



NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES

Approved 6-15-23

June 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 7 PM

Kingsbury Room 485 Washington Street

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

**Guests:** Joe Roberts, Terriers Sports; Jay Prosnitz, Wellesley Trails Committee

**Welcome and Meeting Guidelines**

Mr. McHale convened the meeting at 7:03 PM

**Public Speak (non-agenda item)**

None.

**Director's Report**

**Permit Request: Mass at Hunnewell Track and Field: September 17, 2023.**

Mr. Schmitt introduced a permit request from the St. John/St. Paul Collective to hold an outdoor mass in the Hunnewell Track and Field at the field and on the bleacher seating. In addition to the permit application, Mr. Schmitt provided background regarding prior history of this event, the amplified sound request and the steps taken by the Collective to clear any potential conflicts with schools or youth football. Ms. Robert requested to find out the number of expected attendees. The NRC deferred a decision until the next meeting to allow for public comment.

**Permit Request: Terriers programs for sound– Various Summer 2023 Dates - Kelly Field.**

Mr. Roberts presented the Terriers permit for field use with amplification for the Terriers Sports Camp and Wellesley Little League In-Town Baseball program at Kelly Field. Mr. Roberts clarified he was requesting a vote at the 6/15 NRC meeting. The permit includes program details by week and day, including blocks of time for sound and specific fields to be used. Mr. Roberts outlined the rationale behind the request, providing specifics on decibel level and speaker placement. The NRC discussed staffing with High School students, how the program manages song selection, and how the actual use of music/amplification will be monitored to meet the permit requirements, if it is to be approved. Prior to making a decision, the NRC requested flyers with the proposed program details be distributed to neighbors inviting feedback to the NRC. Ms. Robert cautioned that any communication to residents should note that other organizations can also request amplified sound. The NRC formally deferred a decision until the next meeting to allow public feedback based on notifications sent out by the Terriers.

**Morses Pond Update:**

(1) **Pond Conditions:** Mr. Schmitt described the current plant growth and harvesting situation at the pond and acknowledged current resident concerns about the plant growth, primarily invasive species, in the pond. The NRC suggested putting the information in the upcoming newsletter, consideration of collecting funds similar to the field use maintenance funds to increase maintenance schedule and invasive species mitigation efforts, and applying more resources overall to the pond. The NRC also discussed concerns about the opportunity cost of shifting staff or other resources to the pond and the impact on other projects, and including messaging to residents to help with the issue by adopting lower impact landscaping practices.

**(2) Request for Amplified Sound:** Mr. Schmitt reported that he has not received any negative feedback from the public regarding the amplified music permit request from Recreation at Morses Pond.

**Tree Canopy:**

Mr. Schmitt reported the Tree Canopy Study is complete, and will be distributed to other departments.

**Field Utilization Study:**

Mr. Schmitt reported the public forum for the Field Use Study will take place on June 7, at 7PM via zoom.

**New and Continuing Business**

**Signage/Safety at Fuller Brook Park:** Mr. Prosnitz from the Trails Committee outlined concerns among the Trails Committee about bicycle-pedestrian conflict, particularly on the Fuller Brook Park (FBP). The Trails Committee is proposing the addition of signs to the FBP for the dual purpose of managing behavior among bicyclists and providing a visible “rule” to point to should a conflict arise. On behalf of the Trails Committee, Mr. Prosnitz offered examples of simple language and signs consistent with the park entrance sign at the entrance at Maugus and Washington and provided 6 locations along the park for consideration. The NRC discussed overall concerns about additional signage, and felt this is a topic to be considered among a broader policy regarding e-bikes at a future point. The NRC and Mr. Prosnitz agreed more education should be pushed out into the community when appropriate. (e.g. Hunnewell School reopening)

**Policy Handbook Discussion (until 8:30 – main discussion June 12th):** Agenda item held over until June 12<sup>th</sup> policy meeting.

**Chapter 2 – Close discussion on Open Space**

**Chapter 3 – Parks and Conservation Land**

**Liaison Reports**

**Trails:** The next Trails Committee meeting date is June 20, 2023.

**Wetlands Protection Committee:** The WPC deliberated on the peer review, hours, and wildlife habitat assessment and is working on drafting an Order of Conditions for the project at 55 Rice Street (i.e. Hunnewell Track and Field Lighting project)

**PFTF:** There will be one additional June meeting and then the PFTF will be on summer break.

**Mobility Committee:** The Committee discussed e-bikes, and Ms. Collins visited the aqueduct bathrooms with others and will be proposing potential changes to the surfacing around the building to help access, as well as entry and trails from Whole Foods along the aqueduct.

**Land Trust/Open Space Project:** Work continues refining our open space data.

**Climate Emergency**

Ms. Robert noted an article on flowering plants, and the impact of climate change on hardiness zones.

**Approve Minutes**

*After a motion was made (D’Ortenzio) and seconded (Collins), the Commission voted unanimously to approve the 4/20/23 minutes as amended.*

*After a motion was made (D’Ortenzio) and seconded (Collins), the Commission voted unanimously to approve the 5/4/23 Minutes as amended.*

The NRC discussed the process to develop minutes, and a desire to elevate the product that is distributed to the Commission. Additional lead time for review, shorter and summarized minutes will hopefully help to create cleaner more accurate minutes.

### **Urgent Items Not Anticipated Prior to 48-hours of Posting**

Mr. Schmitt reported on a request from the Charles River Watershed Association to support [S.599, An Act to Incentivize the Adoption of Local Climate Resilience Policies](#). The board was generally supportive of the legislation and approved that the Director support it if there were no objections by Monday.

Mr. Schmitt also reported that a larger park tree at Yotz Park would need to be removed after a large section failed.

A tour of the North 40 is being scheduled in the next couple of weeks.

### **Schedule meetings**

N/A

### **Adjourn**

After a motion (Collins) was made and seconded (D'Ortenzio), the NRC voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 9:20

### **Materials Referenced**

**Agenda 6-1-2023**

**Permit Applications (Kelly Field and Mass)**

**Morses Pond Technical Memo**

**Tree Canopy Report**

**Draft Minutes (4/20/23, 5/4/23)**