

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, June 16, 2022

Approved 7/7/2022

Present: Jay McHale, Chair; Laura Robert, Vice-Chair; Bea Bezmalinovic, Secretary, Lisa Collins; Brandon Schmitt, Director – Allison Burson was not in attendance.

Guests: Josephine Okun, Kiril Selverov, Martha Collins, Jay Prosnitz

Public Speak

No one spoke on non-agenda business

New and Continuing Business

Appointments:

- Mr. McHale asked for a motion to approve the one-year appointment of the Trails Committee members including Steve Park, Denny Nackoney, Eric Sofen, Bob Brown Ekaterina Zemlyakova, Diane Hall, Jay Prosnitz, Joan Gaughan, Laura Robert and John Schuler. Mr. McHale also asked for a motion to approve a three-year appointment for Kevin Hanron and Eben Scanlon to the Wetlands Commission. Ms. Collins made a motion to approve the members for one year, Ms. Bezmalinovic seconded the motion. The Trails Committee was approved, 3-0 with Ms. Robert's abstention from the vote. The motion to confirm the three-year appointment of new Wetlands Protection Committee members was approved, 4-0.
- Mr. McHale thanks Mr. Richard Howell, who is the outgoing chair for the Wetlands Protection Committee. Mr. Howell has resigned his position and conducted his final meeting June 23.

Hunnewell Track and Field Proposal –

- Mr. McHale wanted to review and discuss the Lighting Usage Policy which goes along with the Track and Field Proposal. He also shared that the NRC received a letter with questions related to this project from six Town Meeting members from Precinct H. The letter with questions was directed to Town Council. If possible, answers will be provided to the board and neighbors in the next meeting.

Mr. McHale then asked Ms. Bezmalinovic about the work she has done on use of parkland and playing fields. She addressed the use of parkland and the challenges for the NRC through the current policy. She shared her views on the criteria and the impact on the natural resources. Ms. Bezmalinovic clarified that she is generally in favor of lights but has concerns about traffic, noise and sound, trash, the slippery slope, the enforceability and accountabilities. She shared revisions to a proposed draft policy *for Hunnewell Track & Field Facility – Lighting Usage and Public Address Systems**, since this is intended to be an NRC policy, Ms. Bezmalinovic suggested revisions to the NRC policy.

Ms. Collins confirmed that the intent of this policy is to serve as an interim policy while the NRC updates and strengthens its field use policy. Ms. Robert shared her concerns about accountability, enforceability, noise and sound issues for the area neighbors. The

conversation continued about the number of games, time limits on the lights, who is responsible and accountable for monitoring and enforcing use. Mr. McHale mentioned that the NRC would need to determine whether to ask for any additional nights of use subject to NRC approval that would be separate and in addition to the request from the School Committee. Ms. Robert expressed the concern that the ZBA would not be able to enforce limitations on the number of nights of lights on the Hunnewell T&F. The Board members discussed the balance of the NRC's role and the extent to which members want to bind the board and how checks and balances could be built into this decision. Ms. Collin observed that the integration of checks and balances into this framework represented a positive step. Since the policy is a draft, the Board can continue to discuss revisions to the policy.

Public Comment on Track & Field (8:12 p.m.):

- **Josephine Okun (15 Cottonwood Rd.)** – Wanted to dispute the area neighbors are not in support of athletics and not being selfish. She questioned why the proposal needs private fundraising. She suggested that the school should use the school Capital budget to fund project, which provides a process for oversight. The proposal is not about 15 games as she has concerns about the field being used by other teams. She asks that the Town provide clarity and transparency.
- **Kiril Selverov (27 Atwood)** – Mr. Selverov is worried the board is focused on enforcement and the slippery slope that they have ignored the impact on Fuller Brook. He reminds the Board that the impact of lights is permanent.
- **Martha Collins (17 Rice St.)** – She thinks more work needs to be done on the proposal as shown by the continued discussion by the board on several issues. She also questioned the responsibility & enforcing the use of the field.
- **Jay Prosnitz (11 Tappan Rd.)** – He is speaking as an individual concerned with preserving the town, not as a member of the Trails Committee. He questioned why the school committee can't add an outline of a violation policy. He urged the NRC to provide appropriate notifications and opportunity for public comment.

Liaison Reports

- **Mr. McHale** shared the Climate Action Committee will join an upcoming NRC meeting.
- **Ms. Robert** reported on the Trails Committee's – next meeting is June 22.
- **Ms. Bea Bezmalinovic on Playing Fields Task Force** – reviewed applications for fields, they are in the process of standardizing the names for fields, which will streamline reservations using RecTrack. Once complete, fields will need additional signage. Weston & Sampson presented and overview of the work they are doing with each team and neighborhood representatives as well as others who use the fields to begin to quantify the current use of the fields.
- **Ms. Collins** shared that she and Mr. McHale met with the **Climate Action Committee** and will work on a way the two committees can work together. Mr. McHale shared the CAC will attend an NRC meeting for future collaborations.

Climate Emergency:

- **Ms. Collins** wanted to remind others as we get into the heat of the summer that other communities that do not have outlets like Wellesley and how lucky we are in the area to beat the heat she referenced a NY Times article on the struggles of other communities dealing with the heat in the summer – NY Times article – <https://tinyurl.com/mr2uy446>
- **Ms. Bezmalinovic** shared information from the Boston Globe about the decision Boston has to maybe remove a wooded area for housing - <https://rb.gy/31qt9j>

Directors Report

- **Field Utilization Study** –Mr. Schmitt shared that Weston & Sampson distributed questionnaires that ask various permitted parties the hours and numbers to gather data on how the fields are being used. Once the data is gathered it will be shared in the fall.
- **Tree Canopy** – the application with [PlanIt Geo](#) is active and currently working through it and what it is capable of. He will share the link with instructions. With the help of the NRC summer intern Logan who is working on the tree census, which will provide insight into the species size, accuracy of the shade trees, With the tree canopy study, the NRC will gain clarity on tree canopy and allow for greater efficiency in planting and maintenance. In combination, these studies will help guide the NRC to target public shade tree plantings more efficiently.
- **Morses Pond Shoreline** – Doug Stewart, the former town engineer, is helping with developing contracts and bids for work on the shoreline. We will put the site of Pine Point out for bid. Mr. Schmitt recommended the work to be done in the fall. More updates will come in the coming weeks.
- **Brown Park** - the property owner is allowing Trails to put their medallions on the property as the trail will connect to Rock Ridge Pond.
- **Hunnewell Aqueduct Bathroom** – Mr. Schmitt said the building is complete the hope is the delivery for it will be in the week or two. The crane will come in through State St. as there will be work done long the road to complete the installation.
- **Lighting Retrofit** – Mr. Schmitt shared an update after meeting with the electrical engineer from the company. The plan involves replacing 12 fixtures, 10 on the existing poles and adding two new poles. He shared that it's a two-week construction process and should not impact the fields or use for a long period of time.
- Mr. Schmitt then mentioned that he planned to approve the new contract for Parterre Ecological Services which handles the invasive species control at Fuller Brook Park and the Morses Pond Management contract which is up for renewal.
- The Climate Compact had its final meeting for the Flood Model. The tool to look at sites and evaluate them against flood mitigation in town.

Approved Minutes

- The NRC approved the minutes, 4-0, for 6/2/2022 after Ms. Robert asked that her comment about the applicability of Article 97 be added to the minutes. Allison Burson was absent.

Adjourn:

- The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.