



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

TOWN OF MEDWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

PARKS COMMISSION

APPROVED 9/27/2023

Town of Medway
Board of Park Commissioners Meeting
September 19, 2023 – 6:30 PM
Medway Senior Center – 76 Oakland Street

Park Commissioners: Debi Rossi, Sean Murphy, Rick D’Innocenzo, Lyle Core, John Farrell

Absent: None

Others: Julie Harrington, Director of Parks and Recreation
Dan Shea, Medway Youth Soccer
Pete Soule, Medway Youth Lacrosse

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

Public Comments: None

Other Business:

1. Budget review

Ms. Rossi provided reports for fiscal year ending 6/30/23. She got an email from Carol from Town Hall who advised against moving money into the field stabilization fund (can only be used for athletic fields). Mr. Core doesn’t want to lose control of the money, but there are many bigger projects to be done. If it goes in the stabilization fund, you lose control of the money. The town is saying available funds are \$166k not including recreation, which is \$242k but it will shift when summer payments go out. Ms. Rossi feels that this is the correct way to view it since the funds from Rec programs should not go towards fields, so she no longer feels that money should go into the fund. Mr. Murphy agrees, and Mr. Farrell feels the same, especially without a funding goal. Mr. D’Innocenzo say that if we have to cover all of the expenses we have currently, then we can’t afford to put money away. Ms. Rossi said that the current funds in the stabilization account will be used toward engineering costs.

Ms. Rossi said expenses in fiscal year 2023 were \$600K, electricity and lights were over \$100k, including repairs, many at school fields. Middle School electricity was \$3,500 and VFW was \$16,000, North is \$33k, Lamson is \$33k. She provided a copy of the breakdown of the miscellaneous expenses which added up to \$120k

Park Commissioners are invited to attend the Select Board Meeting on Oct 10 because Gale & Associates are coming to present.

Members agreed with the recommendation that no funds will be moved to the Field Stabilization account.

2. Field fee rates – Discussion/Vote

Ms. Rossi had a statement of 2019 field rates and noted that they have not changed and they may actually be charging less than a few years before that. She reviewed current field rates with Medway Youth Soccer and Lacrosse. Mr. Core feels we are losing income now that there are more turf fields and less people using grass fields. Ms. Rossi and others reviewed sample cost that other towns charge for fields and lights. Mr. Murphy reiterated that we are making money on turf fields and losing money on grass fields likely because of having to pay other additional expenses.

The members discussed how to determine the specific amounts that various sports organizations should be charged. Some fields can be rented for other income and others cannot.

Mr. Farrell noted that we are losing almost \$60k for the VFW field. Those fields that are making money are turf and grass fields are losing money. Mr. Farrell suggested charging more for turf, but Ms. Harrington confirmed that our rates are in line with other towns and we could potentially lose groups if Medway field rates are higher. Ms. Rossi feels that the turf rate shouldn't go over \$200.

Ms. Rossi asked Ms. Harrington whether we could add a surcharge for using the scoreboard. She said that you can't lock it, it's on blue tooth and only one person can control it at a time. Dan Shea asked if the town would make more money from raising the field rates or raising the player fees. He feels that it's reasonable to raise fees since it's been so long. Ms. Farrell suggested getting rid of a cap on fees. The cap was put in place for Medway Youth soccer.

The per person surcharge goes into capital for projects, i.e. scoreboard.

Mr. Core feels that we cannot raise the \$200 turf rate. Mr. Core suggested maybe charging a little more for access to the scoreboard. The group suggested charging one fee inclusive of lights and scoreboard. Ms. Rossi suggested \$200, Mr. Murphy suggested \$235/hr and say it includes lights, scoreboard, custodial. Ms. Harrington is concerned that other towns are \$150, so she isn't sure how groups will react. If we lost a tournament, then the total fees would be the same or less. Mr. Farrell suggested we try to offer \$225 to the group that requested tournaments for March and May 2024 and see how they respond.

Mr. Core made a motion to charge \$225 to out-of-town tournaments, Mr. Farrell seconded the motion. Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

In-Town Tournament rate

Mr. Farrell suggested that we charge the out-of-town rate for town tournaments since teams from other towns are there. Mr. Shea said that when playoffs are brought in, he agrees with being charged in out-of-town rates.

In town turf rate

Ms. Rossi suggested \$40 per hour, Mr. Farrell suggested \$50. Mr. Shea said it's easier to raise the per player charge as they can pass that along in the player fees. Mr. Soule agrees that the town shouldn't be losing money for people using the fields and feels that the MYL board will accept an increase since they haven't increase in so long.

The group discussed the \$15 per player fee for grass fields, but for groups like soccer, they currently charge the fee even though they use both grass and turf. There was concern that some groups would ask for only turf then.

Mr. Farrell made a motion to increase in-town turf rate to \$50/hour, no one seconded. Ms. Rossi thinks it's too big of an increase. Mr. Murphy feels that it could be more than \$50.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to charge \$45 per hour in town turf rate with no increase in per player charge, D'Innocenzo seconded the motion.

Approved, vote was 3-2

Grass Fields Discussion

Cassidy:

Ms. Rossi confirmed that the current price is \$500 per field for the season plus \$15 player fee. Center Street Softball field is \$250. The difference is due to lights. The field is losing money, but most feel that doubling the price is too big an increase. Groundskeeping supplies were paid by Cassidy, but Parks pays other expenses. They discussed that the prices used to be higher, but prices were lowered so that groups would opt for grass over turf. Mr. Murphy would prefer to raise the fees more now rather than have to raise again next year. The Middle School complex made money because they rent it to other groups, but other grass fields lost money. In the past, they charged \$1,000 for rectangular fields, plus lights, split between groups, so \$500 each. Mr. D'Innocenzo suggested adding surcharges if electricity rates go up. The groundskeeping costs for the field were about \$3,000. Ms. Rossi asked whether fees for field 4 should be less since there aren't lights. Ms. Harrington noted that RBI rented in the summer for \$75/hr.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to increase the rate to \$1,000 for fields 1,2 & 3 at Cassidy and \$500 for field 4, per season beginning with spring. Mr. Core seconded the motion.

Approved, vote was 4-1.

Oakland:

Mr. Farrell suggested a flat fee for the complex, not per field, maybe \$2,000. Soccer is currently paying \$625 per season for Oakland. There is a fall season & spring season, Mr. Shea noted that it's used for younger players on Sat/Sun. This field lost \$13,000 last year. The expenses for these fields are high. Groundskeeping is \$3,600. There were irrigation issues, electricity fees, bathrooms. Mr. Farrell feels that the costs should be split with other groups using the fields besides soccer.

Mr. Farrell made a motion to charge \$1,000 per season to rent the Oakland fields. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Approved in a unanimous vote 5-0.

Idylbrook:

The current fee is \$250 for baseball (no lights), \$250 for 11v11 and \$125 for 7v7s. Mr. Farrell said to keep in mind that this field lost \$8,000 last year. Ms. Rossi mentioned that they already told cricket that the fees would increase. Going forward, they will be charged for the season, but there would be additional fees if they add dates. Cricket was previously charged \$1,500. Mr. Farrell said that the baseball field is in good condition. Ms. Rossi suggested charging \$500, but there are no lights. The group debated balancing increasing the field fee and the per person capital fee and also releasing the cap for soccer. There was originally a cap for soccer because they used so many different fields and would have been paying close to \$50k for fields, lights, lines etc. Mr. Core suggested increasing the per person so that everyone is sharing the increased cost. Soccer uses the most fields and for 2 seasons. Ms. Rossi asked Mr. Shea about the impact on the program. He understands the need for an increase, but it will be difficult. At Idylbrook baseball and soccer can practice at the same time. Mr. Farrell suggested a flat rate for the complex rather than charging separately for all fields. Groundskeeping supplies in fiscal year were \$7,400, due to the field drying out and pumps breaking down. Mr. Farrell said last year was an anomaly, but Ms. Rossi looked back and previous years had high expenses too. Mr. Core feels that soccer should pay the same as they do for Oakland. Ms. Rossi suggested that the fee for baseball should be increased to \$500. For cricket, June to August, Mr. Farrell suggested \$3,000 for the summer season and \$75/hr for any fall availability. Cricket rates were low initially because the cricket group incurred costs for the pitch to be put in.

Mr. Farrell made a motion to charge \$3,000 for the cricket season. Mr. Murphy proposed \$2,000 for cricket, \$1,000 for soccer and \$1,000 for baseball. Ms. Rossi suggested \$2,500 for cricket. Mr. Farrell said baseball fees should not be as high because there are no lights.

Mr. Core made a motion to charge cricket \$2,500 for the summer season. Ms. Rossi seconded the motion.

Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

Mr. Core made a motion to charge Medway youth soccer \$1,000 per season for the Idylbrook grass fields. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion.

Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to charge \$1,000 per season for the Idylbrook baseball field, Mr. Core seconded the motion.

Approved in a 3-2 vote.

Softball Fields (Center, Kelley 1, Kelley 2):

Mr. Murphy made a motion to charge \$1,000 for softball fields (Center, Kelley 1, Kelley 2), Mr. Farrell seconded the motion.

Approved in a 4-1 vote.

McGovern:

Mr. Core made a motion to leave field fees at McGovern at \$250/season. Mr. Murphy seconded

Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

High School:

The current fees are \$250 for baseball and \$250 for grass fields. At one time they charged for leagues at tennis courts. There are 2 11v11 fields, they are used by lacrosse and the high school. Ms. Harrington said we make money renting at \$75/hour to groups.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to charge \$500 per field, \$1,000 total for all fields for in town groups for the grass fields. Mr. D’Innocenzo seconded the motion.

Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

Mr. Muphy made a motion to charge \$1,000 for the high school baseball field. Mr. D’Innocenzo seconded the motion.

Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

Middle School:

Mr. Farrell made a motion to charge \$1,000 each for Charland and the practice field, \$2,000 total for the season. Ms. Harrington mentioned that football uses the field for 5 days/week. Mr. Farrell said each group should have a permit and work out who uses the field. Ms. Harrington prefers that it goes through her, groups should not be ‘subletting’ to other groups. Currents rates are \$500 for Charland, \$500 for the practice field and \$250 for the back field.

Mr. Farrell made a motion to charge \$1,000 for Charland, \$1000 for the practice field and \$500 for the back field, Mr. Core seconded the motion.

Approved in a 4-1 vote.

Middle school baseball field is currently \$250. Mr. Farrell said all other fields are \$1,000 should be consistent.

Mr. Murphy made a motion to charge \$1,000 for the Middle school baseball field per season. Mr. Core seconded the motion.

Approved in a 4-1 vote.

Memorial – no change

Upper and lower are currently charged \$250 per field per season. The only group using upper Memorial is Old School.

Ms. Rossi made a motion to keep rates for the fields at Memorial the same. Mr. Core seconded the motion.

Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

3. Capital planning – Discussion/Vote

Ms. Harrington reviewed the list of items on the Capital planning list. Items include Idlybrook field, rebuild VFW, track, turf fields 1 & 2. She took the rec van off and will keep basketball/multi-sport court on the list. Mr. Farrell asked to add the redesign of the HS grass complex, noting that it is expected to cost \$3 million. Ms. Harrington will add the renovation of the building at Choate to next year’s list.

4. Chair update

None

5. Director's update

Ms. Harrington will write these field fee changes up to review at the next meeting.

Mr. Farrell made a motion to adjourn at 9:19, Mr. D'Innonuzi seconded the motion. Approved in a unanimous vote, 5-0.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, September 27, 2023

Wednesday, October 25, 2023

Respectfully submitted by,
Marianne Boynton, Recording Secretary
Commonwealth of Massachusetts