

PARKS AND RECREATION COMMITTEE IRRIGATION REQUEST TO TOWN MEETING

The Parks and Recreation Committee is requesting up to \$400K of Community Preservation Act funds for the installation of an irrigation system at the Codman Athletic Fields and infrastructure to support future Ballfield Road campus irrigation projects, if fiscally prudent.

This request has been supported by the Community Preservation Committee and will be addressed in **Article 11 of town meeting on Saturday, March 23 in the Brooks School Auditorium.**

How do Community Preservation Act Funds Work?

CPC funds replenish annually through a 3% surcharge on your tax bill and a State match that varies from year-to-year. These funds are earmarked to support projects that improve open space, affordable housing, historic preservation and recreation in Lincoln. Projects financed through the CPA do not require any increase to your tax bill.

Why Now? Why Codman?

With the new Wang athletic field opening this spring, we are turning our attention to improving Codman Field now, before the school building project begins. Over the next five years, all of the other athletic fields on campus will be affected by the renovation, leaving Codman to handle the majority of use. Installing irrigation now will help us prepare it for the increased user load and avoid the need for a full renovation down the road. After the school project, we plan to irrigate the other fields on campus.

Why do you need “up to \$400K” to finance this work?

Irrigation projects involve some unknown variables. The irrigation system itself is a relatively predictable cost, but using bedrock wells to source water is a combination of science and luck. You become subject to drilling location, number of wells needed, water yield and whether or not water collection tanks and associated pumps are necessary.

Also, since our long term goal is to irrigate all fields on campus, we want to be able to capitalize on a great water source if we come across it. So we have budgeting to install tanks and pumps to service multiple fields *ONLY IF* we determine that it will save the town money down the road. We will explain the *up to* costs in more detail at town meeting.

Why are you drilling bedrock wells and not using town water?

We met with the Water Commissioners when designing the irrigation system at Wang Field. We determined that bedrock wells were the better choice for three reasons:

- 1) Town water is a managed resource. Our water commissioners work hard to keep Lincoln's town-wide draw under a necessary threshold, and our bedrock wells would not count towards that draw.
- 2) The Town spends money to treat its water and make it drinkable. Taking that water and spraying it on our fields seems counter-intuitive.
- 3) Paying for the water would require a massive and permanent budget increase for the Parks and Recreation Department, whereas a drilling a bedrock well is a one-time capital expense offset by State funds.

Why isn't this part of the school building project?

The School Building Project budget did not include irrigation of the athletic fields and chose to focus its scope on what was absolutely necessary for educational excellence and public safety. The Parks and Recreation Committee are responsible for the maintenance and safety of all athletic fields in town and have had irrigation on our long-range plan for many years. With the completion of the Wang Project, and the beginning of the School Building Project, this is the right time to take this next step.