

**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**  
**REMOTE ONLINE MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, August 4, 2022**

Approved 9/1/2022

**Present:** Jay McHale, Chair; Laura Robert, Vice-Chair; Bea Bezmalinovic, Secretary; Allison Burson (joined); Lisa Collins; Brandon Schmitt, Director.

**Guests:** Jerry Nigro, Al Ferrer, Advisory Committee (NRC Liaison)

**Welcome & Meeting Guidelines**

**Public Speak**

**Jerry Nigro** – Mr. Nigro wanted to thank everyone including Dave Hickey, DPW and the NRC for their efforts to get the bathroom project approved and moving forward with the lighting of the Hunnewell T&F.

**News and Continuing Business**

- **Field Utilization Study** - Ms. Bezmalinovic reviewed the presentation Wesson and Sampson did for the Playing Fields Task Force. She discussed the data W&S would like to collect as well as the timeline they have planned. The discussion continued on what groups the NRC can help share the online survey with other groups around the Town and how to reach those groups. Mr. Schmitt suggested Town news and announcements and partner organizations. Ms. Collins suggested the Mother's Forum & Juniors, Sustainable Wellesley, the various Wellesley Garden clubs and the Service League. Ms. Bezmalinovic also mentioned that the Playing Fields Task Force (PFTF) will be developing a more elaborate application for events that will draw more than 500 participants and observers. PFTF is also reviewing its fee structure. Finally, there is a question of how much or whether field reservations will be publicly available. Ms. Robert asked about the survey questions and asked that they be written in a way that draws input from all residents including people who do not physically play sports on the fields.

- Al Ferrer, the advisory liaison for the NRC inquired if groups have liability insurance to cover any damages on the fields. Mr. Schmitt explained typically when permitting they ask for a certificate of insurance.

**Trails** – Ms. Robert talked about a shady trail that crosses over the Sisters of Charity and Mass Bay CC. It was closed but people were using it. The Sisters of Charity have approved use, but they await the approval from Mass Bay. Trails is also working on rehabilitation of the signs and map houses at some of the Trails. The committee is working with DPW on an erosion issue at Centennial. Ms. Collins asked about more trash bins inside Centennial. Ms. Robert explained they encourage the carry in-carry out process, there are bins, dog bags and signage at each entrance. The conversation moved to signage on trails. Ms. Robert shared that people do not like signage along trails and it's not necessary. People tend to pick up any trash, which is very limited in the reservations.

**Mobility** – Ms. Burson talked about Walnut Street construction with National Grid and town construction. The construction has advanced.

**Wetlands** – Ms. Collins reported there was no update for Wetlands.

**CPC** - Mr. McHale reported **CPC** did not meet and there are no updates. He did share that Morses Pond construction will probably be delayed.

### **Climate Emergency:**

- Mr. McHale talks about the [Bill 5060](#) in the state legislation that has not been signed off. It addresses the issue for driving clean energy and offshore wind.
- Mr. McHale and Ms. Collins met with Climate Action Committee and they will be at the next NRC meeting. The Tree Canopy is a hot topic and hopes to work with the NRC with several issues.
- Ms. Roberts talked about the importance of grass roots and community efforts to make advancements in Climate Action. She thanked Martha Collins for sharing a video about [local involvement](#).
- Ms. Collins mentioned opportunities to continue to engage people by linking town efforts to regional and global efforts. She referenced the challenge of getting participation on programs like food composting at the high school. Actions to encourage behavior change with some adopters may be more effective when focused on the financial and other benefits, rather than specifically focusing on climate change.
- Mr. McHale also noted that Chief Jack Pilecki released a [video](#) on Climate change this week.

### **Directors Report**

- Mr. Schmitt shared that he is going to be part of the steering committee for the Climate Compact.
- He added that the office is now at 888 Worcester Street (Suite 160). Thanked the IT as well as his staff on the move.
- First order on the agenda was a permit for Dog Jog at Hunnewell Field. It has been withdrawn.
- **Tree Canopy Study** - Mr. Schmitt shared some of the maps that have been created with the new software. He shared the very raw maps that he has created. The discussion was on the type of data and how to use it to improve the tree canopy.
- **Open Space Plan** draft was submitted to the state. He said there should be requests for revisions.
- **Lighting Retrofit** contract has been signed. That will be a fall installation for the lamps. The moving of two poles and installation may happen sooner. It looks like October for lights on the field.
- **Aqueduct Bathroom** – the water is on, sewer is on. They are working on the locks and lights and in a couple of weeks it should be open soon.

- **Lawn Conversion Project** – Evan came and spent a few hours on the sight. He will send designs of the area and he suggest not to mow the area. The DPW has agreed not to mow the area. In the future when it regrows, we will look at the pollinators that visit the area.

#### **Approved Minutes**

- The NRC edited the minutes for 7/07/2022 and approved the minutes, 4-0.

#### **Misc. Information**

- Mr. McHale talked about setting up a retreat, maybe two sessions, which would work for the whole group. Ms. Robert brought up what issues will be discussed and whether it will involve updating policies. Mr. McHale confirmed that the Board would not get into decision-making on policy. Ms. Collins added the retreat was more for taking inventory on the NRC policies. The NRC retreat may focus on a discussion of which policies needed to be reviewed at a subsequent time.
- Mr. McHale talked about meeting in person. Mr. Schmitt just reminded the committee he needs to know in advance if there will be a meeting in person so to secure the room and video. The next meeting – August 18 – the committee will meet remotely.

#### **Adjourn:**

- The meeting adjourned at 9:48 p.m.