



David B. Cohen  
Mayor



Fran L. Towle  
Commissioner

## Newton Parks & Recreation Commission

### Meeting Minutes

Newton City Hall, Room 209

March 16, 2009

Attending: Walter Bernheimer, Acting Chair, Peter Johnson, Arthur Magni, Lee Mottard, Kathleen Heitman, Michael Clarke, Alternate and Jack Neville, Alternate, Fran Towle, Commissioner, Carol Stapleton, Acting Secretary

1. The Minutes from the February 23, 2009 Commission Meeting were accepted 7-0
2. Reports of Program, Maintenance and Forestry by Commissioner Towle
  - Crystal Lake Projects Update – The 230 Lake Ave acquisition pathway project is in the planning stages by various City Departments and will be presented to the Conservation Commission for a NOI on Thursday, April 23, 2009. The Crystal Lake Task Force will make two presentations: Thursday, March 26<sup>th</sup> the plans will be presented to the Historical Commission and on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>, a presentation to the Conservation Commission will be held at City Hall.
  - The Department's February School Vacation Programs were very successful and Staff is in the planning stages for the April School Vacation Programs
  - Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner Towle will appear before Programs & Services Committee for a request for an appropriation to cover the costs of recent snow storms.
  - Michael Clarke inquired if the total amounts of monies spent on snow removal are figured into the Schools Budget. Commissioner Towle responded that the amounts for snow removal, grass cutting and lining of athletic fields are not figured into the total costs of running the Schools and are absorbed by The City.
  - The Maintenance and Forestry Divisions are working towards spring clean up of all areas that include General Maintenance, Fence Repair, Painting, Playground Repairs, Rubbish Removal and Signage. The Forestry Division has continued the tree by tree City wide inventory and developing a booklet and revised application information. Marc Welch is also developing a report for the Post Audit Committee regarding the Tree Preservation Ordinance.
  - Commissioner Towle also reported on the very successful Kevin Clancy Basketball Tourney held at NNHS for the benefit of Special Needs Athletes

throughout the State. Some 20 teams participated in the tourney held on March 7<sup>th</sup> at NNHS.

- Applications are now being circulated for the Youth Service Awards. Presentation of the awards will be held on June 15<sup>th</sup> at City Hall.
  - Meetings are ongoing with the Newton West Little League and their efforts to install sports lighting. Since the last meeting, the left outfield pole has been relocated to stay clear of the trees. Also, the total number of fixtures has been increased by four. There are now a total of 26 lights.
  - Commissioner Towle reminded the Commission that staff would be presenting options for fee charge for Senior Citizens at the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting.
  - Commissioner Towle also reported that she would be attending a meeting with members of the CAG (Citizen's Advisory Group) and the Commissioner of Public Works, Tom Daley later on in the week. This meeting is in response to a proposal by the CAG to combine certain elements of the Parks & Recreation Maintenance Division with Public Works Division.
  - The Department's Web Site Committee continues meeting and a report should be available by the next Commission Meeting.
  - Michael Clarke would like the Commission Meeting Notices added to the Friday list of meetings published by the Planning Department. Commissioner Towle will ask Robin McLaughlin to look into this request.
  - The Department continues working on the 3% Budget Cut recommendations to the Executive Department and will have a report for the Commission shortly. There will be a recommendation to raise the cost of some fees for some programs.
3. The installation of the Dog Park Signs at Cold Springs began today. A total of 3 of the 8 signs that are required have been installed as of this date. When the signs are all in, then the Dog Park Trial will officially begin and reports will then be coming to the Commission on a monthly basis. The Commissioner also mentioned that each member had received copies of any and all emails sent in regarding the Dog Park and the Department will continue to update the Commission on the process.
4. Relay for Life request for permission to use Forte Park for their Annual Event: Ms. Jo Anne Lafontaine, Community Executive, Development Office for the American Cancer Society was present at the meeting. Commissioner Towle reported that letters had been sent to the area abutters informing them of this request. As of this date, the Department had not received any calls or letters concerning this request.

- Vote: Kathy Heitman moved and Peter Johnson seconded that we honor this request and issue a permit for May 30 & 31<sup>st</sup> @ Forte Field. Carol Stapleton will work with the American Cancer Society to draw up the necessary contracts and memorandum of understanding.
5. St. Mary of Carmen Society Festival. Mr. Frank Batista, Festival Carnival Committee Representative was present to formally request that permission be given to the Society to hold its annual Carnival July 13<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at Hawthorne/Pellegrini Park. The Commission and Department will now go forward and notify the abutters of the area and a formal vote would be taken at the April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2009 meeting. Mr. Batista informed the Commission that President of the Society Festival Carnival Committee Chuck Prioa was unable to attend due to the recent passing of former chair Nunzio Leone. Mr. Prioa is expected to attend the April Meeting.
6. New Business
- Commissioner Towle reported that the 24 Warren Street Improvements Proposal submitted by The Goldman/Sevransky Family was put on hold until a ruling is issued by The City of Newton Law Department concerning the issue of private use on public lands.
  - Mr. Joshua Coval of 175 Elgin Street was in the audience and did not know that the item had been postponed. Mr. Coval was at the meeting in support of the project.
  - The Commission will be notified when this item is rescheduled for discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.

Respectfully submitted:

*Carol Stapleton, Acting Secretary*