



THE CITY OF WORCESTER
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS AND PARKS
PARKS, RECREATION, & CEMETERY DIVISION
50 Skyline Drive, Worcester, MA 01605

Robert C. Antonelli, Jr. Assistant Commissioner Phone: (508) 799-1190 Fax: (508) 799-1293

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Meeting Minutes for
Thursday, September 27, 2018 – 6:30 PM

Commissioners Present:

Scott Cashman
Nick Chacharone
Eric Goldstein
George Sedares

Administration Present:

Robert C. Antonelli, Jr. CPRP
Jeff Tomaino, Park & Recreation Coordinator

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER'S REPORT:

Chairperson Mr. Sedares called the meeting to order at 6:37 PM.

- Mr. Sedares went on to the acceptance of minutes for September 6, 2018
 - Mr. Goldstein made a motion to accept the minutes for September 6, 2018. Second by Mr. Chacharone. All were in favor. Minutes were approved 4 – 0.
- Mr. Sedares turned the meeting to Mr. Antonelli for the Assistant Commissioners report:
- Mr. Antonelli went to the first item on his report:
 - Request of the Worcester Downtown Business Improvement District to speak on the proposed program and the Commission to vote on the proposed program. This item had been a tabled on the last meeting, because there were questions.
 - Mr. Troy Siebels spoke on behalf of the Hanover Theater in favor of the proposed program.
 - Mr. Cashman had questions that were addressed/answered as follows:
 1. Who has signed the petition so far? (To be confirmed).
 2. How is the 60% and 51% vote/petition calculated? It appears based on ownership and assessed value. The proposed district has 140 properties representing a total FY18 assessed value of \$381.95 million. The thresholds are 84 / 140 (60% of the number of properties) and \$194.8 million (51% of \$381.95 million). These would be confirmed by both the City Clerk and City Assessor after the petition is submitted.
 3. What is the total assessed valuation in the proposed district? \$381.95 million. Single-family residential condos are not only exempt from the fee, they are omitted entirely and do not cast a vote.
 4. What is the breakdown of assessed value between commercial, residential apartments, residential owned condos, nonprofits? This exact breakdown would need to be confirmed with the assessor due to mixed-use properties that have residential above and commercial on the first floor. We currently have an inventory for

the total assessed value of each property, not each use within the building. Commercial, residential, mixed-use and non-profits all have the same fee of 0.3% of their assessed value, so it was not necessary to breakdown the assessed value and square footage of commercial vs. residential in mixed-use buildings. The breakdown of land-use was looked at deeply as it related to tax-exempt ownership and whether those properties would need to contribute. In order for the BID initiative to be feasible, it was determined tax-exempt properties must contribute since about 26% of the properties in the district are exempt from property taxes and they will be benefitting from the services rendered. Residential is approximately 16% (less the first-floor commercial value on applicable properties) with major owners being The Grid District / MG2 and 145 Front.

5. Is it true tax exempt organizations cannot be legally obligated to pay the assessment? It appears under MGL c400 s 6 that municipalities “may” exempt owner occupied and tax exempt organizations. Does this proposal exempt nonprofits? Tax-exempt entities will be legally obligated to pay. It is true that BIDs can choose to exempt them, but it was determined that structure was not the right fit for this district based on the % of tax-exempt properties referenced previously. MCPHS University as well as the City of Worcester is participating by way of a Memorandum of Understanding with respect to in-kind services and other added value in place of the 0.3% fee.
 6. Who appoints the board? Or how is board elected? Nominations are submitted by any property owner for themselves or other eligible individuals and confirmed by majority vote of property owners.
 - Mr. Cashman was pleased that all his questions were answered in detail.
 - A motion was made by Mr. Chacharone to accept the proposed program. Second by Mr. Cashman. All were in favor. Motion was approved 4 – 0.
- Mr. Antonelli went on to the following item on the agenda:
- Request of the Friends of Newton Hill to speak to the Commission on the cross country ski course & grant award for Newton Hill. This item had been previously brought to the Parks Commission as an informational piece and it was not voted on.
 - Mr. Bill Bolduc spoke in reference to the upgrades to the Disc Golf Course, he explained that this would be grant supported and the work would be mostly done by volunteers.
 - Mr. Cashman asked Mr. Antonelli if he supported this upgrade.
 - Mr. Antonelli stated that he did as this was a positive upgrade and he is in favor of increasing the park use in the winter weather.
 - Mr. Goldstein asked if the grant would cover all of the cost.
 - Mr. Antonelli explained that there would be no city funds needed but the Parks Division might hand some assistance with the upgrades.
 - There was a neighbor who had a concern with this upgrade taking away from the natural beauty.

- Mr. Bolduc assured him that there would not affect the park in any major way and they would be in touch with him throughout the upgrades to keep him informed.
 - A motion was made by Mr. Goldstein to approve the upgrades. Second by Mr. Cashman. All were in favor. Motion was approved 4 – 0.
- Grant Applications –
 - Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant – Betty Price - Awarded
 - Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant – Hadwen Park – Awarded
 - Land & Water Conservation Fund Grant – Hadwen Park – Filed
 - PARC & LAND Grant Program – South Worcester Playground - Awarded
 - PARC & LAND Grant Program – Crompton Park – Filed
- Economic Development Initiatives – NA
- Cultural Events-
 - NA
- Park Vandalism & Graffiti – NA
- Donations –
 - \$400.00 for Rockwood Field
 - \$1,400.00 for Lake Park
 - \$2,500.00 for Memorial Bench @ Elm Park
 - \$15,000.00 for Green Hill Park Arboretum
- Capital Improvement Programs
 - Apricot Street Playground - NA
 - Ball Property - NA
 - Banis Street Playground - NA
 - Beaver Brook Park - NA
 - Bell Pond – NA
 - Bennett Field – NA
 - Betty Price Playground – In process
 - Blackstone Gateway Park – In process
 - Blithwood Park – Started Design for Parking lot
 - Boynton Park – NA
 - Burncoat Park – NA
 - Burncoat Playground – NA
 - Cascades Park – NA
 - Castle Park – Update
 - Common Master Plan Implementation – NA
 - Coes Park (Knife) – Update
 - Stearns Tavern – Work continues
 - Playground - Completed
 - Coes Pond – NA
 - Columbus Park – NA
 - Cookson Park – NA
 - Cristoforo Columbo (East Park) – \$75,000 from CSX towards picnic tables and benches
 - Crompton Park – NA
 - Dodge Park – NA
 - Elm Park – NA
 - Newton Hill – Building was finalized

- Fairmont Park – NA
- Farber Field – Need Funding
- Grant Square – Completed
- Great Brook Valley Playground – NA
- Green Hill Park Renovation – Update
 - Green Hill Farm – Up and operational
 - Community Gardens – Another Successful year
 - WWI – Work in process
- Greenwood Park – NA
- Hadwen Park – Project has been awarded – new playground, basketball court, lighting, parking lot, moving pillars and gate in further.
- Harrington Field – NA
- Harry Sherry Field (S. Worcester) – Under construction
- Holland Rink - NA
- Holmes Field – Almost finalized
- Indian Hill Park – NA
- Indian Lake Beach – NA
- Institute Park – Update
 - Walkway Design – Still under design
 - Salisbury Pond
- Kendrick Field – NA
- Knights of Columbus – NA
- Korean War Memorial – NA
- Lake Park – NA
- Lake Park State - NA
- Lake View Playground – NA
- Logan Field – NA
- Morgan Landing – NA
- Mulcahy Field - Update
- Oakland Heights Playground – NA
- Providence Street Playground – Working on lighting system
- Ramshorn Island – NA
- Rockwood Field – NA
- Salisbury Park (Bancroft Tower) – Closing hours were changed from 10:00 PM to 8:00 PM
- Shale Street Playground – NA
- Shore Park – NA
- Spillane Field – NA
- Tacoma Street Playground – NA
- TY Cobb – NA
- University Park – NA
- Vernon Hill – NA
- Wetherall Estates (Duffy Field) – NA
- 149 West Boylston Drive - NA
- Winslow & Pleasant - NA
- Aquatic Master Plan – NA
- Open Space and Recreation Plan – Will be scheduling public hearings in the new year
- North Lake Ave Linear Park – NA
- Community Development Block Grant – NA
- Art-in-the-Park – NA

- Dog Park, Licensing & Control of Dogs – Completed construction
- Rectangular Field Development – NA
- Park Monument Review – Working on 12 monuments throughout the city
- Misc. items:
 - Keep Worcester Clean –
 - NA
 - City Council Orders –
 - Request to review water chestnut from Knights of Columbus
 - Petitions –
 - NA
 - Forestry Operations – No Update
 - ALB (Asian Longhorned Beetle)
 - EAB (Emerald Ash Borer)
 - Arbor Day - NA
 - Budget – Operational & Capital – No updates
 - Parks, Recreation & Cemetery Division – No Update
 - Capital Improvement Program – No Update
 - City Five Point Financial Plan – NA
 - City Auditor Communications - NA
 - Summer Youth Employment Program – MA
 - Aquatics – Update
 - Christian’s Law – NA
 - Recreation Worcester - NA
 - Holiday Tree – November 30, 2018
 - Worcester Common Ice Skating Rink - NA
 - Waterfowl in Park – NA
 - Out-to-Lunch – NA
 - Trash – NA
 - ESCo – NA
 - Park Permits –
 - NA
 - Access/ ADA – NA
 - Mobile Concession/ Food Truck - NA
 - ATV – Recreational Vehicle – NA
 - Misc Information –
 - Article on Coes Pond Cleanup with WPI
 - Article on Indian Lake Closure
 - Article on Worcester Red Sox’s
 - Article on Hadwen Park
 - Article on Trees @ Hadwen Arboretum
 - Article on Park Upgrades
 - City Council Youth Parks & Recreation Sub Committee
 - NA
- Golf Course:
 - Driving Range Fees & Policies
- Golf Course Donations: -
 - NA

- Mr. Chacharone made a motion to adjourn. Second by Mr. Cashman. All were in favor. Motion was approved 4 - 0. Meeting was adjourned at 7:21 PM
- Next Parks & Recreation Commission meeting: October 25, 2018 – 6:30 PM