



Medway Town Hall  
155 Village Street  
Medway, MA 02053  
Telephone (508) 533-3275

# TOWN OF MEDWAY

## COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

### PARKS COMMISSION

**APPROVED 12/1/2021**

Town of Medway  
Board of Park Commissioners Meeting  
October 27, 2021 – 6:30 PM  
155 Village Street  
Sanford Hall

**Park Commissioners:** Debi Rossi, Chair, Lyle Core, John Farrell

**Absent:** Sean Murphy, 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; Jim Wickis, Open Space

Chairman Rossi called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM

#### **Public Comment**

No public comments outside of agenda items.

**Call to Order:** At 6:30 PM, Ms. Debi Rossi called the meeting to order.

**Agenda Item #1** - Approval of Minutes: September 29, 2021

**VOTE:** Ms. Rossi motioned to accept the September 29, 2021 as amended. Mr. Farrell seconded this motion, which carried unanimously. Core: aye, Farrell: aye, Rossi: aye. VOTE: 3-0-2.

**Agenda Item #2** - November Meeting Date

The Board wished to reschedule their November 24 meeting, since it is the night before the Thanksgiving holiday. They moved the meeting to December 1.

### **Agenda Item #3 - Invasive Plant Policy – Medway Open Space Committee**

Mr. Jim Wickis, a member of the Open Space Committee, presented to the Board regarding the current Draft of Policies for the Management of Invasive Plants in Medway. He was curious as to the Board's interest in being involved in the policymaking process. He underscored how Massachusetts has been at the forefront of successfully managing invasive plants, and therefore encouraged the Board to identify areas where invasive plants are currently creating issues. He distinguished between native and non-native plants, clarifying that non-native plants have the potential to invade minimally managed areas and push out native plants and dominate the existing habitat. He reiterated that most native plants are non-invasive.

Ms. Rossi asked what the Board of Parks Commissioners can do to assist in the process. Mr. Wickis replied that the DPW has begun using native, non-invasive plants when they do any kind of planting, which has been a helpful strategy. He also shared that there is a significant amount of invasive plants along the fencing at Oakland Park; he asked if this area fell under the jurisdiction of the Board of Parks. Ms. Rossi asked Mr. Harrington of the DPW to comment on this; in response, he shared that if there are invasive plants in areas the DPW maintains, they control it, but they do not have exact locations of all invasive plant areas in town.

When Ms. Rossi asked Mr. Wickis to clarify how exactly the Board can best support him, he replied that mapping of known areas of invasive plants would be a helpful way for groups such as the Board of Parks, Conservation Commission, and the DPW to collaborate and find opportunities to address the issue of invasive plants in Medway, particularly at Oakland Park. His ultimate goal is to reduce the effect of invasive plants on the properties the community cares about, such as playing fields and walking trails. Mr. Wickis also shared that some invasive plants are poisonous enough to give a person second-degree burns.

Mr. Core agreed that invasive plants in the areas of playing fields are of particular concern. Mr. Farrell shared that he agrees with Mr. Core on this matter.

Ms. Rossi shared that she would like a member of the Board of Parks to be included in a meeting with the Open Spaces Committee in order to further address this matter.

Mr. Wickis asked if the Board would like to make a formal statement on this matter; Ms. Rossi shared that she wishes to follow the existing Massachusetts laws and regulations on this matter. She also shared that the Board has no intentions of planting anything new, especially on the playing fields. Moreover, she shared that any planting goes through the DPW and that they will remain vigilant on the matter.

Mr. Core offered for the Open Spaces Committee to bring them more concrete information regarding the cost of treating these invasive plants; at this point, the Board could vote whether or not to approve using the Board's funding to treat or remove these plants.

Mr. Wickis shared that this will not be a pressing issue until the spring. Ms. Rossi asked for Mr. Wickis to inform her of the next meeting date so that someone from the Board of Parks can attend.

### **Agenda Item #4 - Thanksgiving Bonfire**

Mr. Farrell had no update at this time.

### **Agenda Item #5 - Baseball Fence Update**

The Board revisited the issue of storage for the proposed baseball fence. Due to funding issues, the cost of the fence and storage is not feasible. The Board discussed different fencing materials, plating, potential seasonal damage, and overall issues of durability and longevity. The Board deliberated on the issue of permanent fencing versus temporary fencing.

Ms. Rossi asked Mr. Harrington what the DPW's preference would be regarding permanent or temporary fences; he shared that permanent would be better, as they would not have to break it down and repair the grass every year. He shared that leaving the fence outside would not be ideal, given the cost being in the range of \$20,000-\$25,000 and the potential for seasonal damage. He offered to get a quote for a permanent fence around the entirety of the baseball field.

Ms. Rossi recapped that the Board seems to be erring on the side of a permanent fence and agreed with Mr. Harrington's decision to request a quote.

Mr. Core and Mr. Farrell offered to schedule a meeting with Mr. Harrington and the DPW to view the field together for clarity and continuity.

### **Agenda Item #6 - Vandalism at Choate and Middle School Tennis Courts**

The Board discussed how camera surveillance might help prevent these issues in the future; they discussed how placing cameras outside bathrooms and areas in question could ameliorate this issue and help hold people accountable.

Mr. Harrington noted that the DPW paid for the damages in the Choate bathroom, which was approximately \$1,500 in total.

In terms of the tennis quotes, Mr. Harrington shared that the necessary repairs will take place in the spring.

Ms. Harrington shared that there will be additional cameras placed at the tennis courts to address this issue. Other suggestions from the Board included more signage and reaching out to groups who frequent the area to monitor their group's activity.

### **Agenda Item #7 - Dog Policy Discussion for Bylaw Committee**

Ms. Harrington shared that the Bylaw Review Committee is changing their existing bylaws on dog policies. She suggested that the Board of Parks take a clear public stance on the matter. In order to do so, Ms. Harrington suggested the drafting of a dog policy statement, which the Board could then vote on.

Ms. Dietrich offered the help of the School Committee Policy Subcommittee in the drafting of this statement, which the Board accepted. She reviewed the existing policies on animals at school and offered to make any necessary adjustments, as all committees must be consistent.

Mr. Core suggested revisiting the past writeups on this matter and collaborating with the other relevant parties; Ms. Harrington agreed with this and suggested reaching out to groups such as the Conservation Commission and Animal Control.

### **Agenda Item #8 - Signage for Tennis, Pickleball Courts and Playground**

The Board reiterated that they have previously voted on providing signage at all playgrounds, but not the courts yet.

**VOTE:** Ms. Rossi motioned to also put signs on all tennis courts and the pickleball courts. Mr. Farrell seconded this motion, which passed unanimously. Core: aye, Murphy: aye, Rossi: aye. VOTE: 3-0-2.

### **Agenda Item #9 - Peace Garden Update – Handball Court Discussion**

Ms. Harrington expressed that on the other side of Cassidy, near the Ide House, there could be space for a new court. She stated that it would not interfere with the existing spaces for camps. She shared that she and Mr. Harrington could look at the space together and make a definitive decision as to whether this is doable.

The Board also discussed the volleyball court, which could potentially be converted for other purposes, such as a basketball court.

Ms. Harrington also mentioned the potential for building a mural in this area. Mr. Farrell suggested potentially having a schoolwide contest for students to submit their artwork and be featured on the mural. Mr. Harrington also shared that the construction of a mural could help discourage vandalism.

### **Agenda Item #10 - Fields Update**

Ms. Harrington shared that NEFC approached her with their March tournament dates, which are March 18-20 and March 25-27. Ms. Rossi shared some concerns about potentially overlapping with other teams who often book tournaments during the March 25-27 span. Mr. Core clarified that the span of March 18-20 is more easily approved, as NEFC often books that time frame anyway.

Ms. Harrington and Ms. Rossi updated the Board on the issue of temporary lights at the fields. Although the lights were supposed to be delivered recently, Ms. Harrington found out that NSTAR commandeered all temporary lights due to an emergency, so none are available for town use at this time.

### **Agenda Item #11 - Chair Update**

Ms. Rossi updated the Board that the Master Plan Committee will be meeting at the end of November to discuss the goals of the Committee's contracted employee. She asked the Board to review the relevant materials and send her any feedback or ideas in anticipation of the November meeting. She shared that the Master Plan Committee is trying to garner more interest and traction with the community and sought the Board's assistance in doing so.

She also shared that the existing budget for the Board of Parks is approximately \$166,000 and that the committee's revenues are up.

### **Agenda Item #12 - Director Update**

Ms. Harrington reminded the Board of the upcoming Pumpkin Walk on Friday, October 29, 2021, starting at 7PM. She shared that registration has been successful and that many people have signed up. Additionally, she stated that 15-20 high school students have signed up to assist with the Pumpkin Walk and earn community service hours. She sought the Board's assistance with logistics of parking, traffic patterns, signage, and streamlining the activity.

Mr. Harrington updated the Board about updating the plaque; the quote was approximately \$500. However, he also shared that they cleaned the existing plaque, so he suggested maintaining the existing plaque. The Board agreed with this approach and decided to keep the plaque as is.

Mr. Harrington also shared an update about the middle school softball field; the rain has delayed the progress of that job for at least a few days. He also shared that the numbers are beginning to fade on the football field, which the DPW will be addressing.

**Motion to Adjourn: At 8:46PM, Mr. Farrell motioned to adjourn. Ms. Rossi seconded this motion, which passed unanimously. Farrell: aye, Core: aye, Rossi: aye. VOTE: 3-0-2.**

**Meeting Adjourned by Ms. Rossi: 8:46pm**

**Next meeting: Wednesday, December 1, 2021**

Respectfully submitted by,  
Amelia McLaughlin, Recording Secretary