

**Dover Parks and Recreation Commission
Meeting of March 26, 2013
Minutes**

P&R Commissioners In Attendance: Peter Davies, Rich Oasis, Scott Seidman, Nancy Simms

P&R Employees In Attendance: David MacTavish, Mark Ghiloni

Others In Attendance: Jim Dawley (BOS), James Stuart (WC)

The meeting was called to order at 7:49am.

ADMINISTRATIVE

Acceptance of Minutes

Motions were made and seconded to approve minutes from 2/1/13 approved 4-0, 2/8/13 approved 4-0, 3/1/13 approved 4-0, and 3/15/13 approved 4-0. Nancy will email these to the town clerk's office.

Upcoming Meetings

- BOS – Thursday, March 28 at 6:30pm
- P&R – Thursday, March 28 at 7:00pm and Friday, April 5 at 7:45am.
- ConCom – Currently on the agenda for Wednesday, April 10 at 7:30pm. However, Kate Faulkner, the Chairwoman of ConCom, has asked if P&R could move our appearance before ConCom to Wednesday, April 24. It was agreed to comply with Kate's request and move our appearance before ConCom to Wednesday, April 24 at 7:30pm. Rich will get back to Kate. Mark will email Lori Hagerty.
- Planning Board – Monday, April 29 at 7:30pm. Mark will confirm via email with Sue Hall.

RECREATION

Sports Clubs

Rich will draft a letter explaining the ramifications to the youth sports community of the outcome of the proposed ballot question pertaining to the Caryl Park fields project. The letter will be sent by the P&R commissioners to the presidents of Dover Sherborn Soccer Club, Dover Sherborn Youth Football Club, Dover Sherborn Youth Baseball and Softball Club, Dover Sherborn Boys Lacrosse Club, Dover Sherborn Girls Lacrosse Club; to the president of the Dover Mothers' Association; to Peter Cooper; and to Pete Sylvester. The letter will also be sent again by the P&R commissioners to members of the Dover Sherborn Field Hockey program and to all the names in the P&R database.

It was agreed that P&R needs to be more proactive in preserving the existing grass fields in Dover. Despite resting one of the three Dover fields every year, the fields continue to receive an unsustainable number of hours of use. It was agreed to start further field restrictions in order to avoid irreparable deterioration of the grass root zone by moving toward the industry-wide recommendation of 160 hours of use per year. It was suggested that P&R rest one of the three fields every spring in addition to the fall. An alternative suggestion was made to reduce the number of practice slots available to each club team to once a week. Discussion was continued to the April 5 meeting.

PARKS

CPARC – Non-binding Ballot Question

At the March 19th Board of Selectmen’s meeting, P&R discussed with the Selectmen the language for the non-binding question proposed for inclusion on the May 20th election ballot. It was agreed that the Selectmen would meet with Town Counsel again to review the wording. It was also agreed that P&R would schedule an additional meeting to review and vote on the wording to come out of the Town Counsel meeting. This morning’s meeting was scheduled as requested for this purpose.

Jim Dawley presented to the P&R commissioners for their review two proposed non-binding ballot questions for the town of Dover election. He reminded P&R of the need to keep the questions simple as legally there cannot be explanatory language attached to either of the questions.

The first proposed non-binding ballot question reads as follows,

“ Shall the Dover Park and Recreation Commission be advised to proceed with current plans to construct additional athletic fields at Caryl Park, provided such construction is funded only with donated monies and requires no funding from taxes or from the Park and Recreation Revolving Fund?

Yes _____
No _____”

The second proposed non-binding ballot question reads as follows,

“ Shall the Dover Park and Recreation Commission be advised to submit future plans for future projects involving the construction of athletic fields at Caryl Park to Town Meeting for review and approval?

Yes _____
No _____”

Regarding the first proposed non-binding ballot question, a motion was made and seconded to **accept** the question as presented. Approved 4-0.

Regarding the second proposed non-binding ballot question, a motion was made and seconded to **reject** the question as presented. Approved 4-0. P&R believes that a town election vote allows significantly more citizens the opportunity to cast their votes than does a Town Meeting vote and eliminates the historical demographic bias that exists at Town Meetings in favor of those who are not burdened with young children or job-related travel schedules or other work obligations and who do not have to juggle these burdens in order to attend a three-hour weekday evening meeting.

In the process of reviewing the warrant articles, specifically, the Citizens’ Petition for Article 12, Town Counsel has determined that to date Dover has not been in compliance with MGL chapter 44, section 53a which requires the School Committee (for education-related gifts) or the Board of Selectmen (for all other types of gifts) to approve the expenditure of all gifts. Quoting from Town Counsel’s letter to the BOS, dated March 13, 2013

“....Chapter 44, §53A, authorizes “an officer or department of any . . . town . . . [to] accept grants or gifts of funds” and expend such funds for the purposes of the grant or gift, subject to approval of the School Committee (gifts for educational purposes) or the Board of Selectmen (gifts for other purposes).”

Jim explained that in Town Counsel's opinion, under this law, the P&R commissioners are authorized to receive grants or gifts of funds but will need approval of the BOS in order to expend such funds. Jim stated that in the coming months, the BOS will be creating policies regarding the adherence to and execution of MGL chapter 44 section 53a which will affect all town departments.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:58am.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Simms, P&R Commissioner