



Setti D. Warren
Mayor

Newton Parks & Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
City Hall, Room 209, 7:00pm
January 25, 2010



Robert J. DeRubeis
Interim
Commissioner

Attending: Fran Rice, *Chairman*, Walter Bernheimer, *Vice Chairman*, Arthur Magni, Kathleen Heitman, Jack Neville, *Alternate*, Peter Kastner, *Alternate*, Robert DeRubeis, *Interim Commissioner*, Robin McLaughlin, *Secretary*

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

- 1. Meeting Minutes from the December 21, 2009 meeting accepted 6-0**
- 2. Lee Mottard presentation**
 - The presentation of a gift was scheduled. The gift is for Mr. Lee Mottard. Mr. Mottard is being recognized for his service to the Commission. Mr. Mottard was a Commission member who resigned in October 2009. Mr. Mottard could not attend the meeting. The gift was sent via U.S.P.S.
- 3. Commissioner's Reports on Programs, Forestry and Maintenance**
 - Interim Commissioner DeRubeis distributed a new report that will be presented at the Commission meetings (see Attachment A). The report is a monthly snapshot of the Parks & Recreation Department. The snapshot follows the Recstat model which is a performance measurement based management system. The snapshot includes performance, financial, and attendance statistics.
 - Mr. Bernheimer recommends adding year to date information.
 - Mr. Rice inquired where the attendance numbers come from for the NNHS Indoor Recreation attendance. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the information comes from the Sportsmen computer program used to record the number of people going through the different programs.
 - The Auburndale Cove has been open for ice skating. Approximately 900 people have been in attendance over the last two weekends. The expense to plow and plane the ice for skating is \$600.00/day.
 - The Lower Falls Community Center has been awarded \$500,000.00 dollars for renovations. Mr. Neville inquired where the money came from. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the money came from a State Capital Bond. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis has met with State Representative Kay Khan, Mayor Warren and members of the Lower Falls Community to discuss the project. The Parks & Recreation Department and the Public Buildings Department will be working together on this project.

4. Off-Leash Area Working Group (OLAWG) – Update

- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated OLAWG has met three times during the month of January. Weekly meetings are scheduled on Fridays at 9:00 a.m. in room 222 at City Hall. The meetings are open to the public. The meeting is a working session but the last five minutes are open to the public.
- OLAWG has a web page on the City web site, <http://www.ci.newton.ma.us/Parks/DogInformation/index.htm>
- Most of the City's current information for dog owners can be found on this web page. Other information on the website includes a list of the OLAWG members and their biography's. The agenda and meeting minutes are posted on the web page. A dog owner survey has been posted to the web site and OLAWG members are working on getting the word out to dog owners about the survey.
- The group is currently working on the language for Phase 1 criteria. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis defined the Phase 1 & Phase 2 criteria:
 - Phase 1 = Criteria for what makes a green space acceptable for use as an off leash area
 - Phase 2 = Criteria for off leash area
- Mr. Bernheimer stated there are two types of recreation, passive and active. Conditions for success of an OLA are different for each of these areas.
- Mr. Neville asked if there should be an OLA in each Ward of the City.
- Mr. Bernheimer stated at least 30 OLA should be proposed, though it is unrealistic, if there is no enforcement.
- Mr. Magni stated he hoped one of the criteria is enforcement. Mr. Bernheimer agreed with Mr. Magni.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated enforcement is a phase 1 criteria.
- Mr. Magni commented the website is a good idea.
- Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated the group will never meet 100% compliance with the public but the idea is to be transparent with the information.
- Chairman Rice stated OLAWG is a diverse group and they are doing great work.
- Mr. Bernheimer stated playgrounds are obvious sites for fenced in areas. Most communities Mr. Bernheimer has spoken with have fenced in off leash areas. Where is the money going to come from for fencing? Funding would be the City's responsibility.
- Chairman Rice commented people create the issues. Chairman Rice attends the YMCA and people ignore the sign requiring members to shower before using the sauna. There is no enforcement. Without enforcement some people will not follow the rules.
- Mr. Neville stated having signs allows the rules to be enforced.
- Mr. Bernheimer commented we need Officers that will enforce the rules.
- Mr. Johnson asked Interim Commissioner DeRubeis if cost is a phase 1 criteria. Interim Commissioner DeRubeis stated cost is a phase 2 criteria.
- Mr. Bernheimer stated the OLAWG is going about it the right way, the City is in charge.

5. Election

- Chairman Rice asked for nominations for Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Mr. Bernheimer made the motion to nominate Arthur Magni for Chairman. Ms. Heitman seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

- Mr. Magni thanked the Commission for the vote of confidence.

Chairman Rice made the motion to nominate Kathleen Heitman for Vice-Chairman. Mr. Magni seconded the motion. Motion passed 6-0.

- Ms. Heitman thanked the Commission for the vote of confidence.

6. New Business

- No new business

Meeting Adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Robin McLaughlin, Secretary