

Virtual Meeting 6:03 pm

December 8, 2025

Commissioners: Mara Huston, Granger Atkinson, Ben Carmel, Laurie Eliason, Bobby Beagan (joined at 6:13pm)

Guests: Andy Sheehan, Town Manager, Victor Garofalo, Asst Town Manager/Finance

Roll Call: Laurie-here, Granger-here, Ben-here, Mara-here

Public Comment: None

**Chair Comments:** Mara stated she was notified the Park and Recreation Director, Dennis Mannone, offered his resignation effective December 5<sup>th</sup>. Victor stated an interim Director has already been hired and started on December 8<sup>th</sup>. The interim Director is a retired Park and Recreation Director from Bedford with 30 plus years of experience in Recreation. She will be in the office for 20 hours a week, Monday through Thursday. The Park and Recreation Director position will be posted in January. Mara will reach out to bring the interim Director up to speed regarding the Commission. Victor added the Park and Recreation staff will increase their hours temporarily to cover any gaps. He also confirmed Dennis' role at the pool is covered by two Aquatic Supervisors, one a certified CPO, and a temporary contract with SSG for any monitoring/maintenance has been signed for any issues that may arise.

Victor reported the Atkinson Pool opened on schedule, December 1<sup>st</sup> for swim teams. Due to some temperature issues the pool wasn't opened to the public until Wednesday, December 3. There is a minor punch list for some remaining work at the pool. No air quality issues have been reported to date. Moving forward, a decision will be made if there is a need for the thermal duct system. He confirmed they are on track for Phase 2 in May. The cove around the base wall will be installed within the next few weeks. A new UV system for the dive pool, new computer system in the back room and new chlorinators will also be installed shortly. Park and Recreation programs running include dodgeball, middle school basketball, Skyhawks, High Point Athletics. Ski club begins in January with about 150 participants. Planning is underway for the Summer 2026 Camp programs, registration will probably be in January but date isn't set yet. Pickleball is running every day in the gym, in addition to men's and woman's basketball during the evening.

Mara asked about the status of residents using the Fairbank Community Center. Victor responded that plans for facility rentals are in progress, but will not require Commission approval. He will share plans once the facility rental plans are finalized which he expects to occur sometime in 2026.

He reported Gale Associates is on target in regard to the Feeley Field project phases, with schematic design expected by December 18<sup>th</sup> and a review meeting scheduled for January 6, with a plan to have 75% design done by the end of January with a review meeting in February. Once the schematic design is done, Victor will share it with the Commission. The bid will hopefully be awarded by May 1<sup>st</sup>, with construction tentatively scheduled for summer of 2026 with completion by October.

Mara was in contact with Adam Burney, Planning Director, regarding the Open Space and Recreation Plan. She will invite him to the February Commission meeting to give an update on the plan.

**Smile/Lyons Playground Design Ideas:** Victor presented playground design options for the Smile/Lyons playground focusing on inclusive, universal designs to accommodate users of all physical and intellectual abilities. He presented five options, which included various playground structures, musical instruments, and shade structures while considering space constraints and accessibility. The proposals fit in the budget that has already been submitted to the CPC. The Commission discussed the age appropriateness and accessibility of the equipment while inquiring about universal design features. Mara raised concerns about the accessibility of the merry go round for children in wheelchairs and questioned if modification should be made to accommodate all users. She suggested a four seated seesaw that might be more inclusive. Victor explained space limitations prevented certain combinations of equipment. Liesje Quinto, 15 Pendleton Road, Chair of the Disability Commission, expressed concerns about the proposed design's lack of universal accessibility, particularly regarding climbing structures. Victor explained that space constraints limited the options for some inclusive equipment and there were universal design elements like sensory play features, adding more accessible climbing options would require more budget and the area still has septic system constraints. The Commission discussed the need to provide accessible play options and while maintaining a balanced playground design considering the needs of children with and without mobility issues. Liesje discussed her experiences about the challenges her child faces using the current playground equipment. Victor was receptive to changes and said there was still time before the May Town meeting to finalize the design, but they are still limited by the small space available. The Commission agreed to involve the Commission on Disability (COD) in future discussions, with Ben suggesting listening sessions similar to what was offered for the pool project. Mara confirmed she would arrange a joint meeting with COD in January.

The Commission continued discussing plans for the playground structure, focusing on balancing universal accessibility with the addition of a toddler climbing structure. Victor will work with the vendor to develop 3-4 universal design options that fit within the available space. Mara stated she will share the discussion and options with the Community through One Sudbury and other groups like Sudbury Working Moms to gather feedback, with the knowledge that a final decision isn't needed until closer to Town meeting.

**CPC Project Submission Discussion-** Victor asked the Commissioners what their preference would be if the CPC suggested focusing on finishing the Feeley project and only approved one of the field design projects. The Commission discussed the Davis Field and Broadacres CPC submissions and are aligned on keeping the Davis project the priority over Broadacre, which Victor will communicate to the CPC. Laurie reported on Rail Trail Advisory Committee discussions regarding slope concerns and the upcoming joint CPC meeting. The Commission also reviewed the Haskell bathroom renovation plans for \$66,000. Victor stated any demolition and electrical work would be completed by the Town rather than an outside contractor.

Granger made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission approve the Haskell bathroom renovation project for \$66,000. Second by Ben. Vote: Granger-yes, Ben-yes, Laurie-yes, Bobby-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.

Mara raised the possibility of redirecting the solar panels suggested for the Haskell parking lot to the Featherland parking lot. Sandra Duran, Combined Facilities Director, noted that moving the solar panels from Haskell would likely increase costs since it would split the project into three different locations. Granger suggested possibly incorporating solar projects in the Davis and Broadacre locations.

Sandra stated the Haskell solar project emphasizes Haskell fields optimal sun exposure for renewable energy generation. Sandra mentioned there are also plans to install solar panels on the Fairbank Community Center building, to cover 68% of its electrical costs. Granger was tasked with reporting back to the Commission on the upcoming CPC discussions regarding project funding.

**Leash Law Sign Approval for Recreation Properties** - Mara presented leash law sign options for recreation fields. The signs mention the Town bylaws, waste removal, cleaning up after your dog. Commission discussed wording on the signs and agreed that simplicity was better than a sign with too much print and harder to read. The Commissioners thought the signs would inform and alert dog owners of the Town policy regarding the leash law.

Laurie made a motion for the Park and Recreation Commission to approve option #2 of the leash law sign offerings, which display rules for leash laws in Sudbury at Town recreational properties. Motion was seconded by Ben. Vote: Laurie-yes, Ben-yes, Bobby-yes, Granger-yes, Mara-yes. Motion passed in favor 5-0. Victor confirmed he will handle the implementation of the signs.

Bobby also brought up concerns regarding electric vehicles on recreation fields. Victor offered to check with Chief Nix about enforcement and potential additional signage at fields.

**Establishing Core Commission Policies** – Ben proposed developing comprehensive policies for the Town’s Parks and Recreational facilities, including field and court usage, amenities standards, lighting, maintenance, and safety protocols. Granger supported the initiative and suggested adding policies/forms for project requests and review process and a Commission process to institutionalize knowledge and improve continuity when there are changes in the Commission. Mara agreed on the importance of these policies and pointed out the capital planning meeting will start that process since capital planning will be the only topic on the agenda.

**SYB LED Scoreboard at Featherland** – Mara presented information sent to her on the scoreboard installation requested by Sudbury Youth Baseball. The request is to install solar powered LED scoreboards at Lower Featherland left and center and Upper Featherland baseball field. SYB would do the install, one scoreboard a year for the next 3 years. Lower Featherland Center would be completed in spring of 2026 and the dimensions will be a 4’ by 9’ solar LED scoreboard. The chosen vendor would work with the Town in the installation process.

Bobby Beagan made a motion that the Park and Recreation Commission approve Sudbury Youth Baseball’s request to install LED solar scoreboards at Featherland Field, with the understanding the Youth Baseball organization will work with the Town and Park and Grounds staff regarding the location of the scoreboards due to the possibility of future parking lot modifications.

Laurie seconded the motion. Vote: Bobby-yes, Laurie- yes, Granger-yes, Ben-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.

**Assign Liaisons to Commission on Disability (COD)** – Bobby expressed interest in the appointment to the COD. Mara made a motion to appoint Bobby Beagan as the Park and Recreation liaison to the Council on Disability. Motion seconded by Ben. Vote: Ben-yes, Granger-yes, Bobby-yes, Laurie-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.

**Review and approve minutes** – Laurie made a motion to approve the Park and Recreation minutes from October 21<sup>st</sup>. Second by Bobby. Vote: Laurie-yes, Bobby-yes, Ben-yes, Granger-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.

Next meeting is on December 16<sup>th</sup> and is dedicated to capital planning. The January meeting is scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> and the February meeting is on the 12<sup>th</sup>. Mara asked the Commissioners to forward her any suggestions for agenda items.

Motion to adjourn, seconded by Granger. Vote: Bobby-yes, Granger-yes, Laurie-yes, Ben-yes, Mara-yes. Vote passed in favor 5-0.