

**WESTON RECREATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, May 21, 2020 7:00 PM via ZOOM**

Pursuant to Gov. Baker's Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 modifying the requirements of the Open Meeting Law, the Recreation Master Plan Steering Committee, to ensure the safety of all participants, held its meeting remotely via Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/925462282>, Meeting ID: 392 344 366.

Members Present: Eric Rosenthal (Chair), Elly Pendergast, Melissa Crocker, Trevor MacDonald, Julie Johnstone, and Marcy Dorna

Absent: Xinsheng Zhu

Staff: Chris Fitzgerald (Director), Sharon Locke (Assistant Director), Lauren Smith (Program Coordinator), Dana Weintraub [Camp Director], Matt Cedrone [Camp Director]

Resident Comments: None

The minutes for the February 11 and April 9 minutes were reviewed and approved.

Recreation Master Plan

Chris Fitzgerald/Melissa Crocker

Ms. Crocker talked about a critical opinion piece that Finance Committee published about the Recreation Master Plan. The Finance Committee was concerned about the School Committee Warrant Article requesting \$100,000 for feasibility of capital projects that included some RMP initiatives. Ms. Kristen Barbieri and Ms. Crocker wrote a rebuttal on behalf of themselves in the Town the Crier explaining that RMPSC's position on the Master Plan that was different than what the Finance Committee article depicted. In a call today, Ms. Barbieri assured the chair of the Finance Committee that the RMPSC's position is to prioritize the maintenance of the fields and the pool. Eventually the School Committee may ask for support from the Recreation Commission for their article before Town Meeting.

Recreation Commission

Chris Fitzgerald/Eric Rosenthal

Ms. Pendergast asked how long her term will continue, because planned to not run for re-election and Town elections had been postponed. She expressed a desire to move on. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that the term continues until they are not re-elected or they resign. The Recreation Commission asked Mr. Fitzgerald to look into the process of appointing someone should Ms. Pendergast or anybody else resign, and the process considering their term would end with the next election unless they run for the position and win re-election.

Covid-19 Summer Update

Chris Fitzgerald & Staff

- **Youth Sports/Fields:** Governor Baker released a plan for a phased in opening of parks and fields. Mr. Fitzgerald has a draft strategy for opening, but more information is needed from the state to continue. There is a possibility for an increased amount of activity in phase 2, but specific recommendations are still being worked out. No games are possible until at least Phase 3. The track is closed as part of the closure of the entire school

complex. Basketball is open to individuals and to members of the same family but no group play.

- **Tennis:** There is a concern of opening the Brook School Tennis Courts because they are so close to the senior housing complex. Mr. MacDonald suggested that those courts stay closed for the time being. Mr. Rosenthal asked that measures be looked into to restrict parking and allow some use.
- **Day Camp:** Ms. Smith reported that she and her staff have made plans to move forward with the possibility of running camps with 100 campers. They have worked on planning staggered drop off, daily temperature checks at arrival, keeping campers in assigned “family units”, no mixing of groups, supplies etc. More restrictions may be needed as state guidance has not been released yet. There would also be no field trips as well as increased hand washing and sanitation stations. Mr. Rosenthal would like to see a survey put out to determine what residents would have a tolerance for. Ms. Smith explained that alternative camp ideas have been looked at such as “Camp in a Box” or sending camp counselors over to houses to run day camp activities in the backyard. Also that parents do not seem to want virtual camp. Mr. MacDonald suggested sending counselors into homes was too much of a liability for the department.
- **Memorial Pool:** Ms. Locke reported that the state guidelines for the reopening of pools have not yet been released even though pools have been approved to reopen in Phase 2, making it difficult to plan with exact measures. Ms. Locke has been sitting in on weekly meeting both within state and nationally, and reported that some expected regulations include limiting capacity to 25% of normal bather load, masks to be worn on land when 6 foot distancing is not possible, six foot distancing on land between family groups of no more than 10 as well as in the water, lifeguards wearing masks on land, new protocol for CPR, hourly (if not more) disinfection of pool railings, chairs, lifeguard chairs and equipment, etc., no concession sales, no swim lessons, no swim teams and no special events. Other restrictions would include no access to the sandbox, no access to changing areas (patrons have to arrive and leave in bathing suits), limited access to bathrooms, and time restrictions on patrons.

Ms. Locke has written a Memorial Pool Contingency Re-Opening plan which gives a plan for all the scenarios posted above. She sees her biggest obstacle as restrictions on the kind of training that lifeguards can conduct. Some of the more critical rescue techniques will not be able to be practiced because of social distancing restriction, which raises safety concerns for swimmers.

Multiple Recreation Commissioners asked about the cost of pool startup, which is estimated at a\$20,000. They questioned the ability to enforce social distancing and the possibility of having to close the pool because of a state mandated order and/or the inability to continue enforcing social distancing.

Finances/Budget for Summer 2020**Chris Fitzgerald**

Mr. Fitzgerald discussed the financial loss that will occur in the summer of 2020. He presented the Recreation Commission with several scenarios which included opening both camp and pool, closing both camp and pool, operating only camp, and operating only pool. Please see the attached document. There is potential Covid funding as part of the CARE Act to perhaps recoup some but not all of the losses.

Some ideas to help move forward with the FY21 Budget would be to increase the town contribution to the recreation budget. Mr. Fitzgerald asked the Recreation Commission if they were comfortable going to the Select Board Meeting this week to talk about the current state of the recreation budget and perhaps adjusting the town contribution. Mr. Fitzgerald explained that as more and more things begin to open up recreation becomes more and more essential. He believes that every possibility needs to be explored until it cannot be explored anymore.

Commissioners asked that the Recreation Department Staff to look into alternative recreational program activities such as smaller family activities.

The Recreation Commission has stated that overall, they are comfortable moving forward and speaking to the Select Board, but Mr. Rosenthal told the staff not to spend too much of their time trying to make this happen. Mr. Rosenthal, Ms. Crocker, and Ms. Dorna have volunteered to be present at the Select Board Meeting along with Mr. Fitzgerald and his staff, to represent the Recreation Commission

The Recreation Commission has also given Mr. Fitzgerald and his staff permission to move forward with planning but has also given them permission to make the appropriate call to stop trying once they feel that they have exhausted every possible scenario or simply feel it's too risky. Mr. Fitzgerald will find an appropriate way to communicate this to the Weston public.

Memorial Pool Feasibility Study**Mr. Fitzgerald**

Mr. Fitzgerald asked the House Doctor to take out the plans for a new bathhouse and add in expanded concession/ check in area plans. This dropped the price to just over \$2 million.

Next Meeting Mr. Fitzgerald will send out a Doodle Poll to the Commission.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:15 PM.