



# TOWN OF HOPEDALE

78 Hopedale Street - P.O. Box 7  
Hopedale, Massachusetts 01747  
Tel: 508-634-2203 x 302 Fax: 508-634-2200  
Email: [parks@hopedale-ma.gov](mailto:parks@hopedale-ma.gov)

**Park  
Commission**  
Don Howes, Chair  
Jim Abbruzzese  
David Sprowl

## **Hopedale Park Commission Regular Meeting Minutes 7:00 pm Draper Room, Town Hall via Zoom April 30, 2020 This meeting was televised live and recorded.**

Call to Order at 7:04 PM

### **Attendance**

Park Commission: Don Howes, David Sprowl, Jim Abbruzzese

Park Clerk: Mary Arcudi

Town Administrator: Diana Schindler

It was moved by Mr. Abbruzzese, seconded by David Sprowl, to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 19, 2020. All were in favor.

Mr. Howes took a moment to remember Jack Farrar who passed away on April 4, 2020. Jack was a lifelong resident and Road Commissioner for the town of Hopedale along with many other positions he held. He will be sorely missed.

### **Correspondences and requests**

- The Friends of Historic Hopedale emailed the commission with the two finalists for the mural contest and it was unanimously voted for the blue angel wings submitted by C. Smith.
- The new shed is moving in at Phillips Field. It was noticed that the fence was in bad shape. There will be minimal costs to repair as the Hopedale Youth Softball Association has donated the boards and the Highway Department will assist in the repair.
- Mr. Robert Burke has requested permission to camp overnight in the Parklands. He will be testing his gear in a simulation way during stormy weather for future backpacking expeditions. Since he had asked last spring and never had an opportunity to do so, the board extended his permission for six months as long as he calls the Chairman to confirm the date. Mr. Howes will then notify the Police Department. There was a reminder that fires are never allowed in the Parklands.

### **Public Comment - Short Items (non-discussion)**

None

Moving forward, Diana Schindler informed the HPC that all meetings will have an option for residents to join in to the meeting via Zoom with any questions or concerns during the public comment time slots. The link to join will be on the agenda and the website.

### **Review previous action items**

- Update on park closures - The Governor has extended the closure of parks until May 18th. This will be reviewed at the next HPC meeting in May.

- Tennis courts warrant - The FY20 budget is outrageously tight and under scrutiny. Mr. Howes felt that this was not the time to put forward this warrant. After a brief discussion, Mr. Sprowl made a motion to withdraw the tennis court warrant for the FY20 budget for Town Meeting on June 23, 2020. Mr. Howes seconded the motion and the vote was as follows:  
David Sprowl                yes  
Jim Abbruzzese            abstained  
Don Howes                yes  
Motion passed in favor.
- Playground tree restoration/safety warrant and quotes - Mr. Sprowl has called and emailed for additional quotes and is waiting for responses.
- Review installing vinyl siding on steel box/shed at Phillips Field - The vinyl siding and wood have been donated by Hopedale Youth Softball Association. There is a quote for a carpenter to complete the work that is under \$800. Mr. Abbruzzese made a motion to appropriate up to \$800 for the labor to install vinyl siding and repair the shed at Phillips Field. Mr. Sprowl seconded the motion and all were in favor.
- Update on testing of soil at Draper Field by Recreational Field ad hoc Committee - Mr. Abbruzzese reviewed the revised proposal for environmental consulting for a limited site investigation to evaluate the potential presence and extent of contamination at the Draper Field. This proposal was completed by Nobis Group and details the scope of services for this project. Mr. Sprowl made a motion to move forward with the environmental consulting with the Nobis Group/Gale Associates at Draper Field as proposed and detailed in their report, with the funds provided by the state grant. Motion seconded by Mr. Abbruzzese and all were in favor. This documentation will be sent on May 1, 2020 to CDM Smith and Rockwell for review and approval.

As residents can see, the play swing in the playground has been removed and the rocking horse has been unearthed. Installation of new items and relocated items has been delayed due to COVID19. The Highway Department has a telephone pole that will be used to move the light in the playground area. Quotes to repair or replace the broken parts of the slide are well over \$20,000.

### **New Business**

- Budget for FY 21 - The Finance Committee currently is asking for a 2 percent reduction in all town budgets. This could impact the salaries for summer staff and the HPC will work diligently in protecting the services it currently provides for the Parks and Parklands. Consideration will be to preserve the irrigation funds but may need to be reduced to complete the tree safety in the playground if that warrant does not pass at Town Meeting.
- School buildings closed for the rest of the year - MIAA has cancelled all spring sports and the school buildings have been closed for the remainder of the school year.

### **Bills and Invoices**

Up to date

### **Public Comment - lengthy items**

None

## **Report of board members**

- Fields and parks are still being maintained with the staggered Highway staff schedules due to COVID19.

Diana Schindler, our new Town Administrator inquired with the HPC about grants and the status of any long term plans the board had in place. She suggested working on an Open Space and Recreation Plan. Having such a plan allows the HPC to apply for grants. The board does believe there is a plan on record and will research the status of this but does know that it would need updating and could be considered part of the town's new Master Plan. This could be in partnership with the Conservation Commission. The Town Administrator will work with the Board of Selectmen to appoint an Open Space Planning Committee with HPC and Conservation Committee as members along with any other residents.

Mr. Abbruzzese brought up the interest in the Community Preservation Act as well which is funding generated from local property tax surcharges of up to 3% and through receipts of annual matching funds. This would help in funding preservation space, developing outdoor recreational facilities and much more. Ms. Schindler will look into moving this forward as well with the Board of Selectmen.

Adjourned at 8:10 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Arcudi  
HPC Clerk

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Don Howes, Chairman

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Jim Abbruzzese

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David Sprowl