

**Town of Northborough  
Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting  
November 10, 2009**

**In attendance: David Rawlings, David Putnam, Sean McCann, Sean Durkin, Jim Wing, Kara Buzanoski, Allison Lane and Michelle Lyseth; Guests: Police Chief Mark Leahy, Betty Tetreault, Donna Wamback, Rick and Janice Ferenchick, Claudia McGuire (Dog Officer), Anthony and Laura Ziton, Russ Thompson and Tom Hamilton.**

**6:30pm—Meeting called to order.**

**6:31pm—October Minutes.** Sean McCann (SM) made a motion to approve the September minutes, motion seconded by Dave Putnam (DP), motion passed 4-0.

**6:32pm—Security Cameras in Town Parks.** Chief Mark Leahy (ML) told the Commission that he was present to discuss the potential use of security cameras in the Town's parks. ML handed out an outline documenting the pro's and con's of using video cameras in the parks 'as part of a crime suppression strategy' (please refer to attached outline). ML said that while cameras would not be a panacea [for criminal activity], he does find them to be a great investigative tool. Discussion followed. Dave Putnam (DP) suggested that better lighting in the parks would be needed as well, in order for the cameras to record images adequately; ML suggested considering infrared cameras. Sean Durkin (SD) said he is 'not a huge fan of cameras [in parks]' but that he doesn't want the town to continue spending time and money resulting from vandalism. Kara Buzanoski (KB) agreed that, as the DPW Director, she is also tired of paying overtime and interrupting the daily work schedule to deal with situations stemming from vandalism. DP worried about displacement from the parks to other areas in town. More discussion followed, then a vote was taken. Four commission members voted 'aye' in support of cameras in town parks, one commission member (David Rawlings) voted 'nay'.

**6:58pm—Dog Park Presentation by Anthony and Laura Ziton.** Anthony Ziton (AZ) distributed copies of slides he was showing. He said that the group was no longer called 'People Who Play With Pups' and was now called 'The Friends of the Northborough Dog Park'. Approximately seven members from that group were present in the audience. AZ spoke on behalf of those guests, saying that the group has been actively searching for a spot in town where they can let their dogs loose off of their leashes and allow them to socialize with other dogs, in a local, fenced in area. AZ said his group has about 165 families on his mailing list who support such a facility. He also said that there are 1800 registered dogs in town, many of whom would benefit from a dog park. He went on to say the the group is focusing in on Assabet park as a desired location. Prior to that, they had been working to use the Yellick Conservation Land as a dog park but was turned down by the DCR. Space at Assabet Park became the next choice, having fit many of their criteria. The area the group is proposing to use is the grassy area near the Splash Pad and at the top of the hill in the park, which is currently not used at all. This area fits their criteria, as they feel it is underutilized and isolated; central location; and will have minimal impact to the surrounding area. AZ went on to say that once a property has been chosen, then the group can work to gain nonprofit status and being fundraising for fencing, mulch, etc. for the dog park. AZ acknowledged that the same park rules would be in force at the dog park, with one exception being that dogs would not be required to be leashed. The same park rules regarding behavior and etiquette will be in force. In addition, they are proposing double gated entrances to prevent dogs get loose. AZ concluded his presentation by saying that they need guidance going forward, and approval from the Parks and Recreation Commission, before the next step of meeting with the Selectmen.

AL applauded the groups' efforts for their hard work. She added that, at recent MRPA (Massachusetts Recreation and Parks Association) meetings, discussion came up regarding dog parks and how successful they have been in their towns. She said she would welcome anything that would deter dogs from being at Ellsworth McAfee park. Jim Wing (JW) asked if only Town residents would be allowed to use the proposed park. AZ said that he assumed it would be open to all as it would be difficult to police. Discussion followed regarding other possible areas in Town. SD suggested the old Fish and Game property, the group said that had been their informal location before the building of the new Senior Center. SD wondered whether there wasn't still sufficient space there, but Claudia McGuire (Dog Officer) said that it wasn't possible per Town Administrator John Coderre,

**6:58pm—Recreation Report by Allison Lane (AL).** AL reported that fall registration is still doing well. Recreation is launching a new Pre-K program for preschool-aged kids with different sessions being rolled out each month until June. AL next spoke about Recreation’s attempts at selling advertising space in the seasonal brochures. In the past, it has cost Recreation \$6,500 per season to print and mail brochures to each household in Northborough. By selling advertising space, Recreation is hoping to recoup some of that cost. Advertising in Recreation’s brochure was sold for the first time for the Fall Brochure, with roughly \$3,300 in ad sales. AL told the Commission that Recreation needs the members help in developing policies for ad sales. Discussion followed and a fee structure was established. Together, the group decided to offer ‘premium’ ad pages, which are in highly visible spaces in the brochure, and are at a higher rate than the ‘standard’ ad pages, which are lower in price and placed at the discretion of the Recreation Department. Next was a discussion regarding using a lottery system in the event that more than one person/business wants a particular premium page. Following that discussion was a suggestion from Sean Durkin (SD) for Recreation to sell advertising space on it’s website. Dave Putnam (DP) suggested advertising on t-shirts as another viable option. The end result of these discussions is a workable system for selling advertising space that will be put into place immediately. DP asked that after the policy has been typed, that it be sent to the Commission for review before sending it out to advertisers.

**7:15pm—DPW Report by Kara Buzanoski (KB).** KB updated the Board with regard to several DPW projects. Signs for the parks have been purchased and ready to put up. The nicknamed ‘Road to Nowhere’ at Ellsworth-McAfee Park has been paved, and the broken piece of equipment (the ‘Snail’) has been repaired. SD asked if dogs are banned from the park just from April-November? KB said that would be discussed at the November Parks & Recreation Commission meeting, when a representative from the group advocating for a dog park would be present at the November meeting. Discussion following regarding possible placement of a future dog park, with Assabet Park being the favored park.

**7:32pm—Meeting Adjourned.**