



**TOWN OF HUDSON
PARK COMMISSION**
Division of Recreation
Town Hall
78 Main Street
Hudson, MA 01749
978-568-9642

PARK COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 28 2019
Town Hall – Selectmen’s Room at 8:00 am

1. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Bowen called the meeting to order at 8:04am. Members present were, Mr. Bowen and Mr. Chaves. Also present: Mr. Santos, Mr. Hannon and Mr. Aponte

2. Minutes to Approve:

A. Public Session –February 13, 2019

Mr. Chaves motioned to accept the minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Bowen and carried...

Vote: 2-0, in favor

3. Citizens Issues / Special Interest Groups:

A. Tricia Girard, Hudson resident, addressed the Park Commission with her concerns related to the use of the pickle ball courts at Riverside Park by non-residents.

Mr. Bowen stated that he was aware that the Recreation Staff were working on updating the courts policies to reflect the addition of pickle ball courts and implement guidelines similar to what has been used for the tennis courts for many years.

Mr. Santos stated that he had met with Mrs. Girard in the fall and was working to get updated policies and rules to the Park Commission for review and approval at their next meeting

Mr. Chaves said that he would look to the residents who are interested in using the courts for pickle ball to become more organized as time carries on and that he would support the use of the courts by residents over non-residents.

Mr. Santos stated that given the spring would be the first full season of active play, any new policies or rules created may need to be adjusted from time to time going forward, to meet the needs of the community.

4. Personnel:

A. None

5. Director’s Report:

A. None

6. New Business:

A. Park Commission to consider the installation of Sunscreen Dispensers in select locations in partnership with Emerson Hospital and Brightguard & IMPACT Melanoma

Mr. Santos stated that a previous similar request was tabled due to the fact that a long term maintenance plan for dispensers had not yet been established.

Mr. Santos stated via the new partnership between IMPACT Melanoma, Brightguard & Emerson Hospital (as the sponsoring organization) the dispenser would be installed and fully serviced and

maintained by Brightguard.

Mr. Santos requested that the Park Commission support this initiative and allow him and his staff to work with partnering organization to determine the most appropriate location to place two (2) dispensers in town.

Mr. Chaves stated that he'd prefer the smaller dispenser display, rather than the large version.

Mr. Chaves motioned to support the request and allow the installation of two (2) dispensers, subject to approval by the Recreation Department, seconded by Mr. Bowen and carried...

Vote: 2 – 0, in favor

B. Park Commission to discuss and consider potential recreation specific facility uses for the Hudson Armory

Mr. Santos stated that:

- He and his staff had toured the Armory on February 27th and that upon return to the rec office, he and his staff came to the conclusion that the building was much too large to house only recreation programs and services.

- He and his staff were excited about the potential opportunities, however worried about the funding resources available to both purchase and make improvements to the facilities in order to provide sustainable and profitable recreational programs.

- In addition to visiting the Armory on Feb 27th, he had met with both Mr. Hunter and Mr. Steve Goldberg.

...At this meeting, Mr. Goldberg explained the vision a group of local business (BID) and community leaders had for the purpose of creating a performing arts center, inclusive of spaces for both local non-profits and municipal recreation programs. Further that the group was working on developing a business proposal to be presented to the Board of Selectmen, which would support the acquisition and use of the facility thus providing a benefit to the community.

- He had planned on bringing this matter to the attention of the Park Commission during the February 28th Park Commission meeting, however the meeting was cancelled due to inclement weather.

- He attended meetings with the interested group of business and community leaders on both March 7th and March 21st, informing them on March 21st that the Park Commission had not yet discussed this topic and would do so on March 28th.

- He and his staff had recently attended the Massachusetts Recreation and Parks Association Annual Conference and had sought out information specific to community and rec centers in other communities across the state.

Mr. Santos explained to the commission that although the need for a community center is present, he was not sure that this location would be the best option due to the current lack of sufficient parking, potential conflicts with other programs sharing the space (especially on nights and weekends) and the cost associated with bringing the building up to code for public use. Mr. Santos stated that he and his staff agreed that the most valuable space in the armory for recreation purposes was the large gymnasium area, which could be used for various programs and events. But other spaces such as classrooms and the garage area merit further exploration. Mr. Santos stated further that the armory's current condition, including the gymnasium was not turn-key and may require significant financial investment.

Mr. Chaves stated that the Park Commission and the Recreation Staff are not in a position to compete with the BID, a well-organized and educated group of community leaders, who are currently exploring this matter.

Further that the commission does not have the resources or the capacity at this time to make a sound decision on whether or not the use of any part of the facility is financially feasible. And that further consideration of use would be difficult to determine without knowing what level of financial support the Commission would receive from the Town vs how much would need to be supported by the Recreation Department.

Mr. Santos asked that Mr. Moses provide the Commission with an overview of what has transpired to date and what role the Town of Hudson has in the acquisition process.

Mr. Moses stated that:

-The Board of Selectmen have first right of refusal and if they choose to move forward with acquiring the facility, they would be the ones to decide what types of programs/organizations/uses would take place; stating further that the final price of acquisition would be based on the planned future use. Mr. Moses provided the Commission with some scenarios of how DCAMM would evaluate the final sale price based on future use. Mr. Moses stated that the Board of Selectmen has until August 1, 2019 to reply to DCAMM with their intentions and if they choose to proceed with the acquisition of the property that a business plan proposal would need to be provided to DCAMM as well.

-He and the Board of Selectmen were aware of a group of local business and community leaders actively working on developing a business plan to be presented to the BOS in the near future.

-The estimated current operating costs were in the vicinity of \$60-\$70K/ year and it would be expected to increase if the building was used more frequently than currently.

-The Park Commission should consider touring the facility, which could possibly be done sometime in April.

-The BOS would review all proposals for future use of the building and that regardless of the Commission's final determination on this matter; the Commission should consider providing the BOS with a letter of opinion as soon as a determination has been made.

Mr. Bowen asked Mr. Moses if the building were to be acquired by the Town, could the town lease the space to non-municipal organizations. Mr. Moses stated although that may be a possibility, that would need to be identified up front as it may impact the acquisition price.

Mr. Bowen asked if any other town agencies were looking to have access to the space as well, including Hudson Public Schools. Mr. Moses replied that he was not aware of any other town agency that has shown interest in the facility and that there had been no discussions with Hudson Public School to date with regard to this facility.

Mr. Santos asked Mr. Moses, if the Town would consider a bond to fund a project of this scope. Mr. Moses stated that he would not speak to whether or not the Town or the BOS would support bonding a project of this scope. However, he did explain the general guidelines and process of bonding a project and/or capital expenditure.

Mr. Chaves stated that at this time there was not enough information in hand to make a determination as to how much, if any, space the Commission would like to see set aside for municipal recreation use.

Mr. Moses suggested the Commission engage other town resources (such as the building department, HPS Facilities Director, etc.) as a means of gathering information in order to make a more informed decision.

Mr. Santos stated that the Commission should tour the building as soon as possible and invite local town agency professionals to provide their feedback on current conditions and potential facility improvement challenges.

Mr. Chaves stated that at this time it may be difficult for the recreation staff to research and evaluate a project of this scope without negatively impacting recreation programs, projects and short term goals set forth by the Commission. Mr. Chaves stated that he was ready to vote on this topic given the information, or lack thereof, presented thus far. Mr. Chaves stated that his opinion on the matter may be different, if he knew what level of financial support for both acquisition and improvements the Commission would receive from the Town.

Mr. Bowen suggested that the Commission not vote on this matter until Commissioner Wood had an opportunity to weigh in on the matter.

Mr. Santos stated that the Commission should take closer look at the facility as soon as possible and continue the discussion, perhaps meeting again the following week.

Mr. Bowen asked Mr. Moses when the Commission would be able to access the armory. Mr. Moses stated it could be as early as the end of April if not sooner. Mr. Bowen asked Mr. Santos to inform the Commission of the earliest available day and time to view the facility.

Mr. Santos stated the group of business and community leaders working on a proposal is extremely interested in capitalizing on the gymnasium/auditorium space as part of their business plan proposal and requested that the Commission continue to work with him to determine, whether or not the Commission/recreation department would require complete access to the gymnasium space; would

we be willing to share the gymnasium space with another group; would be open to foregoing use of the gymnasium space altogether; and/or whether they'd like to use other spaces within the facility for various recreation programming.
Discussion on the matter ended.

7. Old Business:

A. Update on Playground Improvements Project

Mr. Santos reviewed the project summary and the proposed action plan.

Mr. Chaves motioned to accept the summary and approve the action plan as presented, seconded by Mr. Bowen and carried...

Vote: 2-0, in favor

8. Communications and/or Correspondence to be noted by Commissioners:

A. Letter from Hudson Youth Baseball/Softball regarding use of Boutwell Building for concessions
The Park Commission reviewed the letter submitted by HYBS.

Mr. Santos suggested that the Commission allow him and his staff to work with the Board of Health (BOH) to determine acceptable uses of certain buildings for concession purposes.

Mr. Chaves suggested that the recreation staff work creatively with the BOH to ensure that operation of concessions at facilities meet all BOH requirements, without creating financial hardship on the organizations who rely on such profits to support their programs.

Announcements/Adjournment

Mr. Santos informed the Park Commission that the Finance Committee had met to review the Town Meeting Warrant and voted in favor (5-1 vote) for use of CPC funds to support the Centennial Beach Renovation Project.

Mr. Santos informed the Park Commission that he and his staff had attended the Massachusetts Recreations and Parks Annual Conference.

Mr. Bowen motioned to adjourn the meeting at 10:22am, seconded by Mr. Chaves and carried...

Vote: 2-0, in favor

Motion to Adopt: Mr. Chaves

Second: Mr. Wood

Vote: 3 – 0, in favor

Date: April 10, 2019