

Recreation Commission Meeting

4/24/2023

Zoom

Commission Attendees: Dave Lind (Vice Chair; acting chair), Cortney Eldridge (secretary), Anthony Ferrante, Theresa O'Connor, Steve Colella, Paul Cowing, Steve Warner

Town Attendees: Brandon Fitts, Jay Marcotte

Guests: Pickleball community

Call to order 5:33pm

Minutes from last meeting (April 3rd)

Approved with edits

In favor: Steve Warner, Anthony Ferrante, Theresa O'Connor, Cortney Eldridge

Abstain: Steve Colella, David Lind

**RECEIVED
TOWN CLERK
BELMONT, MA**

DATE: June 16, 2023

TIME: 8:47 AM

Parkour Signage: Brandon

Leveraged heavily from Lincoln Park; Brandon shared updates for Belmont Town Field

Discussion:

- Steve W: Some of this is redundant (e.g., use caution – act and train responsibly; and use space at your own risk); would like “refrain from profanity” to be a “global” park rule (not just parkour)
- Cortney: timing should be consistent with other signage (e.g., open dawn to dusk; open 5am – 9pm)
- Steve C: is there something from Town Council that is required in addition to this/can they offer language?
 - Brandon/Jay: Town Council did look at this and is ok with it
- Cortney: why cut off is 13 when Somerville is 10? (Not sure; will go back to 10 to match Somerville; this also matches the pool age)
- Theresa: worth keeping the “refrain from profanity” comment explicitly in there given middle schoolers will be using this space alongside young children

Motion: approve of signage as amended

Approved Unanimously: Theresa, Anthony Ferrante, Steve Colella, Cortney Eldridge, Steve Warner, Paul Cowing, David Lind

Belmont Youth Human Rights Commission Permit: Brandon

Juneteenth Celebration on June 18th 2-6pm at Town Field

Motion: move to approve permit as submitted

Approved Unanimously: Theresa O'Connor, Anthony Ferrante, Steve Colella, Cortney Eldridge, Steve Warner, Paul Cowing, David Lind

Town Field Pickleball Court Management: Brandon/David

David: summary of last meeting, prioritization of courts (e.g., getting a permit from Belmont Rec Website), and then third-party sites supporting meet ups – they can show up and play if courts are

available. The reservations and meet-ups from third party site will not be honored if/when there are conflicts (i.e., Belmont reservations supersede Playtime Scheduler app groups)

Public comment:

- Bob Singler: currently plays at PQ Park (normally plays at Town Field) and recommends Town Field is not part of Playtime Scheduler because it will be popular when it reopens. Suggest two Town Field courts are reservable via Belmont Recreation.
- Candy Bolte: wanted an overview of the reservation system, how much traffic this has, how to access it (e.g., 24/7?), how smooth this is, etc.? (Is it easy and user friendly?)
 - Brandon: Gave overview: It's online (24/7) and the permit is emailed so you can pull it up on your phone or print it out if needed.
- Jean Cabral: Brandon made a suggestion on making two courts reservable and the others for "general play". What is "general play?"
 - Brandon: Explained that two (half) of the courts are able to be reserved and the others are open for free play/non-reservable
- Mariana Nacht: Thanked us for the considerations and likes the approach of having two reservable courts through Belmont Recreation and two open courts. Enjoy the Playtime Scheduler because it's how she met the best matches for her skill and commonly plays with these folks.
- Maria Olagaju: Discussed rink and its positive vote and other opportunities for "west of Harris"
 - Brandon: Clarification that the commission does not have purview over "west of Harris" – it's school property and under school's remit
- Trey Klein: have not used Playtime scheduler but support their ability to schedule the courts in Belmont (all of them, including the new one); echoed that he appreciates the work of the Commission
- Barry Katz: Looking to understand the ramification of Playtime Scheduler
 - Brandon: more like a "social media" meet-up – can find people of his skill level all over to play with
- Anthony Ferrante: this is most acute during tennis season because so many of the tennis courts are booked during prime time
- Josh Pressey: prefers Playtime Scheduler and would like all the courts at Town Field available for permitting so large groups can join and play. Is there a fee for reserving?
 - Brandon: it's a \$5.00 fee per hour and that fee goes into our Revolving Account and goes to maintenance of fields and courts.
- Michael Pridham: active pickleball player using Playtime; clarifying Grove Street is not on Playtime Scheduler (but PQ Park is)
- Judy Liberman: Confirming/clarifying that there is no current limit on how much people can reserve (Brandon confirmed). Some trends that exist elsewhere (e.g., Burlington, Natick) that people are enjoying playing together; can play for the courts (as a resident – is a plus and minus). In Burlington (Simonds Park) – they have a sign that encourages rotating after a certain amount of time. One concern is that the courts could be booked and folks who want to play cannot (because they're too busy). Looking forward to a continuation of the pickleball community.
- Melissa Dailey: It would be great to come up with a very simple policy so we do not create conflict (Playtime Scheduler "reservation" vs Belmont court reservation). Agreed with Cortney that if we open it up to Playtime Scheduler this year and it does not work, then it's harder to take it away next year – would be better to go slower. Pickleball is the fastest growing sport in

the United States. In agreement with Bob – leave PQ. Should be able to reserve and pay for it like tennis courts, but not Playtime.

- Bob Singler: agree with Melissa to keep Town Field off Playtime and clarifying that Grove is (indeed) on Playtime. So, Belmont has both PQ Park and Grove Street
- Jean Cabral: In agreement with keeping the four courts at Belmont Residents to reserve (all 4). But still want to invite friends from other towns on Playtime Scheduler.
- Ellen Schreiber: Speaking for the people who are not playing regularly, but would like to come with their kids and “pick up play”. Endorse the idea of walk-ons and reservations. Suggest a limit (e.g., one hour limit)
- Melissa Dailey: concern about confusion, disappointment, and conflict if the courts are on both Playtime and reservable from Belmont Recreation

Commission Discussion:

- Cortney: in favor of not having Playtime scheduler on Town Field, but in favor of half (i.e., two of Town Field’s four) courts reservable – comparable to Tennis approach; reevaluate in the late summer to see how it goes
- Anthony: Just because the courts are reservable does not mean you must reserve them. (Is in favor of having all courts reservable)
- Brandon: proposed the following
 - Town Field: not on Playtime Scheduler; have two courts reservable (and two open)
 - PQ Park: on Playtime Scheduler; two tennis courts (four PB) reservable; two (four) open
 - Grove Street: on Playtime Scheduler; two tennis courts (four PB) reservable; two (four) open
 - Winn Brook: not on Playtime Scheduler; not lined for Pickleball; two (of five) reservable for tennis (only – no pickleball)
- Anthony: how does tennis fit into this?
 - Brandon: that is unknown and a potential challenge with this proposal

Motion:

Move to approve the proposed configuration as outlined above (by Brandon), regarding Playtime availability and Belmont Recreation reservability.

Approved unanimously: Anthony Ferrante, Cortney Eldridge, Theresa O’Connor, Steve Colella, Steve Warner, Paul Cowing, David Lind

Director’s Report: Brandon

- Watertown Family – going through hard times and asking for Belmont resident price due to financial and health concerns of family
- Discussion: short – commission is in agreement that we can offer this support for this patron

Next meetings

May 15th: 5:30pm on Zoom

June 13th: 5:30pm on Zoom

Adjourn 7:13pm