***TOWN OF DEDHAM***

***Parks & Recreation Department***



*Robert Stanley*

*Director*

*Debra Anderson*

*Assistant & Program Director*

*Tracey White*

*Administrative Assistant*

*Dedham Recreation Center*

*269 Common Street*

*781-751-9250*

*Anthony Mucciaccio Pool*

*1 Recreation Road*

*781-461-5991*

April 13, 2020

REMOTE

7:00 pm

Present:

Jonathon Briggs - Chairman Absent:

Tye Donahue – Vice Chairman

Lisa Moran

James Maher

Chuck Dello Iacono

Robert Stanley – Director

Debra Anderson – Asst. Director

Tracey White – Assistant to the Director

Chairman Briggs opened the meeting by reading the following statement:

***Due to the ongoing COVID-19 Pandemic and State of Emergency, on March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an Executive Order Temporarily Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20. Pursuant to the Order, public bodies are temporarily relieved from the Open Meeting Law’s requirement that meetings be held in public places, open and physically accessible to the public, so long as measures are taken to ensure public access to the bodies' deliberations "through adequate, alternative means."***

**Public Comment**  none

**Chief D’Entremont**

It is on the radar of Officers, if they see a group of people on fields, Officers will the approach and inform people that they are on a closed facility and that they need to spread out and not congregate in a group. Officers keep an eye on the fields and facilities and move people along. The signage and removal of equipment that will draw people, such as basketball hoops and gates being closed at certain parking lots and such, so that the areas are known as being closed, is very helpful, it may become more difficult as the weather gets warmer, but Officers will keep moving people along.

J. Briggs stated that when the weather was good there where more issues then when the weather was not so good.

T. Donahue stated that he appreciates the work that has been done between the Chief and the Director

J. Maher asked if the signage is appropriate for Officers to enforce, the Chief stated that the message is there, and signage is helpful

L. Moran asked if there is one particular spot that is an issue with people gathering.

Chief D’Entremont stated that Riverdale School, Gonzalez Field, the High School and Paul Park are the four areas that have the most, the removal of the hoops and the closing of the parking lots are helpful, the High School and Gonzalez are an issue with the tracks still being open.

J. Briggs thanked the Chief for calling in and keeping the Board informed.

**Status on Parks & Recreation as it relates to Corona Virus**

J. Briggs stated that programming and future programming is being affected, and asked the Director for a status update, there will be things that we can’t figure out yet. because there no timeline. Things that we can be doing to keep people engaged.

Director Stanley stated the Regional Swim meets were cancelled as an abundance of caution, and now it is considered an impending threat. Regional swim meet would have had about two thousand people and that would have hurt the State of Massachusetts,

It really hit on March 13th. We looked to the Board of Health, the Town Manager and the State guidelines.

Closing the playgrounds was a combined decision and the NPRA came out and said most playgrounds were being closed due to the touching of equipment and being in close proximity to others. Two weeks later the fields were closed, due to large groups of people gathering that was a recommendation from the Board of Health. Then it became an issue of how to keep people off the fields, we had the signs, the message boards and we cautioned off the fields with tape. We taped off all of Gonzalez Field with caution tape. We were telling people the field was closed, and they were saying that they were unaware. Over the past week or it has improved. We must enforce the no one rule. Hopefully, field and parks will be open, working with BOH, we have kept trails open, it has been positive to see people using the trails. Social distancing is being done.

Shut down all our programs and the Dedham Pool, at least until the end of April, we have been getting a lot of information from the Town Manager.

Staffing has become an issue, that has been most of our part time staff, as for our Full time we are doing our best to keep people working remotely, we do try and keep the office staffed, just not open to the public. There is no interaction with the public, the Dog Park is still open, it was an ok decision, there are no new registrations, hopefully we can do that in a few more weeks.

All Department Heads met with the Town Nurse and then the Town Manager, we are following all the same rules as the Town Hall, they have a skeleton crew at the Town Hall as is the case at the Dolan Center.

Thankful to the Town Manager, and all the employees at Town Hall that have been working.

Cancelled Swim Banquet and Dance Recital and Gymnastics Show.

Going forward we must make decisions, such as the Flag Day Parade, we have been in touch with the Director. I have been in touch with Quincy, who also has a parade, they are strongly thinking of cancelling and possibly having another event, such as fireworks. We will make sure that we keep everyone in the loop, as that Funds may not be available, as some of the parade is funded by local businesses, and that may not be able to happen at this time.

There will be no spring programs and we will have to give partial or full refunds, all funds will be credited to accounts, and then if people want a refund, they can call the office to request.

Summer programs will be challenging in the future, right now things are unclear, we were 30% higher in revenue, from where we were last year. We are now lower as people are not signing up for programs for the summer yet.

NPRA watching to see what others are doing, now most are keeping summer programs open with modifications. Thinks the way we should proceed. If social distancing, how can we run a Swim & Gym program, hiring freeze with the Town, so we can not hire summer staff. There are a lot of unknowns out there. We are unable to make many plans currently.

Pool Programs and Playground programs could be in jeopardy.

Finances and capitol projects, pool windows should be done in September, that is funded and will move on. The HVAC at needs to be replaced at the pool and will need a temporary HVAC system when we open the pool in the summer. The HVAC is a Capitol Project and needs a reserve fund transfer

The Parks employees have still been getting work done, fields have been seeded and fertilized and such. The MIAA has been looking at April 24th to restart spring sports, however that isn’t looking good, and if that is the case most youth sports will probably follow suit. We may not have men’s softball; however, we will have to see how that goes.

J. Briggs stated that we are in a holding pattern, we can all collectively think of ways to have some type of programs. He stated he was happy to see FB stuff and would like to see that continue.

L. Moran stated that the Trails are being used and people are socially distancing. The Facebook posts about the Senior kids have been terrific.

L. Moran asked what the timeframe would be to start to register and hire employees

R. Stanley stated there would be a bit of issues, however we could probably be ready to go with three- or four-weeks’ notice.

R. Stanley stated that as far as hiring freeze maybe easier, as most summer programs are paid through the revolving fund.

D. Anderson stated that Facebook posts will continue, Signs have been put around parks, dance recital has been cancelled, and the Instructors have been discussing on line classes.

As soon as we can begin, programs we would be ready to go, biggest issue would be hiring staff

L. Moran asked how long the hiring process usually takes

D. Anderson stated it takes about a month to hire new staff

j. Maher asked about moving up the pool window project from September to possibly May

R. Stanley stated that it would be ideal to do now and keep pool closed until all work could be done and reopen with all work done to reopen in September, he has been speaking to Facilities Director.

L. Moran asked if Summer League has reached out to discuss what the plans are.

R. Stanley stated he has not heard on league plans yet

J. Briggs stated that fields will be ready

R. Stanley stated that fields will be ready to go in a day or two notice

F. Bellotti stated that Girls Softball is waiting for direction from the Town

T. Donahue thanked the Office Staff, for all that they are doing at all different hours of the day and night.

**OLD BUSINESS** NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**  NONE

L. Moran stated it has been one year since she was elected, and what a year it’s been

C. Dello Iacono motion to adjourn, second by L. Moran

Roll Call vote:

With C. Dello Iacono making the motion and L. Moran the second

J. Maher yes

T. Donahue yes

C. Dello Iacono voted yes

L. Moran voted yes

Chairman Briggs voted yes

Meeting adjourned