing the postcards. There are over 14,000 households in our program database which approximates to about 30,000 email addresses which is too much for the Town's email system. The postcards allow the Department to only mail brochures to those residents who request it. Director Egan explained that there will also be a "code red" which is the reverse 911 system which will inform the community that the brochure is available online. These methods are an improvement to our prior program distribution and will reach all of our residents.

Chair Norden asked if the summer programming staff will need to be vaccinated prior to running the programs. Program Coordinator Lehman stated that there is no requirement for staff to be vaccinated at this time, but that is a great example of how things are fluid, constantly changing.

Vice Chair Nelson shared his opinion as to the ease of the digital brochure and how impressed he was with the ease and information available. Vice Chair Nelson also suggested that paper copies of the brochure could be made available at the library.

New Business

Presented by Director Egan

FY22 Budget: As discussed previously, the Town's guidelines called for a level funded budget from last year except for contractual obligations. There are obligations in the contract for step increases for BMEA (union) employees. The overall increase is 1.69% for full time and part time salary increases that are part of the BMEA contract. Last year's budget had been reduced by \$8,000 at Fall Town Meeting. The budget was level funded to that amount, which is \$1,924,212.

Discussion:

Chair Norden complimented Director Egan on keeping the budget in the guidelines.

Commissioner Murphy shared his understanding that the guidelines set by Ways and Means is a blended 3.25%. Murphy asked if there was any direction given to the Parks & Recreation Department to not go up to 3%.

Director Egan explained that everything had to be level funded except for contractual obligations. He believes that between the schools and the town only increasing by the contractual obligations it will meet the blended 3.25%. Commissioner Murphy shared that school has been allocated 3.5%.

Vice Chair Nelson asked what impact Director Egan might see on the services provided by the Department given the small increases that they have been allowed. Director Egan insured there are no disruptions or cuts to staff, but it will, however, affect the part time budget. He explained there will need to be some adjustments. This year Celebrate Burlington will occur but with some adjustments; cutting interns and waiting to hire a Marketing Coordinator.

Chair Norden requested a motion to approve the FY22 budget of \$1,924,212 which is level funded with a 1.69% increase for contractual obligations. Commissioner Raymond made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Sullivan.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Murphy – aye
Commissioner Raymond – aye
Vice Chair Nelson – aye
Commissioner Sullivan – aye
Chair Norden – aye

VOTE: 5-0-0

Chair Norden announced the Fiscal Year 22 Budget approved at \$1,924,212. Chair Norden also noted the possibility there may be a request to meet a guideline to decrease the budget by 5%.

Old Business

Presented by Director Egan

On January 27th, 2021, the Recreation Commission met to discuss 4 potential capital requests this year. Director Egan suggested voting on the requests in priority order,

1. Overseeder
2. Wildwood Sun Shade
3. Accessible Passenger Van

Overseeder:

Chair Norden requested a motion be made to approve the Redexim 3K 1575 overseeder with an estimated projected cost of \$18,000. Commissioner Raymond made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Murphy.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Murphy – aye
Commissioner Raymond – aye
Vice Chair Nelson – aye
Commissioner Sullivan – aye
Chair Norden – aye

VOTE: 5-0-0

Chair Norden announced the motion for the overseeder is approved.

Wildwood Park Sun Shade:

Chair Norden requested a motion be made to approve the Wildwood Park sun shade with an estimated projected cost of \$45,000. Commissioner Murphy made the motion; seconded by Commissioner Raymond.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Murphy – aye
Commissioner Raymond – aye
Vice Chair Nelson – aye
Commissioner Sullivan – aye
Chair Norden – aye

VOTE: 5-0-0

Chair Norden announced the motion for the Wildwood Park sun shade is approved.

Accessible Passenger Van:

Chair Norden requested a motion be made to approve the accessible passenger van with an estimated projected cost of \$58,000. Commissioner Murphy made the motion; seconded by Vice Chair Nelson.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Murphy – aye
Commissioner Raymond – aye
Vice Chair Nelson – aye
Commissioner Sullivan – aye
Chair Norden – aye

VOTE: 5-0-0

Chair Norden announced the motion for the accessible passenger van is approved.

Director Egan will share any news he hears about the warrant articles with the Commission immediately. Commissioner Sullivan reminded the Commission that since the members have voted on these warrant articles, if the town asks the Commission to withdraw any items, the Commissioners will need to vote again on which one(s) to withdraw.

Chair Norden asked Director Egan for any other Old Business.

During this meeting, Director Egan did review the Mary Cummings Estate Park paperwork. The agreement with the City of Boston was signed in April, not September as previously thought. Director Egan will attempt to get a resolution to extend the agreement to make sure the Town covers any activities taking place on the field. Director Egan will get an answer on the liability for that property.

Commissioner Raymond stated that the Trustees of the Reservations put out a publication highlighting Mary PC Cummings Park. It was referred to as the new jewel of Burlington.

Commissioner Raymond also wanted to compliment Director Egan and Program Coordinator Lehman and the programming staff on the material, brochures, and on-line information coming out of the Parks & Recreation Department.

Executive Session:

No need

The next Recreation Commission meeting will be preliminarily scheduled for February 24 at 3:00 pm. If there have been no budgetary changes, then the next meeting will occur on March 3 at 3:00 pm instead of February 24.

Chair Norden asked for a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Murphy made the motion; seconded by Vice Chair Nelson.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Commissioner Murphy – aye

Commissioner Raymond – aye

Vice Chair Nelson – aye

Commissioner Sullivan – aye

Chair Norden – aye

VOTE: 5-0-0

Chair Norden adjourned the WebEx meeting at 4:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Terese Castellano