

PLAYING FIELDS TASK FORCE

MINUTES

May 12th, 2023

7:45 am online zoom meeting

Attending:

Voting Members:

Bea Bezmalinovic – Natural Resources Commission (NRC); Laurance Stuntz – Recreation Commission (RC) (Chair), Linda Chow – School Committee (SC) (arrived about 7:50), Beth Sullivan Woods – Select Board (SB), Jeff Wechsler – Board of Public Works (BPW); Jerry Nigro – Boys Lacrosse (BL), Kelly Uller – Girls Lacrosse (GL) (arrived about 8:00); Michael Bessette – Field Hockey (FH); Ansley Martin – Wellesley United Soccer (S); Rick Kinney – Wellesley Youth Baseball and Softball (LL); Maura Renzella – Wellesley Youth Football (F); Luke DelVecchio – Adult Softball (AS); Tripp Sheehan – Member at Large (TS)

Board/Commission staff and other guests:

Wendy Paul – Advisory; Tim Bania – BPW; Dave Cohen - BPW; Matt Chin – Rec; Angela Snyder – FH; John Maccini, Resident; Joe Roberts, Resident, Terriers, Community Investors; Lisa Collins, NRC

1. Call to order by Laurance Stuntz at 7:46 am

2. Citizen Speak:

None

3. Minutes:

No comments.

Motion: By Bea Bezmalinovic: To approve the Minutes from the April 14th, 2023 meeting as presented

Seconded: by Maura Renzella

Voted in Favor: Bea Bezmalinovic – NRC; Laurance Stuntz – RC; Beth Sullivan Woods – SB; Jeff Wechsler – BPW; Jerry Nigro –BL; Michael Bessette –FH; Ansley Martin - S; Rick Kinney – LL; Maura Renzella – F; Luke DelVecchio – AS;

Abstained: Tripp Sheehan - MaL

4. Field Applications:

- a. Jewish Arts Collaborative, practice art installation at Schofield on 5/27, only about 45-60 minutes use. Non-profit, no charge.
- b. WHS Girls Soccer, summer soccer games, at WHS track and field, Tuesday and Thursday evenings 5-8 pm, June 27-July 27. Organized use of the HS Track, \$15/participant for the series.
- c. WHS Girls Soccer, pre-season captains' practice. Sprague 2, August 7, 8, 9, 5-7:30pm. No charge.
- d. ProPath Soccer. Soccer skills clinic at Perrin Park. 5-8 pm Mondays and Wednesdays, 7/10 to 8/2 (8 dates). Charged as Non-Resident field rental of a grass field.

Motion: By Jerry Nigro: To approve the permits.

Seconded: by Kelly Uller

Voted in Favor: Bea Bezmalinovic – NRC; Laurance Stuntz – RC; Linda Chow –SC; Beth Sullivan Woods – SB; Jeff Wechsler – BPW; Jerry Nigro –BL; Kelly Uller –GL; Michael Bessette –FH; Ansley Martin - S; Rick Kinney – LL; Maura Renzella – F; Luke DelVecchio – AS; Tripp Sheehan – MaL

5. Sound Discussion

- a. Lisa Collins from the NRC introduced the subject. The NRC, in collaboration with the School Committee, is interested in developing a policy governing the use of amplified sound on the playing fields. Long term, after developing this policy, there is a thought that the PFTF would help to manage the total requests from the groups represented in the PFTF such that users are not negatively impacted by a “first come first served” approach. Lisa asked the user groups to weigh in on 2 things: 1) What has the experience of the members of this group in been in terms of what is happening in other towns at similar sports events. (i.e. Are you hearing amplified sound at games in other towns?) and 2) Among this group, what do you expect the total demand (use and type) to be for amplified sound?
- b. A robust discussion ensued, with Rick Kinney introducing for context the Girls Softball request for a pilot program for amplified sound, not to exceed 55-60db at Warren Field during night games. Joe Roberts also introduced the Terriers request for amplified music at Kelly and Upham as part of their early baseball/softball program.
- c. Various groups weighed in on their expected use of sound and experience from other towns. Often, particularly as kids get into middle school and high school, they play music briefly as part of their warmups. In general, for sports without stoppages (e.g., soccer, lacrosse, field hockey) don’t have music or amplified sound during the games. For sports with more stoppages (baseball, softball, football) those user groups often would like to use amplified sound for announcements and some music.
- d. Over the discussion, a consensus emerged that any policy should include several aspects:
 - i. Monitoring, measurement, and accountability should be built into any pilot program
 - ii. Sound requests should be submitted ahead of a season so that the total sound amount can be anticipated
 - iii. Create a data base of requests over the entire year
- e. Lisa Collins thanked the group for their input and said that she would be bringing this input back to the NRC.

6. Project Updates

- a. Sprague Bathrooms
 - i. Dave Cohen reported that they are moving forward with the permitting process to get the bathrooms built and in place.
- b. High School Track and Field
 - i. Dave Cohen provided a brief update that a lot of work is going on, with the next major step being a peer review from a consultant that the Wetlands Protection Committee selected to review the Epsilon study completed by the School Committee as part of their project proposal.
- c. Lacrosse Wall
 - i. Tim Bania reported on progress. Virtually done, and the wall is in use by teams. Thanks to everyone, teams, funders, community, for coming together to get this recreational resource available for our kids.
- d. Field Utilization Study
 - i. Bea reported that Weston & Sampson will be putting together a presentation at NRC on May 18th and the next step is for a working group to put together capital requests.

- ii. Bea asked for actuals to be provided for RecTrac so that we have the data to make the case that a capital request is substantiated.

7. General Fields discussion

- a. There is a parking issue at Sprague on Saturdays with people parking on the grass and in illegal spots that would block emergency vehicle access. User groups were asked to remind their teams and visitors of the available parking in the Sprague lot and in the Middle School lot on Donizetti.

8. Adjourn:

Motion: To adjourn by Rick Kinney

Seconded: by Maura Renzella

Voted in Favor: All still present (several members had to drop off early).