

**WESTON RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, April 8, 2021 7:30 PM**

Pursuant to Gov. Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 modifying the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee, to ensure the safety of all participants, held its meeting remotely via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/925462282>, Meeting ID: 392 344 366.

Members Present: Eric Rosenthal (Chair), Melissa Crocker, Trevor MacDonald, Julie Johnstone, Maija Cirulis-Gooch, Adam King, and Marcy Dorna

Staff: Chris Fitzgerald (Director), Sharon Locke (Assistant Director), Lauren Smith (Program Coordinator)

Guests: Charles Foote, Kelly Larocque, Peter Hill, Bharath Venkataraman, Ken Newberg

Resident Comments: None

Previous Meeting Minutes: The minutes from the March 4, 2021 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Design Request Fee for Memorial Pool

Eric Rosenthal

Mr. Rosenthal began by addressing what he believes is a misunderstanding among Finance Committee about the facts that Recreation Commission has shared about the Memorial Pool Design Fee request and what FC has stated publicly. Also their desire to separate needs from wants misses the point of cost savings and the need to have a desirable pool in order for Recreation to draw in sufficient revenues to offset costs appropriately.

The Recreation Commission discussed ways to better educate the Finance Committee and other Committees in town to make sure the information those committee shared about Recreation initiatives was consistent with what Recreation Commission communicated.

More discussion about the overall recreation budget took place which included exploring better ways to highlight what an asset recreation is to the Town, and whether it's appropriate to have such a strong emphasis on revenue generation. Mr. Fitzgerald clarified that an increase in Town subsidy was requested for FY 22 because of the continued uncertainty that pandemic related restrictions is having on future revenues. Recreation Commissioners expressed support for this request, noting the previous comments about revenues and other unforeseen challenges – such as a reduction in school space that is being allocated for camps this year. Thankfully, the Recreation Department worked with the Cambridge School of Weston to house some campers there, keeping numbers at levels originally expected during COVID. Part of the arrangement, however, is to take on the operation of CSW's pool, which is an additional unexpected cost. They are also thankful to CSW for this arrangement, knowing that their charge significantly less than their normal rate.

The FY23 is expected to reflect the normal 30%, assuming there is no further uncertainty related to the pandemic.

Mr. Fitzgerald then shared the draft Warrant Article for Memorial Pool Design Fees. There will be no Power Point presentations at Town Meeting, but someone is expected to speak to the article. The moderator encouraged use of websites and videos to make presentations public ahead of time. Mr.

Rosenthal suggested working on our message at Town Meeting and discussing that at the May Recreation Commission.

Pickleball

Melissa Crocker

Ms. Crocker and Mr. Rosenthal lead a discussion about pickleball courts in town with numerous residents in attendance who were enthusiastic players. There is a growing demand for the sport in Town, and the discussion focused on if and where more pickleball courts could be added – both immediately and long-term. Some ideas shared included:

- Adding lines at the remaining tennis courts at Brook School Apartments, High School/Middle School complex, and/or on outdoor basketball courts.
- Considering online court reservation options.
- A desire to add pickleball without taking away from tennis, and prospects of building Pickleball specific courts.

Mr. Fitzgerald was tasked with looking into these suggestions and weighing considerations for a future meeting. There is also an issue of significant cracks forming at the Burchard Park tennis courts which should get addressed soon.

Summer Updates

Recreation Staff

There has been a very positive response to the opening of programs and summer camps. Most camps are full with a wait list. The idea of a middle school camp or some type of middle school recreation programming is not off the radar. Ms. Smith is working with the Board of Health to see if and when they may be comfortable allowing for some type of local field trip.

Next Meeting: A doodle poll will be sent out.

Motion: Motion made to adjourn the meeting

Moved: Ms. Cirulis-Gooch, Second: Mr. MacDonald

Meeting Adjourned at 10:06 pm