

**RECREATION MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2023, 7:00 AM  
VIA ZOOM REMOTE MEETING PLATFORM**

*Pursuant to Gov. Baker signing into law An Act Relative to Extending Certain State of Emergency Accommodations, extending the expiration of the provisions pertaining to the Open Meeting Law to March 31, 2023, the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee held its meeting remotely via Zoom. A link was provided for participation by members of the public in real time.*

**Members present:** Melissa Crocker, Trevor MacDonald, Charlie Hipwood, Shirley Small-Rougeau, Kelly LaRocque, Maija Cirulis-Gooch, Alex Cobb, Kate Carlson, Ben Polimer, Chris Fitzgerald.

**Guest:** Marcy Dorna

**Absent:** Mark Ferris, Mike McGrath, Pete Foley.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 AM.

**Resident comments:** Ms. Dorna was introduced as a member of the Recreation Commission and Community Preservation Committee.

**Minutes**

Minutes from the January 20 and February 3 meetings were reviewed and approved.

**Pickleball and tennis/basketball update and discussion**

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that Conservation Commission conditionally approved the NOI for this project and has not yet approved the amendment to the MOU. Both are waiting on full stormwater evaluation – initial comments from the Town engineer showed that major changes are not anticipated.

The CPC did not request that we split our request into two applications as we had anticipated prior to this meeting. However, discussions in this meeting and with other key politicians throughout town showed support for keeping the application as is. Other specifics were asked that have since been answered and will be expressed at the February 27 CPC meeting.

Mr. Fitzgerald led a discussion about the pros and cons of keeping the project as one CPC application or treating as two proposals that would preferably be completed together. Committee members further explored bidding and political strategies, including options that may involve more than one warrant article. When the discussion finished, the committee agreed to have the project split, but opted to vote on the matter.

**VOTE**

**Motion: To treat the current CPC requests as two-separate requests - one for pickleball and one for tennis/basketball – that would preferably be completed at the same time as one project.**

*Moved: Mr. Cobb; second: Ms. LaRocque.*

Roll call vote – all in favor.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Annual report**

The RMPSC approved the 2022 annual report, attached.

### **VOTE**

**Motion: To approve the annual report as edited.**

*Moved: Mr. MacDonald, second: Mr. Cobb*

Roll call vote – all in favor.

**Motion carried unanimously.**

### **Updates from youth sport programs**

Mr. MacDonald reported that soccer enrollment is opened; closed for ages 3-8 with teams formed and ready to go. First week of games on April 8, working with Mr. Polimer and Mr. Fitzgerald to get nets up and fields ready for late March/early April.

Mr. Hipwood reported that he is not on the board but knows that requests are eminent from the usual groups outside of Weston Little League. Mr. Fitzgerald reported receiving those request and is working out a schedule with WLL and sorting out conflicts between the other groups, priority will be sorted out according to the field use policy.

Ms. Carlson reported things went well this year for youth basketball, gym availability for practice and games was sufficient.

Mr. Hipwood also reported that lacrosse had a really good registration this year.

### **Future meetings:**

Next RMPSC – Wednesday, March 8, 7 AM, to help prep for CPC public hearing on March 13.

### **Other meetings**

CPC – Monday, February 27, 7 PM and Monday, March 13, 7 PM.

Finance Committee – Thursday, March 2.

Planning Board – Wednesday, March 15.

*The meeting adjourned at 7:51 AM.*

## **Attachment 1: Annual report.**

### **REPORT OF THE RECREATION MASTER PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE**

In 2022, the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee continued its diligent work on the priorities laid out in the 2020 Master Plan.

#### *Pickleball*

After completing a feasibility study last year, the RMPSC sought design fees for pickleball renovation. The feasibility showed that approximately six courts are needed and the Committee decided on a specific location in Burchard Park after considering six recreation properties around town. A public input session on April 25 clarified this choice and showed broad public support.

An attempt to secure design fees failed at May Town Meeting, but a subsequent request using CPC funds passed at Special Town Meeting in September, appropriating \$85,000 toward design fees. At year's end, pickleball courts design had begun.

This project will require an amendment to the MOU in place between Conservation Commission and Recreation Commission for the oversight of Burchard Park and both groups agreed to work toward such an amendment.

#### *Tennis courts*

In the summer of 2022, a consultant was brought on to conduct an analysis of all tennis courts in town to guide the RMPSC in determining a strategy for keeping them in good condition. Among other things, it found the courts at Burchard Park need extensive work due to surface and foundational cracking. Money had been secured by the Recreation Department to resurface the courts, however, the analysis and further evaluation from a resurfacing contractor showed that the cracking was too severe for repair work and a complete replacement was warranted. This includes the basketball court adjacent to the tennis courts.

The funds identified for resurfacing the courts were instead used for design fees for court replacement, to be conducted at the same time as the building of pickleball courts. The Town would realize significant savings by combining both projects at the same location. The plan at the end of the year was to complete design on both and request CPC funding for full replacement at the 2023 Annual Town Meeting.

#### *Support of other projects*

The RMPSC supported the construction fund request from the Recreation Commission to renovate Memorial Pool. This effort passed at Town Meeting, and at the end of the year, construction was well underway, on schedule, and on budget.

#### *General business*

The RMPSC continued to explore ways to ensure that the youth sport groups contribute fairly to the upkeep and maintenance of fields in towns. There were some instances in which some groups assumed all maintenance of some fields while other sports groups were responsible for minimal maintenance or upkeep, with other sports groups somewhere in between. This will be an ongoing discussion over the next year.

#### *Membership*

Shirley Small-Rougeau stayed on as an at-large member, continuing after her first term expired in June. The School Committee appointed Maija Cirulis-Gooch to replace Attia Linnard.

#### *Town-Wide Field Maintenance Budget*

Field Maintenance budget for FY 22 was \$176,260, which represented a level-funded budget from FY 21. No major renovation or rehabilitation projects took place. The summer of 2022 was extremely dry with little to no precipitation from June 1 through September 1, causing higher water usage than the previous year. Continued strong agronomic practices throughout the 50 acres of managed turfgrass and landscape area that are maintained helped our fields and grounds areas recover from the drought quickly.

2022 Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee Members

*At-large members jointly appointed by the Select Board and School Committee*

Melissa Crocker		Recreation Commission, Chair
Kelly Larocque	2024	At-large
Alex Cobb	2023	At-large
Shirley Small-Rougeau	2025	At-large
Maija Cirulis-Gooch		School Committee
Mark Ferris		Weston Youth Lacrosse
Charlie Hipwood		Weston Little League Baseball and Softball
Trevor MacDonald		Weston Youth Soccer
Kate Carlson		Weston Youth Basketball
Peter Foley		Athletic Director (retired), ex officio
Ben Polimer		Field and Grounds Coordinator, ex officio
Michael McGrath		Athletic Director, ex officio
Chris Fitzgerald		Recreation Director, ex officio