

ARTICLE

To see if the Town will vote to place the Town Commons found on assessor's Map 17D lot 5 (4.4 acres) and lot 48 (0.14 acres) under the authority and jurisdiction of the Select Board, ownership remaining with the citizens of the town.

DISCUSSION/HAND OUT

It is unclear who has responsibility to maintain and manage the Town Commons. Both the Select Board (SB) and the Parks and Recreations Commission (P&R) manage schedules and applications for the use of the commons. The SB issues permits for entertainment and liquor on the commons and limits the number of events based on neighborhood input and traffic. P&R currently schedules and charges a small fee for exclusive use of a common and provides a set of rules and regulations (see attached). This warrant article provides the town vote specified in Massachusetts law that will place jurisdiction of particular properties under the SB of the Town of Harvard. This article will clarify responsibility to the town boards and make it easier for citizens to navigate the reservation/permitting process. It is appropriate that the heart of the town be under the jurisdiction of the town's top elected leaders.

Discussion for SB and P&R (not part of TM handout)

- Remaining \$10k from Movie Studio should be transferred from P&R Beach revolving to a SB account for future use on the small common (next to GS).
- DPW has the labor budget for landscaping on the town commons.
- Only expense paid by P&R is electrical bill and it should now be charged to the SB.
- The War Memorial Sub-committee already reports to the SB with no P&R involvement.
- Town Hall parking & other modifications to the commons will now be under the SB's control and not require P&R approval (historically not sought anyway).
- Removal of signs left on the common after they expire is more appropriately handled by town employees and not volunteers.
- P&R can focus on Harvard Park and all of the other recreational facilities in town.
- The SB is welcome to use CivicREC to reserve and collect fees on the commons. The SB account can be built right into the CivicREC transaction so that Turnovers are very easy.
- Attached rules and regulations for commons are part of the current CivicREC reservation system and need to be adopted by the SB or modified as they see fit.

Rules and Regulations for Playing Fields and Common Area:

- Playing fields and commons are open for use by individual residents of town except during scheduled events.
- All organizations wishing to schedule an event, practice, or game must have permission from Parks and Rec.
- Permission to use fields and commons may be revoked at any time by a Park and Recreation representative due to weather conditions, or field conditions.

On all fields and commons the following apply, except by written permission from Parks and Recreation:

- Day time use only unless given written P&R approval (additional fees apply)
- No motor vehicles
- No tents, trailers, or camping
- No golfing
- No metal detectors
- No snowmobiles
- No horseback riding
- No open fires of any type except by permission from Parks and Recreation and a valid fire permit from the fire chief.
- No person shall post, paint, affix or display any sign, notice, placard or advertising device except with permission of the Parks and Recreation Commission, on any field or commons.
- Organizers of events are responsible for removal of any rubbish from event. No household rubbish may be deposited in barrels provided by Parks and Recreation.
- No person shall engage in the distribution of goods, wares, circulars, except with the authority from Parks and Recreation Commission.
- The use of malt or alcoholic beverages on Town property is prohibited under Chapter 138, sec 1 of the Mass. Gen. Laws(Voted as a by-law at annual Town meeting 1975). Violation is punishable by a fine of fifty dollars for each offence.

Posting of signs on the Common:

- Signs must be registered on the P&R website
- Signs must pertain to community or town events and must not advertise personal or commercial events.
- Signs may be posted up to 3 weeks prior to an event.
- Signs must be removed within 24 hours of event, or 3 weeks after posting
- Signs must be placed in southwest corner of the Civil War Monument Common
- Signs must be free-standing, a maximum of 10 square feet, and not attached to trees in any manner.
- Signs must be dated with an event date or a posting date.
- Signs of any type may be removed at any time by Park and Recreation if not following the above rules.