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**Minutes of the Newburyport Parks Commission
May 19, 2022**

Senior Community Center, First Floor Room A

Call to order: 6:00 p.m.
A quorum was present

In attendance: Chair Ted Boretti, Matt Ellsworth, Paul Swindlehurst

Also in attendance: Parks Manager Mike Hennessey, (no attendee list available)

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Motion to table the approval of the April meeting minutes by Commissioner Swindlehurst, seconded by Commissioner Griffin. So voted on a voice vote, 3 yes.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to take items out of order by Commissioner Swindlehurst, seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth. So voted on a voice vote, 3 yes.

Geocache at March's Hill (Massimiliano DiMartino)
This item was tabled.

Proposal to grant right of way, add walkway connection to private business at 200 Merrimac Street
Lisa Mead presented this proposal to grant a right of way and donate \$17,500 to the Parks Commission to install a walkway from the property at 200 Merrimac Street into Cashman Park. She stated that the work would begin as soon as possible with completion occurring before the end of the year. If the work exceeds the amount of the donation, then the additional funding would need to come from the City. Estimates have come in below the amount of the donation. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve the gift with the caveat that the money cannot be spent without approval by City Council, seconded by Commissioner Swindlehurst. So voted on a voice vote, 3 yes.**

Install interpretive panel at Perkins Park (Dave Pasiuk)
Dave Pasiuk presented a history of the Newburyport Gas & Electric Company and a request to install a new interpretive sign at Perkins Park describing said history. Councillor Byron Lane asked if the sign would reference Sean Perkins or Joppa Park. Dave responded that it would mention Joppa, but not Sean Perkins as the park is not named after him. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve in concept the installation of an interpretive sign at Perkins Park, with the caveat that the final design would need to be approved by the Commission, and that the sign would match the standards of previous signs in the City, and that the allocation of funds for the sign are to be determined, seconded by Commissioner Swindlehurst. So voted on a voice vote, 3 yes.**

Project update: plans and status of the Newbury section of the CCRT along Parker Street (Geordie Vining)
This item was tabled.

Pilot program: replace asphalt with reinforced turf at Cushing Park
This item was tabled.

Approval of revised design of Lower Atkinson Improvement Plan (Lise Reid)

Director Reid was not in attendance to present this item, and so the item was tabled. Several members of the public requested to be heard on this item. Philip Cooty stated that he has started a petition of concerned families and neighbors who are opposed to a multi-use sport court in the park. He believes the park is already too busy and cannot support another use. He stated his intention is not to oppose pickleball, but he does not want it located at Lower Atkinson. He suggests locating pickleball at Woodman Park or down at the Park and Ride on Storey Ave. Andy Masia stated that he is concerned that pickleball would be 6-8 months of the year and would be played into the evening and the impact of the noise and percussive nature of the sound of the game. He also stated that the catch basins behind Moulton were filled in, causing drainage issues. Councillor Byron Lane stated that he is opposed to pickleball at Lower Atkinson because of the added traffic and congestion increasing safety issues in the area. He also stated that he felt the courts were being forced on the city by the Morrill Foundation and that they would be better located at the Nock Middle School. Councillor Christine Wallace stated that she sides with the residents and that the park is too busy from 9 am to 9 pm to add another use. She went on to state that she would like to use the Commission move ahead with the accessible playground project before moving ahead with the multi-use court, and resubmit a new master plan for the park after the playground is installed. Kim Turner stated there would be a meeting on Monday with the City Engineer to discuss the drainage at the park and review the parking plan. **This item was tabled.**

Meeting notice procedures

This item was tabled.

Permit: Road race, Cashman Park, 10-23-22 (RaceWire)

Martine Pelletier presented a proposal for a half marathon road race and relay at Cashman Park. This race has been hosted for many years, and they wish to host again this year. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve the permit for the road race as presented, seconded by Commissioner Swindlehurst. So voted on a voice vote, 3 yes.**

Permit: Campout, Cashman Park, Auguts 5-6, 2022 (NYS& cub scouts)

Dan Logan presented a proposal for a cub scout pack of 25 kids to use Cashman park for a campout activity from Friday 8/6 at 4 pm until Saturday morning. He explained how Covid had turned many of their indoor activities to outdoor activities. This would be a joint effort with NYS, with 1 parent per child in attendance. No fires would be lit, a movie would be projected and camping would occur on the ball field. The Commission discussed whether a vote of the Commission was needed for this event, and expressed their general support. Commissioners requested that Parks Manager Mike Hennessey confirm the need for a permit versus an MOU if a park permit is not needed. No action was taken.

Permit: Pride in the Port, Market Square, June 11, 2022 (Sarah Lord)

Sarah Lord was not in attendance to present this proposal. Commissioners discussed the need to clarify that item 8 was no longer valid on the permit. Philip Cooty asked if there is a decibel ordinance in the City. The answer was 'no'. **Motion by Commissioner Swindlehurst to approve the permit, seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth. So voted on a voice vote, 3 yes.**

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Ellsworth, seconded by Commissioner Swindlehurst. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.

Adjourned xx p.m.