



**NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES**

April 20, 2023 7 PM
Remote Meeting

Approved 6/1/2023

Present: Jay McHale, Chair; Bea Bezmalinovic, Vice-Chair; Lisa Collins, Secretary; Laura Robert; Michael D'Ortenzio; Brandon Schmitt, NRC Director

Guests: Linda Chow, School Committee; Barry Fogel, Keegan and Werlin; Joe Robert, Joshua Serie, Terrier Sports; Pete Serreze, Youth Baseball/Softball

Welcome and Meeting Guidelines

Mr. McHale convened the meeting at 7:00 PM

Public Speak (non-agenda item)

None.

Director's Report

Permit Requests: Wellesley Wonderful Weekend Signage: Mr. Schmitt presented a request from the Celebrations Committee to install temporary signage at several NRC parks to announce events for the Wellesley Wonderful Weekend. After a motion was made (Collins) and seconded (Robert), the Commission voted unanimously to approve the signage request. ***McHale-Yea, Bezmalinovic-Yea, Robert-Yea, Collins-Yea, D'Ortenzio, Yea.*** Mr. Schmitt also reported that a permit had been issued to organizers of the Wonder Run for Sunday May 21st at the Hunnewell Track and Field.

Mr. Schmitt reported that work on the Morses Pond Erosion Project sites at Russell Road and Pine Point is scheduled to begin in May. Some equipment will be staged near the trail head along the aqueduct near Russell Road.

Tree Planting: Mr. Schmitt reported that NRC staff have been completing the tree site visits and that tree planting has officially begun.

Mr. Schmitt thanked the individuals who signed up for the weekend's upcoming Earth Day Volunteer events.

Mr. Schmitt also acknowledged and thanked Jack Kenny for his donation of 300 tree seedlings to the community.

Climate Compact: Mr. Schmitt reported on the Climate Compact Longfellow Pond Project public meeting, which is now available to view [online](#).

Liaison Reports

Mobility – Ms. Collins reported Mobility did not meet because of the vacation week.

Trails & Wetlands – Ms. Robert reported there is a discussion around signage on Fuller Brook Path with the use of bikes and walkers. Another issue has been the use of electric bikes, which are not allowed on natural areas, and there are concerns about more issues between walkers and dogs and motorized bikes on Fuller Brook Path and other paths in Town. Ms. Collins offered to connect with the Mobility committee on this discussion.

CPC – Mr. McHale reported are working to move ahead on the North 40 on identifying a parcel that will ultimately go into a deed restriction.

Playing Field Task Force – Ms. Bezmalinovic reported that given the time of year, the PFTF is primarily focused on scheduling field use for local teams, permitting for out-of-Town groups and the Sprague bathroom work. Porta Potties will be in place until the completion of the work. until the bathrooms are in place. She also shared there is continued discussion of the need to capture and integrate the data of actual field use with the permit process.

Climate Emergency

Ms. Collins – shared a CNN report of flooding in California and the impact on the environment and economics in the area, and a second report about the Trash in the [Atlantic Ocean article](#).

Ms. Bezmalinovic noted that while we are enjoying an early spring – it is a possible Climate Change impact and it's not a good sign as plants are budding and blooming earlier than usual.

Approve Minutes

After motion was made (Bezmalinovic) and seconded (Robert), the NRC voted unanimously to approve the March 2, 2023 meeting Minutes. **McHale-Yea, Bezmalinovic-Yea, Robert-Yea, Collins-Yea, D'Ortenzio, Yea.** Ms. Collins is going to review the minutes and add more details and will approve at the next scheduled meeting.

New and Continuing Business

Review & Discuss School Committee Memo: Request for Further Action on NRC's Approval of Lighting at Hunnewell Track and Field

School Committee, represented by Linda Chow and School Committee (SC) outside environmental council, Barry Fogel of Keegan Werlin LLP, prepared and presented a request to the NRC to submit a written communication to the Wetlands Protection Committee (WPC) as part of the WPC's ongoing review of the SC's Hunnewell Track and Field lighting proposal. The specific request to the NRC is:

- Clarify the agreed-upon parameters for lighting usage per the NRC's motion on 7/7/22
- Detail how and when the NRC will finalize and adopt the Hunnewell Track and Field lighting usage policy
- Detail requirements to ensure that no significant changes to the limitations established in the approval of 7/7/22 and the Lighting Usage Policy will be made without prior review and approval by the NRC, followed if necessary by further presentation of any such changes to the WPC for evaluation of potential wetland resource impacts; and
- Describe how the NRC expects to report on lighting usage after the Fall and Spring seasons.

Click [HERE](#) to read the School Committee memo in full.

In summary, the following discussion and clarification followed:

- Ms. Robert put forward a motion to remove this item from the agenda with the position that the work falls to WPC and NRC should not get involved in any capacity at this stage. There was no second on the motion.
- Ms. Collins asked for clarification as to what the SC was requesting. Ms. Chow and Mr. Fogel clarified they were asking the NRC to add the specific SC request (as noted above) to the NRC May 4th meeting to finalize the outstanding parameters for the Lighting Usage Policy and provide the documentation to the WPC as part of their ongoing review. Given the NRC has jurisdiction over the use of the property and the WPC has jurisdiction to review the proposed use given the Wetlands Violation and Town Bylaw, the NRC policy and related documentation should be part of the WPC review.
- Ms. Bezmalinovic added three comments: (1) When we took the vote in July 2022, we agreed the NRC has policy issues that needed to be addressed. (2) Any policy can be reviewed again. (3) If WPC comes back through the third-party review with grounded recommendations, NRC would review and potentially adjust the policy accordingly.
- The discussion continued regarding the peer review and there was a misunderstanding that Ms. Robert thought that Schools was asking for no peer review. Clarification was provided that this request was not in place of the WPC peer review.
- Mr. McHale talked about four issues that needed to be addressed – documentation of what was approved; second and third issues would be how the peer reviewer would deal with the overall usage with respect to the light in parts of the policy; and final point – are there ways to measure how much light will be uses – suggesting a report should be requested from either MLP or Musco Lighting.
- Ms. Robert and Ms. Bezmalinovic reflected on the importance that the usage hours limit is up to NRC - regardless of the final WPC max. hours recommendation.
- Mr. D’Ortenzio brought up the fact that light and noise are not mentioned in the Town’s wetlands bylaws, even if they may be important considerations. He brought up the Wellesley College case, where a project with very similar characteristics recently obtained WPC approval. .
- Mr. McHale confirmed NRC would add this request to the May 4 meeting, focusing on the first three questions, and looking to the School Committee for assistance on the fourth question.

Trails Committee Appointment

- Ms. Robert read biography on new Trails Committee candidate Jen Bonniwell.
- Ms. Robert made a motion to approve Ms. Bonniwell to the Trails Committee. Mr. D’Ortenzio asked about whether there is an appointment policy for the Trails Committee and/or a set number of members. Mr. Schmitt explained that there was not; appointments occur on an annual basis.
- **After a motion was made (Robert) and seconded (Collins), the NRC voted via role call to approve Jen Bonniwell as a member of the Trails Committee. *McHale-Yea, Bezmalinovic-Yea, Robert-Yea, Collins-Yea, D’Ortenzio, Yea***

Amplification Request for Kelly Fields: Terriers Sports/Wellesley Youth Baseball: Saturday – 1:15-3:15 p.m. on 4/29, 5/6, 5/13, 5/20, 6/3, 6/10, 6/17; Sundays, 12:15-2:15 p.m. – 4/30, 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, 6/4, 6/11, 6/18

- Mr. Roberts asked for speaker on the field on certain dates and times on Saturdays and Sundays. Mr. Serie talked about the challenge and ability to get the kids to stay focused and would like to use music to help keep the kids engaged.
- Mr. McHale has reminded the board that amplification has to be approved by the NRC. He then asked if there are any complaints last week. There were no complaints.
- Ms. Collins asked for clarification the request is one speaker in the middle of the field at Bates not a speaker on every corner of the field. Mr. Roberts confirmed the placement was in the middle of the field.
- Ms. Robert said her concern said there needs to be sound studies, supporting focusing on policy before approving any amplification.
- Ms. Collins told the Committee she had spoken with Towns around Wellesley and most she spoken with approve sound on a case by case basis. Ms. Collins suggested using this permit request as a test case.
- Ms. Bezmalinovic said this goes beyond what the NRC has approved and has concerns about equity across other town organizations who would like the use of sound.
- Mr. McHale suggested getting information from the public and mentioned the equity question about allowing all teams or just a limited number of teams. He would prefer the NRC get input from the user community and engage Playing Fields Task Force as that existing Committee brings multiple stakeholders together. He recommended for them to come back with a revised proposal.
- No vote was taken on the existing proposal.

**Amplification Request Amplification Request for Diane Warren Field: Girls Softball
Friday and Saturday nights 4/29 – 6/10 and Wednesday and Thursday nights 6/28 – 8/3.
7:15 pm - 9:15 pm**

- Mr. Serreze reviewed a request at the Diane Warren Field for sound between 7:15-9:15 p.m to include announcing player names and short music clips between innings for the spring and summer seasons, with priority on the spring season.
- Mr. McHale explained it will need to be addressed in a future meeting and the NRC would not vote on this permit request at this time.
- Ms. Collins said she would support this request for the spring season with the announcing of the names with limited amplified sound. (e.g. music during warm ups only)
- Ms. Bezmalinovic said the ZBA ruling for Reidy – the boys (baseball) program has lights on until 9:45 p.m. and sound until 9:30 p.m.
- Mr. McHale reiterated his points from earlier regarding engaging PFTF and defining a broader policy.
- Mr. Serreze would like revise the permit request to the 2 All-Star game on Saturday, June 3 5pm-9:15pm
- Mr. McHale suggested to come back with a new proposal for the All-Star game on June 3, knowing the NRC will receive other youth teams asking for the same request. He also suggested Mr. Serreze attend the PFTF meeting next month.

Urgent Items Not Anticipated Prior to 48-hours of Posting

N/A

Schedule meetings

Meeting locations will be confirmed prior to the meeting dates May 4 and May 20. Mr. Schmitt is still working on a meeting room but has the Warren Room booked through the summer.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 10:05 PM

Materials Referenced

Draft Minutes: March 2, 2023; April 6, 2023.

Permit Requests; Wellesley Wonderful Weekend signage, Wonder Run, Amplification at Kelly, Amplification at Warren.

School Committee Memo to NRC 04-18-2023

Appointment Info for Jennifer Bonniwell

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa Collins, Secretary