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TOWN OF MEDWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

PARKS COMMISSION

APPROVED 10/27/2021

Town of Medway
Board of Park Commissioners Meeting
September 29, 2021 – 6:30 PM
155 Village Street
Sanford Hall

Park Commissioners: Debi Rossi, Chair, Sean Murphy, John Farrell

Absent: Lyle Core, Richard D’Innocenzo

Others: Julie Harrington, Director of Parks and Recreation; Sean Harrington, Deputy Director of Public Works; Susan Dietrich, Chair of the School Committee; Kathy Campbell, Jon Regan, Michael Joy

Chairman Rossi called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM

Public Comment

No public comments outside of agenda items.

Call to Order: At 6:35 PM, Ms. Debi Rossi called the meeting to order.

Agenda Item #1: Adult Lacrosse Fees

Mr. Regan shared that for the last 5-10, adult lacrosse has been in Franklin on Sunday nights from 5-8pm. Franklin could no longer offer weeknight fields, so he was curious about receiving discounted rates due to many of the team members being from Medway. In response, Ms. Rossi stated that it would set a bad precedent for other teams. She informed Mr. Regan and Mr. Joy that Franklin’s rates are lower than Medway’s anyway. She also shared that Medway is primarily interested in generating revenue, particularly in the aftermath of COVID. Mr. Farrell and Ms. Harrington also confirmed that the fields are almost completely booked during the week anyway. Mr. Joy suggested a discounted rate for after 8PM; in response, Mr. Farrell stated that it would nonetheless set an undesired precedent for other teams in the future.

Agenda Item #2: Approval of Minutes: August 25, 2021

VOTE: Mr. Farrell motioned to accept the minutes with changes. Ms. Rossi seconded this motion, which carried unanimously. Farrell: aye, Murphy: aye, Rossi: aye. VOTE: 3-0-0.

Agenda Item #3: Baseball Fencing

Ms. Campbell was present to address this agenda item. Mr. Farrell shared that his concerns with the mesh fences are that outfielders can accidentally break it quite easily. He stated that he spoke to SportaFlex about a metal frame with a mesh inlet that has a giveaway to prevent damage. It is not permanent in the ground and comes in 8 foot pieces. The estimated quote for this system would be approximately \$20,000. Although it is a temporary system, it is a lasting piece of equipment, since it is not permanently installed in the ground; rather, it is mounted on base plates. Ms. Campbell inquired about storage, as this is a primary concern of the schools; Mr. Farrell confirmed that they stack on top of each other. He also stated that it is made of galvanized steel, which is not easily damaged. Moreover, he clarified that the fencing will primarily be used only in the summer. Ms. Campbell suggested looking into the storage space for the fields in order to assuage the concerns of the schools. Mr. Farrell reiterated that the fencing is easily stackable and would not require much storage; there are a total of 53 panels, which are 9 x 8 x 4 ½. The Board discussed the potential of building a shed for storage or adding additional storage space to the existing unit on the baseball fields. After brief research, Mr. Harrington found that the approximate cost of a shed would be slightly under \$30,000. Ms. Rossi clarified that this information implies that sharing the cost with the town would be the best approach. Ms. Campbell agreed and underscored the importance of determining a definitive quote, as well as finalizing storage logistics.

Agenda Item #4: Hanlon Flag Pole

Mr. Harrington stated that there was a request for a 50 foot flag at Hanlon. It requires a 6 ½ foot foundation, which did not work logistically during the test. He also addressed concerns with the plaque being illegible and potentially in need of refurbishing. Ms. Rossi offered for the Board of Parks to potentially pay for the plaque to be refurbished to ensure legibility. She asked Mr. Harrington to find out who made the request for refurbishing in order for the Board to move forward with that.

Agenda Item #5: FY 2021

Ms. Rossi shared that the year to date revenue was \$486,395. The expenses were \$321,761.41. Therefore, the current available budget is \$220,881.32. The biggest growth in revenue came from the parks programs. Ms. Rossi stated that revenues on Cassidy were down 57% and asked Ms. Harrington to look into the reasons for this and identify any potential oversights. Ms. Rossi also noticed that electricity increased by 64%. Specifically, the cost of electricity this year was \$79,000. Mr. Harrington commented on this, stating that the current plan is to switch over to LED lighting for the fields, which will help decrease the total cost of electricity. Ms. Rossi noted that the groundskeeping supplies were down 53%, likely due to the conscious effort to keep that cost down. In response, Mr. Harrington confirmed that they did make a vested effort to be financially responsible, but not at the cost of quality.

Agenda Item #6: Transfer to Stabilization Fund

Ms. Rossi shared that the Financial Committee approached the Select Board last Monday and agreed to add approximately \$93,000-\$95,000 that was previously used as emergency money for the Financial Committee and move it into the Field Stabilization Fund. There will be a warrant article for it in November, since it needs to be voted on. She also suggested the Board consider

moving some funds (approximately \$50,000) to the Stabilization from the Parks budget. She stated the importance of demonstrating to the town that the Board values this idea, but within reason. Ms. Rossi suggested that the Board vote on this at one of the spring meetings when all board members are present and the warrant articles have been addressed. The other members both agreed with that approach.

Mr. Harrington and Ms. Rossi also suggested the potential of redoing the field and track as one large project, which would be approximately \$1.6 million. The Board also suggested looking into other town's recent turf projects to get a ballpark estimate of cost, as well as see different potential materials. Ms. Harrington stated that the track is on the capital for 2022 and the first turf field is 2024. Ms. Rossi clarified that the track should either be done first or have both done at the same time.

Agenda Item #7: VFW Lights

Mr. Farrell shared that he regularly has to call people late in the evening to turn off the lights at the VFW. He stated that many teams or events have left the lights on as late as 12:30AM. For context, lights have to be off in the town by 10PM. Mr. Murphy suggested that the VFW bar be responsible for turning off the lights instead of relying on specific teams and event goers. Mr. Murphy stated that all renters should be responsible for turning the lights off themselves; if they do not, he suggested that there be a financial penalty. Ms. Rossi suggested that Ms. Harrington warns the aforementioned teams that the Board is considering fining them, which Ms. Harrington stated she would do.

Agenda Item #8: Signage at Choate Playground

Ms. Harrington shared that a resident called her to suggest that there be allergy-related signage at Choate park to avoid accidental exposure to allergens, such as nuts. She also shared the need for dog-related signage to ensure that dogs are not allowed in the playground area. Mr. Farrell suggested there be one sign with overall playground rules about food, dogs, bikes, smoking, vaping, alcohol, skateboards, and any other necessary guidelines. He also suggested that the sign be posted right at the entrance gate. Ms. Harrington stated that she can work with the DPW to create a sign.

VOTE: Ms. Rossi motioned to move forward the plan to put signs (outlined above) at all playgrounds in the town. Mr. Farrell seconded this motion, which was unanimous. Farrell: aye, Murphy: aye, Rossi: aye. VOTE: 3-0-0

Agenda Item #9: Capital Items

Ms. Rossi shared the need for a potential design review for the VFW for 2022. Ms. Rossi stated that she will look into their current leasing agreement and return with further detail. She also suggested new scoreboards for all of the fields; this would be a total of 4. She suggested this be on the capital plan. Mr. Farrell also suggested that incorporating advertisements onto the scoreboards could be a lucrative fundraising opportunity for the town. From there, she suggested that Parks and DPW split the cost of a Gator vehicle. Mr. Harrington said the cost would be about \$60,000 per Gator. He stated that he believed this could be a possibility, but suggested that Ms. Rossi reaches out to the DPW directly, particularly if the Board wants it to be a FY 22 decision.

Agenda Item #10: Fall Fields

Ms. Harrington shared that teams are halfway through the fall season and everything is going smoothly. There have been no complaints or negative feedback from teams. She shared that the Youth Field Hockey league will be doing a jamboree at the end of the season in November, half of which will take place in Medway, the other half of which will take place in Franklin.

Agenda Item #11: Fall Community Events – help needed from commission

Ms. Harrington shared that the Trunk or Treat event is next Saturday, October 9. She also shared that on Sunday, October 10, Medway Cable Access is airing *Hocus Pocus* in the park. Additionally, the Pumpkin Walk is on October 29 at Choate. It will be a modified event due to COVID; some of the changes will include not selling concessions and requiring pre-registration. Ms. Harrington also clarified that students can earn community service hours for helping with the Pumpkin Walk. Moreover, she asked for the Board's help with parking, helping attendees move through the process smoothly, and supervising the fire pit. Ms. Campbell offered to reach out to the schools regarding students and sports teams assisting with the event.

Agenda Item #12: Chair Update

Ms. Rossi stated that this weekend, there will be a Master Plan Committee Forum from 11am-3pm on Sunday, October 3 at the high school. She mentioned that there will be a band, kids' events, food trucks, stations, and raffles. Additionally, she stated there will likely be a similar event in the spring.

Agenda Item #13: Director Update

Ms. Harrington did not have any updates at this time.

Motion to Adjourn: At 8:39PM, Mr. Farrell motioned to adjourn. Ms. Rossi seconded this motion, which passed unanimously. Farrell: aye, Murphy: aye, Rossi: aye. VOTE: 3-0-0.

Meeting Adjourned by Ms. Rossi: 8:39pm

Next meeting: Wednesday, October 27, 2021

Respectfully submitted by,
Amelia McLaughlin, Recording Secretary