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**Minutes of the Newburyport Parks Commission
Special Meeting regarding Strategic Visioning: Session 1
November 7, 2022**

Board Room, Senior Community Center

Call to order: 6:00 p.m.

A quorum was present

In attendance: Chair Ted Boretti, Charles Griffin, Matt Ellsworth, Paul Swindlehurst, Nicole Whelan

Also in attendance: Parks Manager Mike Hennessey, Manager of Special Projects Kim Turner, Chief of Staff Andrew Levine, Ben Iacono, Andrea Eigerman, Andrew Simpson, Leslie Eckholdt, Bob Watts, Ken Irwin, Mary Haslinger, Veronica Carleo, Karl Haslinger, Jane Snow, Stacey MacMillan

NEW BUSINESS

Strategic Visioning Session—(Full Parks Commission & Kim Turner)

Ted Boretti asked if the group agreed with the definition of a mission statement:

1. A document that shares our vision for the future of Newburyport's Parks by identifying several goals and detailing the action steps required to reach those goals

Need to identify external and internal forces:

1. Internal forces: demographics, environmental impacts, cost of living, etc.
2. External forces: develop budgets to support capital expenditures, administrative, leadership, volunteerism is tough

Commissioner Swindlehurst: How do we get community input? Do we have a charrette with the community?

Chair Boretti: Can each of the Commissioners share their draft mission statement?

Mike Hennessey: For Parks Department: To protect, maintain and beautify the parks and open spaces of Newburyport for all to enjoy. Or. To give expert landscape management, create safety, accessibility and beauty while maintaining the Newburyport Parks for future generations. For Parks Commission: To lead, envision and create quality parks for all Newburyport residents. Or. To be visionaries for our park's futures, leaders for their improvements and cheerleaders for their maintenance.

Commissioner Whelan: From Boston: Our mission is to provide clean, green, safe and accessible open space. We want to improve the quality of life for individuals, families and communities. We strive to advance access, equity, and excellence in public open spaces citywide. Or. The Boston Parks Commission is responsible for oversight of land acquisition, enforcement of design regulations, naming of parks, and making of rules.

Commissioner Swindlehurst: To enhance the quality of life for Newburyport residents by providing superior parks, facilities, and recreational services in a safe, fiscally responsible and environmentally sustainable manner in partnership with the community. Or. To provide residents and visitors with the

highest quality recreational opportunities and promote high standards for environmental stewardship and land use planning using a system of parks, open-space lands, programs and other services.

Commissioner Ellsworth: To drive our core values.

Chair Boretti: Enriching community, inspiring stewardship, and promoting healthy living through safe, beautiful, and accessible parks.

Commissioner Swindlehurst: 9 Core values:

1. Health and wellness (considering both physical and mental health, reducing stress, activities offered, etc.)
2. Community engagement (develop informed and engaged residents, with regular communication. Result: involved residents and neighbors, increasing *volunteerism*)
3. Environmental Conservation (ensure sustainability, protect natural resources, asset management strategies, emphasize green infrastructure, resource conservation)
4. Accessibility & connectivity (interconnected trails and pathways, close-to-home parks walkable/bikeable neighborhoods, accessible facilities and services to people of different abilities)
5. Social cohesion (Through community events and neighborhood programs and public gathering spaces, we create a closeness among residents and visitors)
6. All Types of Diversity (develop respect for different languages, cultures and peoples, significant variety in recreation opportunities that is responsive to diverse community needs)
7. Equity and Inclusiveness (emphasis social justice, allocating resources fairly, prioritize opportunities and services for people of different cultures, ages, languages, interests, and abilities)
8. Economic vitality (we must have economic vibrancy and sustainability, health, accountability, and fiscal responsibility.)
9. Family-friendly (opportunities for youth development, lifelong learning, multigenerational activities)

Veronica Carleo: add transparency.

Andrea Eigerman: The current ordinance states the mission statement of the Parks Commission as 'improvement of parks and overseeing their use.'

Leslie Eckholdt: Water usage and conservation is important.

Andrew Levine: We already have multiple plans, Open Space and Master Plan that bridge some of this work. Perhaps the Parks plan can add in where there are voids in the other plans.

Kim Turner: Write policy based on core values that can help streamline decisions and priority rankings for projects.

Commissioner Whelan: define ordinances so department can make decisions, based on PC policy, without needing to come back to the Commission for individual approvals.

What are the key focus areas/core values or deliverables? Historic preservation, recreation, culture and community, education and outreach (or combined as community outreach), maintenance and beautification, economic vitality (budget and fundraising), operational efficiency

For the next meeting, take each of the core values and think about answering two questions for each:

1. What can happen now around this core value?
2. What could happen in the future around this core value?

No action was taken.

Adjourned 7:00 p.m.