

**TOWN OF BEDFORD  
PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 10, 2009  
BEDFORD MEETING ROOM**

Present were: Chairman Sue Thomas, Michele Casale, Dennis “Mac” McMahan, Norm Longval (Town Council Rep) and Dave Gilbert.

Absent were: Bob Angelini, Mike Izbicki and Kim Daneault.

Chairman Thomas opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

**OLD BUSINESS – MOLD Update**

Jimmy Astarita (Football & Lacrosse Representative) said he would be presenting tonight for MOLD and first off I would like to thank the MOLD group who are a group of volunteers who have met diligently over the last several months and have come together as a group and we have been faced with a challenge from the Town. MOLD has accepted the challenge and we have expanded on building and maintaining field usage in the Town for the kids. We have been looking into the costs for field maintenance and expansion and I would like to ask the Commission for an extension to finish this challenge. As the fall sports are now winding down and the rest of the members can get to the meetings and we can get an accurate assessment of what needs to be done and what the costs will be and that information we will be bringing forward to the Commission.

Just to let you know some of the topics we have discussed as far as field maintenance is Legacy Field, trying to fix the water issue and the field itself. There is a water problem up there and with the two fields the well is not adequately distributing the water to be able to maintain the grass and it turns brown. Now a bit of history is that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> time we have re-built Legacy Field.

Another thought is looking at Riley Field and the concession stand issues which means we have to come up with a plan to get potable water and disposable water. We are also looking at both Town and School fields and Preston Field is another one with concession stand issues and as we have many organizations that would look forward to using that area for concessions on a weekly or monthly basis we should be investigating the cost factor. We also talked about Selvoski Field, but that is a little bit up in the air in terms of concession stand and what the needs would be for that area.

We have also discussed the tennis courts on County Rd and trying to put in a better light switch system. At the Little League Complex we talked about West Field needing a new backstop.

Long term plans are to possibly review the Joppa Hill Fields were if we can get permission we can extend the currently fields another 20 yards for the length of the field and that would give us another game field at that location. We feel that would be a great opportunity to add another field at an inexpensive cost. We do have to investigate this further as we need to check and see if we will have water issues and ledge issues, but with the people we have within the MOLD group and there are some talented people. I am confident this group can get together a plan to help Parks & Recreation Commission and also help Town Council. My reason for updating you tonight would be to ask for an extension so the MOLD group can get facts and figures together in the next couple months and we can present you with a 5-year Recreation Plan.

Chairman Thomas mentioned that Town Council has already had their first go round of budget meetings with Departments and I was at the Saturday Budget Meeting and what is in the budget for this coming year is 20K directed towards water for Legacy Field which Council feels is half the cost and the leagues will go out and come up with the other half. The leagues have pledged to help get water for this field. We either need a water tank or something needs to go into the ground. The Leagues pledged it 4-5 years ago, so the Council has agreed that the grass keeps dying. If we have a good summer it is great, but if we have a bad summer. The other thing in the Council has budgeted is 50K of impact fees to fence Swenson's Fields. What MOLD is working on is a 5-year Master plan and the Town has asked to incorporate it in the Town's 10 year Master plan. They have spent time looking at the fields and what is needed in the future. MOLD now needs to meet and put together a list of priorities. MOLD is looking at both School and Town fields and we will go to the appropriate authority to budget for the money. I have to warn you that the Council budget is tight for this year, but MOLD is talking about a 5-year plan.

Mr. Astarita commented that I have to let you know that with the success of MOLD and Dave Costa, within the matter of minutes the group decided to sod Swenson's Field the two diamond areas and a variety of organizations pitched in and it was 32K. We have been successful off the bat in helping the Town facilitate playing fields for the kids sooner than later. If we can stay with that idea it is possible that we won't make the mistakes like we did with Legacy and rebuilding of fields that we have done in the past. It is the Town people that make up MOLD and there are no hidden agendas by anyone.

Chairman Thomas said they are good meetings where every league has a representative that comes, every league participates that uses Town facilities.

Councilor Longval asked when we talk about Legacy Field in the past we talked about a tank at that field? Chairman Thomas replied yes we have done the research and have looked at every possible solution, but I think the tank if there is room would be the route to go and we know how successful it was at Joppa.

Councilor Longval asked at Preston Field you mentioned maybe lights? That is a School Field if that is part of the plan would the School District be participating in the cost? Mr. Astarita said Preston Field we have only mentioned the concession stand. Councilor Lonval said I thought I heard you say lights. Mr. Astarita said the only mention of lights

in our plan is for the County Rd tennis courts some type of a new light switch system than what we presently have.

Chairman Thomas commented the members of MOLD talked about when they go by fields and tennis courts and the lights are on and no one is playing. This doesn't seem to happen as often with the Fields as the Leagues have keys to the lights, but at the County Rd tennis courts there is a button that is pushed to activate the lights, but once people leave they are on until 10 p.m. The MOLD group wondered if there was a better way to control those lights with a new switch system. Norm when the final report comes out from this group it will be the School and Town Fields and understanding will be where funding is coming from whether it is School or Town.

**MOTION made by Mr. Gilbert to have the MOLD group continue working on the Recreation Master 5-Year Plan. Seconded by Ms. Casale. Vote taken – all in favor. 5-0.**

Chairman Thomas said thank you to all the members who come to the meetings and who are here this evening. There is a lot that needs to be done on the fields. Just to let you know that Babe Ruth is continuing to raise money for the lights at the SAU baseball field and the leagues are aware of that. Selvoski will be done by the Town with money that we have put aside for a few years and the bid has gone out for that. We want nice fields and we want fields that will not fall apart and if the Town is spending the money towards the fields, we do not want them in disrepair in a few years. The leagues have worked very hard on this plan and will continue to work with the Town as users of the fields to help maintain them.

Chairman Thomas said another order of business the Town Council had asked us if we wanted MOLD's 5 year master plan included in the Town's 10-year plan and I think from e-mail that I had sent out the Commission is in agreement with this. Can I have a motion to support this.

**MOTION made by Councilor Longval to add the MOLD 5-year plan to the Town's 10-year Master Plan. Seconded by Mr. McMahan. Vote taken – all in favor. 5-0.**

### **OLD BUSINESS – Dog Park Subcommittee Update**

Chairman Thomas asked Norm what is new with the Dog Park subcommittee.

Councilor Longval said at the last presentation we had gone through the first process with National Grid which was the Environmental and that was the only hurdle cleared. Since then the Transmission particularly the area we are utilizing. We are looking for safety and not lead to any problems. What they have sent back to us there is nothing to create a problem. The final phase is Legal and once we hear from them we will send it to Atty Bart Mayer and I do not expect anything major.

I would like to mention that we had a meeting this past Thursday night and we took on a new member Fred Hurwitz and he will be an asset to the committee and we will put together a website and this subcommittee wants to get into fundraising and we know we cannot do this until we acquire the land. We have some wonderful people on that committee and we are doing very well and we are well organized.

Chairman Thomas commented you cannot do fundraising till you have the land you are correct. Have you worked out a budget so that when you do come for our approval you will have that information just like the Bedford Center people they had their expenses down. Councilor Longval said we have some numbers, but they are not conclusive, but when we come before you we will have some numbers we figure 50K on this.

Ms. Casale asked if you get approval from National Grid do you foresee it opening in the spring. Councilor Longval said the running area possibly, but the training area will be more complex. With the amount of large dogs and small dogs we are looking into a smaller area inside the Dog Park for people with smaller dogs.

Mr. McMahan commented that the website would be a good. We could put a poll on it and ask if the Dog Park would be a good idea. I would imagine along that line we can get an idea of what sort of interest is there really in a Dog Park. Councilor Longval said the website would be great and I hear from a lot of people in Town that they would like a Dog Park so I know there is an interest. I feel we are looking good as far as committee.

#### **NEW BUSINESS – Approval Increase Facility/Field User Fee Schedule**

Chairman Thomas said we need to make a recommendation to Town Council to increase our facility/field user fee. This basically is when out of Town groups use the playing field (i.e. Hesser College) and there is a fee that is charged and Jane schedules the Town and School fields and this spring we noticed a difference in the fees charged between Town and School District. So for example if Jane schedules someone to use the baseball field at Riley Field which is a Town Field that was less expensive and the hours of use were different than the School District. Jane and I met with Tim Mayes and Dawna Duhamel (School District Finance Director) and discussed the fees and came up with a this recommendation. If you look at the Field Use Handbook on page 7 it is under Non-Town Sports Leagues and Teams and basically we would like to increase our fee to \$75 for a 2 hour block and if the request is to use a lighted field the fee would increase to \$150 for a 2 hour block. Tim will go before the School Board and get this approved at their next meeting. What I need is for the Commissions to approve the increase and we will pass it along to Town Council. It really makes sense to have us on the same page.

**MOTION made by Councilor Longval to recommend that the Town Council increase the fees for “field usage” to be set at \$75 per 2-hour block and \$150 per 2-hour block for lights. Seconded by Ms. Casale.**

Chairman Thomas said just to let you know the School District charged a daily rate for the field usage and then an additional charge for lights. So it was the consensus that we both charge our fees in 2-hour blocks to be consistent.

**Vote taken – all in favor. Motion passes 5-0.**

Chairman Thomas commented that Jane has been trying to get our policies in a handbook and here is an example of it tonight and I think it is a nice booklet to hand out to Leagues and members of the public rather than just the sheets of paper that we gave out to them before and it is a nicer look. Does anyone have any other new business, seeing none. We will have approval of two sets of minutes as we tabled the September minutes last month.

**Approval of Minutes – September 8, 2009**

**MOTION made by Councilor Longval to accept the September 8, 2009 minutes as presented. Seconded by Ms. Casale . Vote 4-0 one abstained (Mr. Gilbert)**

**Approval of Minutes – October 13, 2009**

**MOTION made by Mr. McMahan to accept the October 13, 2009 minutes as presented. Seconded Mr. Gilbert. Vote taken 5-0.**

Chairman Thomas said our next meeting will be December 8, 2009 here at BCTV Meeting Room at 7 p.m.

Mr. McMahan asked will we have enough to discuss at the December meeting. Chairman Thomas said the only item as of today would be an update on the Dog Park. Councilor Longval commented that would be if we get the legal portion approved and every month is precious at this point. Chairman Thomas said that is the only thing coming before us in December I believe. Can I have a motion to adjourn?

**MOTION made by Mr. McMahan to adjourn. Seconded by Mr. Gilbert.**

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

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