

Recreation Commission Meeting

5/9/2022

Zoom Meeting

DATE: June 14, 2022

TIME: 9:30 AM

Commission Attendees:

- Officers: Paul Cowing (chair), David Lind (vice chair)
- David Kane (liaison to Community Preservation Committee (CPC))
- Members: Anne Helgen, Melissa Hart

Town Attendees: Brandon Fitts (Acting Director of Recreation)

Activitas: Jonathan Charwick, Olivia Messenger

5:36 pm call to order

Review and approve minutes from 4/11/22:

Approved (Four with one abstention): David Lind, David Kane, Anthony Ferrante, Paul Cowing.

Anne Helgen abstained.

Presentation by Activitas on field utilization (see attached PDF):

Budgetary cost:

- No discussion of Belmont High School (BHS) because still under construction.
- Rating 1-3 (remove or replace – fully functional)
- Many of the issues found were Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance related.
- Pequossette (PQ) Park is example.
 - Tennis courts: Level 3 – typically should be resurfaced every five to seven years.
 - Baseball diamond: Level 1, primarily ADA compliance
 - Continued discussion of amenities.
 - Initial budgetary numbers exclude fields.
 - Mulch replenishment vs rubberized surface for playgrounds.
 - Playgrounds – more of a range in lifespan
 - Will include summary that includes standards for replacement timing.
- Anthony asked about bringing back courts at Chenery Field. BF: needs discussion. JC: couldn't see the conditions but likely a full renovation.
- Anne: asked about mulch vs rubberized surfacing. Is this a recommendation? JC: MA doesn't recognize mulch as acceptable for ADA compliance. Rubberized surfaces are ADA compliant.

Field usage:

- We are mostly well over 100% usage for Level 6 (max) maintenance.
- Anne: does this factor in current BHS field unavailability? Brandon: Bringing back BHS fields won't really help much since youth sports have cut back a bit on utilization to accommodate the BHS.

Recommendations listed:

1. Reduce use. Impractical since we want to encourage activity.
2. Increase maintenance. Usage is so high increased maintenance might not be worth the investment.
3. Convert to synthetic turf. Artificial turf can tolerate very high use levels.
4. Increase number of natural grass fields. Would need to look at sites that can be purchased.

- David K: What is cost of increasing field maintenance to Level 6? JC: unclear but increasing maintenance may not have sufficient impact to be worth doing.

Brandon comments on upcoming issues:

- Need to take report to Town Meeting.
- We are overdue for master plan.
- Need to look at dog usage at the parks.
- Need to discuss tennis.
- Chenery Field needs to be redone sooner rather than later.

Next meetings

- June 13th 5:30pm (perhaps in person)

Meeting adjourned 6:29 pm.