

# Recreation & Parks

## May 12, 2026, 5:30 PM

### Community Center

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Attendance: Rossana Ferrante, Karin Ernst, Larry Simpson, Chris Kennedy, Shelly Bedrossian

Meeting called to order at 5:30 PM.

#### **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes**

- Motion to approve the meeting minutes from April 21st.
  - Clarify: include in the pickleball section that the courts at Vets are 70' from the neighbors and a larger discussion needs to be had with the community, including neighbors, before we can consider.
  - Motion to approve with changes; seconded. All in favor, the motion passes.

#### **Public Comment**

- No public comment.

#### **Appearance: Brendan Callahan - ADA Grant Discussion**

- The department expressed interest in pursuing Chandler Hovey, specifically the pavilion, for the ADA accessibility grant.
  - Cost estimates were generated in 2022 for the ADA transition plan, which was for the walkway - the bid received was for 138,000. The transition plan's total budget at that time was 81,800. Brendan has put together a full grant, escalating the costs to be in line with 2026 costs.
- Scope: 306,708, with the grant covering 250,000. The grant funds construction, not design or permitting. The town portion would be 56,708. Included are construction and labor with prevailing wage for the pavilion, bathrooms, and pathways to be ADA compliant. It is due June 12th.
- Brendan reached out to Bruce Greenwald, who did the original design. Brendan will put together a basic scope of work for him to respond to and confirm that those plans are still ADA compliant.
- Discussion: possible ways to pay for the town portion of the costs. Can the Shattuck fund be used to cover the remainder? Sponsorships are donations were discussed; Shelly has reached out to Thatcher about the procurement process for sponsorships for Reynolds, and the steps could apply here. Can it be funded with money we have today in the revolving fund and then use sponsorships? Jaime noted that if the tier 3 budget is approved we may have funds for beautification.
- Motion to move forward with Brendan's ADA grant proposal for the ADA compliant pavilion project at Chandler Hovey, holding up to \$60,000 from the revolving fund, provided we will look into other sources of funding over the next six months. Seconded. All in favor, the motion passes.
- Brendan will reach out to the Neck association to let them know about the project. He will also present the project to the Disability Commission tomorrow.

### **Appearance: Kent Wheeler - Seaside Park**

- Kent came to speak about the infield of Seaside Park and the scope of work. He has counted twelve games moved off Seaside because it can't be used after minimal rain. The mix works its way under the sod and creates lips. Currently at Seaside the infield is like a bowl and there is nowhere for water to drain. It has been building up over the course of years. It was laser-leveled a few years ago, which helped, but was not a long-term fix.
  - The infield will be built up and the mound will be built up accordingly; the water will drain off the first and third baselines. Some water will go below; the infield mix will contain more sand to help with drainage.
  - The plan is to start in late August and move everything off Seaside.
  - The project has received 15,000 from Shattuck and committed to raising 35,000.
  - Kent will continue fundraising and requests that the department fill the gap up to 20,000 if funds come up short.
- Motion to approve up to 20,000 additional from the revolving fund in support of the Seaside Park refurbishment. All in favor, the motion passes.
- If properly maintained as recommended, with mini overhauls, this will be a long-term solution. We will ensure that staff is properly trained in maintenance.
- Joe McCain of the Seaside shared that their first game of the season this weekend will probably have to be at the high school due to rain earlier in the week.

### **Appearance: Sherrill Curtis - Lime Street**

- Ms. Curtis expressed concern that elements of the Reynolds project would affect the quality of life of her neighborhood. She shared points that she would like the department to be mindful of as the project moves forward:
  - Safety, specifically about children in the parking lot, and addressing the problem of people parking and vaping or smoking.
  - The town could honor the history of Joel Warren Reynolds as a baseball player and look into how other athletics can be supported.
  - The parking lot would not encroach on the softball field.
  - Pathways around the park and benches would be beneficial for Farrell Court and students at Charter School.
- Shared history and context of the neighborhood:
  - Based on documents in the early 2000s surrounding nearby development, she believes Lime Street was originally intended only for one-way access. It was cited as being too narrow and not perpendicular on both sides.
  - While in the process of making her property accessible, she met with Charlie Quigley, then with the engineering department, who noted that her property had been overpaved. This had occurred during the development up the hill, at the directive of Lime Street Realty, and was only partially corrected. 15 feet of her property and 14 feet of her neighbor's property were paved over. The person paving stated that it was because the street must appear to be two lanes.
- Shelly mentioned we are 30% into the design phase and there is still room for change.

- Larry and Shelly will meet Sherrill on Lime Street tomorrow morning to view the site in person and look over documents.
- Ms. Corrigan expressed concern about safety regarding the hockey pucks from the rink that dent her garage door. She was also concerned about the traffic, which is significant from the Charter School.

### **Tree Hearing - 0 Stramski Way: Jon Fobert, tree warden**

- This is a public hearing regarding the removal of three trees from 0 Stramski Way.
  - Jaime had one written response and after having the project explained, the party was fine with it.
  - Rossana provided background information about the Stramski property and its need for ADA compliance.
  - Jon had been contacted in the earlier design stages. He tried to work with the architect to see if there were other options to avoid the roots of the trees - 3 twenty foot white of 20, 23, and 25" caliper. For every inch of caliper, a foot is needed to protect the tree. The critical root zone goes out at a minimum of 25 feet. The roots are currently growing over outcroppings of ledge. It is an unstable site for the trees due to the ledge.
  - Larry asked if the ledge would need to be blasted. Brad said someone would come in with an excavator and a jackhammer. The ledge would need to come down about 30".
  - Public comment:
    - Lisa Wolf of Pitman Road expressed concern about the bedrock. One of her neighbors needed to remove bedrock and equipment kept breaking when trying to excavate, due to the hardness of the bedrock. A six week project took 3 months.
    - Question: have alternative designs been sought for the ramp, such as a switchback? Rossana shared it had been looked into and would be cost prohibitive.
    - Erin Tran of Crowninshield Road expressed that there must be another way without cutting down the trees.
    - Discussion: this hearing is for approval, but if there is an alternative that does not involve taking down the trees we will explore it.
    - Rossana asked for an estimate for the excavation before removing the trees. Brad will reach out to a contractor (Bob Donovan) for a ballpark number.
    - A neighbor on Longview Ave asked about the availability of plans and designs for the public to view.
    - Angela Ellison of Green Street asked if the inside of the building is already ADA compliant and how parking would be addressed.
      - Karin shared that the project originally involved re-doing the parking lot. The current board has made the project smaller and would be more suitable for smaller events (45 person capacity). We are not planning on doing anything different with parking at this time.
- Motion that, if no other way is possible, we remove the three white pine trees at 0 Stramski Way in the foreseeable future. We will do whatever we can to do due diligence to estimate before we remove the trees. Seconded. All in favor, the motion passes.

## **Master Plan Discussion**

- Shelly is a representative for the commission on the 2027 Master Plan advisory committee. An outside company put together a survey for the town's 10 year priorities and asked for feedback prior to sending it out. She wanted to share it with the commission because there are four questions strictly about Recreation & Parks.
- Discussion about the need to recategorize and make choices work together in a way that makes sense, and ensure that all park properties are in the survey. The options outlined in the survey do not necessarily make sense in the way they are currently presented.
- The feedback is due by the 17th; Shelly will meet with Jaime and Brad and make sure all properties and their historical significance are highlighted.

## **Recreation & Parks Department Update (Jaime)**

- Stramski: the water is on. Everything is sealed off on the second floor. It was capped and handles removed. The first floor and basement are all set, the ceiling needs to be touched up. The plumbing inspection is on Thursday. We will get Essex Tech back next fall to get the railing installed. It should be ready for sailing. HVAC should be done this week. We will get a lockbox for the remotes. Three quotes for the trees; Kelly would be the least expensive, including prevailing wage.
- Gatchell's: The department received a letter from a neighbor stating that the lights are impacting their home. The light department adjusted the wattage on all lights last Monday. There is a way to make them dimmer but it would involve bringing outside electricians. On Tuesday night, Brad went down with the light department and Marblehead youth baseball. They adjusted the lights down and away from the neighbors, but enough that the game could still be safely played. Brad is looking into visors.
  - Hours: the lights are off at 9 in the spring and 10:15 in the summer.
  - We are looking into timers that can be adjusted by day, remotely. The current timers can only be set to 7 days a week. We are getting quotes.
- Hobbs and Gatchell's fencing: the town has a fencing company under contract. Brad met with them about replacing the fencing; the current fencing is residential and not adequate. We will add a small gate by the playground and a larger ramp by the barrier-free access.
- Beach update: the boat ramp has been cleared. Tomorrow morning Linpack will be coming in for the front of the pavilion to fix the drop-off. Highway will re-grade the parking lot after the floats are out. We are set tentatively for a Memorial Day opening. We have new kayaks, paddles, and lifejackets, and new signs. We have ordered the new Gator.
- Vine Street: one dumpster has been removed. Brad will bring in a concrete bin.
- Turf Tank: Turf Tank only offered a one year lease followed by purchasing it outright. Brad asked if there were any other lease options and has not heard back.
- Old Burial Hill: trimming around gravestones. Chris and Alex will meet with Brad to look at the site and discuss trimming.
- Recreation is getting ready for summer. Caoimhe is coming back as Sailing Director.
- Jaime got a call from FinCom to let her know that if Tier 3 passes, they were interested in looking at what Recreation & Parks projects are and attaching dollar amounts to that. Jaime looked at four projects, related more to infrastructure, and put together rough estimates: Chandler Hovey ADA pavilion improvements (500,000 up to 1.5 million), Castle Rock rehabilitation and safety improvements (250,000 to one million), Vine Street improvements

(300,000), Reynolds Field improvements phase II (750,000 to 2.5 million). Gatchell's bathrooms (300k).

### **Correspondence**

- The department received a letter from neighbors expressing appreciation about the management of the Vets' Pickleball Courts hours and the procedure for locking and unlocking the courts this year.
- Wyle Goddard requests the use of Chandler Hovey for a wedding ceremony on September 18, 2027, from 2:30-5:30 for 170 people.
  - Discussion: the improvements could potentially be underway on the site, we should inform them that there is a risk.
  - Motion to approve pending insurance and payment of fees. Seconded, all in favor. The motion passes.
- Festival of Arts requests the use of the Green Street fields for their family-friendly annual Pup Party, on June 13-14 from 8 AM to 2 PM. Motion to approve, provided they have the appropriate insurance. Seconded. All in favor, the motion passes.
- Castle Rock from 3:30-6:30 on July 9th, to exchange vows. 34 people in attendance. Motion to approve, pending insurance and fee. Seconded. All in favor, the motion passes.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 26th, at 5:30 PM.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.**

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Minutes taken by Mary Herchenhahn