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TOWN OF MEDWAY

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

PARKS COMMISSION

APPROVED 7/27/2023

Town of Medway
Board of Park Commissioners Meeting
May 31, 2023 – 6:30 PM
Sanford Hall, Medway Town Hall

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

Absent: Lyle Core

Others: Julie Harrington Director of Parks & Recreation,
Erin Griswold
Patricia Sampson
Michael Bouley
Catie Mithukumaran
Caitlin Regan
Martin Dietrich
Marques Crosby
Lisa Bligh

Call to Order: At 6:32PM, Ms. Rossi called the meeting to order.

Public Comments: There were none at this time.

Other Business

1. Approval of Minutes: May 3, 2023 – Mr. Farrell made motion to approve minutes from 5/3/23 with edits. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, approved in a unanimous vote. 3-0

2. Allergy concerns at Playgrounds

Patricia Sampson has a son with severe food allergies, and she is concerned about exposure at town playgrounds. What she envisions would be a sign at the Medway playgrounds to bring allergy awareness of the statistics and dangers, requesting that people respectfully eat at designated areas, wash hands, etc. They are asking for kind gestures to keep kids safe. She is not asking for strict rules that they can’t bring food or peanut butter, just looking to bring awareness. This is difficult and scary for people and food allergies are on the rise and not going away. There is a sign at Choate that says no food, but it’s disregarded. Ms. Rossi questioned whether there could potentially be liability issues if there are signs and then someone has an

allergy-related issue. Ms. Harrington offered to ask Town Council for any concerns they might have with putting up signs. Ms. Rossi suggested that she and Ms. Sampson meet with the Dept. of Health to ask for their input and suggestions. Ms. Sampson offered to have a table/presence at some town events to bring more awareness. Mr. Farrell suggested having signs that say no food at playgrounds and having signs with basic playground rules, including no dogs.

3. Medway Marches Signs at Softball/baseball fields – discussion/vote

Martin Dietrich and Marques Crosby – Mr. Murphy noted that the board received an email that their group was on the agenda. Mr. Dietrich asked who sent the board the email and there was no response from the board. Mr. Dietrich said that he would submit an FOIA request for the information. Medway Marches is a group seeking to raise awareness for underrepresented populations and to promote that Medway is a welcoming community. They are interested in donating signs for fields. Mr. Crosby was in Pembroke for a baseball tournament, and they had a sign that that read “Hate has no ‘home’ with a picture of home plate. They feel that this type of sign would symbolize that Medway is a welcoming community and inclusive. He also suggested some messaging related to ‘see something, say something.’ Ms. Rossi noted that Medway does not currently put up signs on the fields. Mr. Farrell stated that he liked the message but feels it could be perceived as political and then other groups would want to put up signs. It would have to go through the school department, town sports organizations, town council etc. for approval. The Parks Department currently does not have a policy for allowing/approving signs although they are looking into using signs for advertising and a source of income in the future. The vision is that these would be similar in size, color and design and have spaces for names of advertisers. Mr. Crosby and Mr. Dietrich want to understand the process of how to get permission to have a sign and get design approved and they would follow the protocol. Ms. Rossi said that the Rec Department needs to first establish a policy for future signage and then once in place, the group could submit a request.

4. Field Fees - discussion

Ms. Rossi said that they need to do some research and table the discussion for a future meeting. Mr. Murphy suggested moving the times around and having adult soccer start early to allow for additional time slots. He also suggests charging a higher rate for groups that are using the fields for more hours since this takes availability away from other outside groups/income. Ms. Rossi said we should discuss charging an hourly rate rather than a seasonal fee. Mr. Farrell said this could prevent some cancellations. Mr. Murphy said that we should be more efficient with the scheduling to maximize field usage.

5. Trash at Choate – update/discussion

The DPW and Parks Dept continue to monitor the amount of trash now that the cans are gone and pack in/pack out policy is in place. DPW feels that it is better, but still an issue. Mr. Bouley mentioned that at Louisa Lake in Milford, they have dispensers for used up fishing line for recycling. There are a few cans in the back at Choate. A few organizations in town volunteer and assist periodically with clean up.

6. Lamson Scoreboard

it is installed and looks great. There is a panel on the bottom that will be used for advertising, possibly Charles River Bank or a different sponsor. There is currently no power to the scoreboard. Power needed to be run out to it which will be expensive, possibly up to \$15,000. DPW is working with the town electrician to bring the cost down and they are waiting for a price. The funds will likely come from the Parks capital account. They have been using a generator for now. There are only a few more games this spring and then nothing this summer so the board will only need to be used a few more times until the fall.

7. Spring and Summer Fields

Ms. Harrington is working on completing spring and collecting payments by the end of the fiscal year. Mr. D’Innocenzo asked if there are any conflicts with high school teams in the playoffs. Ms. Harrington said that there are none so far. She is working on summer field schedules.

8. Park events: Girls Scouts Choate Park – 6/14

Ms. Harrington said that the Girl Scouts want to use Choate Park for their bridging ceremony for members moving from Daisies to Brownies

Mr. D’Innocenzo made a motion to allow the Girls Scouts to use Choate Park on 6/14 and Mr. Farrell seconded the motion, approved in a unanimous vote. 4-0

9. Chair update

None

10. Director’s update

Ms. Harrington noted that the Fishing derby is Saturday, including a free license weekend.

The summer concerts start July 10, Ms. Harrington is working on the food truck lineup. Posters have been made up.

Motion to Adjourn: At 8:56 PM, Mr. D’Innocenzo offered a motion to adjourn. Mr. Farrell seconded this motion, which passed unanimously. VOTE: 4-0.

Next Meeting: June 28, 2023.

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