

*Town of Weymouth  
Massachusetts*

Robert L. Hedlund  
Mayor

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Weymouth, MA 02189



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**MEMORANDUM**

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**TO: TOWN COUNCIL**  
**FROM: ROBERT L. HEDLUND, MAYOR**   
**RE: FREE CASH FOR CLARK NATURE CENTER IMPROVEMENTS**  
**DATE: April 12, 2018**

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I submit the following measure to Town Council for its consideration and action:

“That the Town of Weymouth transfer the sum of \$250,000.00 from Free Cash for the purpose of funding costs associated with repairs and improvements to the George Clark Nature Center adjacent to Great Esker Park.”

This need is #51 on the FY2019-2023 Capital Improvement Plan.

This measure requires a legal notice and public hearing.

At the time of this submittal the balance in Free Cash is \$7,437,969.00.

Referral Dte. \_\_\_\_\_ PH Dte. \_\_\_\_\_  
Comm. Referral \_\_\_\_\_ TC Vote \_\_\_\_\_  
Comm. Vote \_\_\_\_\_ TC Vote Dte. \_\_\_\_\_  
Comm. Vote Dte. \_\_\_\_\_

## ***Town of Weymouth***

**Recreation Division**  
1393 Pleasant Street  
Weymouth, MA 02189-1360  
Telephone: 781-682-6124  
Stephen Reilly

***Massachusetts***

**MAYOR**  
**Robert L. Hedlund**  
75 Middle Street  
Weymouth, MA 02189-1360  
781-335-2000



### **George Clark Nature Center Improvements Request FY19**

Great Esker Park has programs been the home to outdoor recreation and educational since 1966 when Mary Toomey started an environmental club for high school kids shortly after the town purchased the land. Since then the esker park programs have been an annual summer tradition in Weymouth, providing generations of kids with memories that last a life time. The George Clark Nature center has played an integral role in the Great Esker park summer programs for over thirty years, but in recent years the aging building has increasingly developed structural issues that negatively impact the Great esker park programs and severely limit future uses and opportunities. These issues include leaks in the roof, faulty bathrooms and electricity, mold, bug and rodent infestation. Beyond the major issues, the building overall is outdated and is limited to how and when it can be used.

#### **Esker by the Numbers**

Last Year we sold 1369 spots in GEP programs, engaged 600 students in school programs and another 2200 people in community events. These programs generated \$115,000 in revenue and employed 30 young adults, setting them up for success in future careers.

#### **Building Issues**

Bathrooms- the plumbing in the bathrooms frequently leak and flood the entire building. Also missing a floor drain that is critical to maintaining a sanitary bathroom.

Roof – The roof leaks in multiple spots during any rain event so the Nature center is consistently wet, leading to mold growth and crumbling walls in the building. These leaks also limit the building capacity to house program participants during rainy weather.

Electric outlets- several electrical outlets throughout the building no longer work.

Mold/ bugs -because the building is frequently wet due to roof and bathroom leaks and mold is found throughout the building. The building also has a significant bug and rodent infestation.

#### **Improvements**

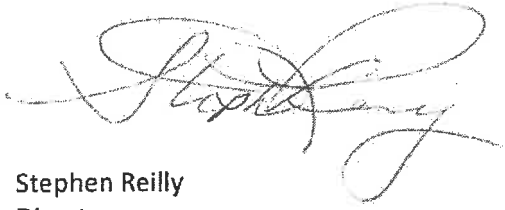
The Nature Center needs a complete rehab of the entire building with new bathrooms, electricity, roof and new interior. Bathrooms ideally would have multiple stalls, a floor drain and be accessible to the public without the public having access to the building. We would like to look at opportunities to expand the space available in the building to accommodate more programs and associated equipment. A new interior and exterior would be more welcoming and reflect the themes of the Back River trail.

### **Improved opportunities**

A renovated building is not only necessary to continue the current level of programing necessary but would give us the opportunity to expand programing currently limited by the buildings condition. These opportunities include facility rentals, school vacation programs, community programs, school educational programs, programs and collaborations with boy scouts and other community groups, the opportunity to engage the community in environmental stewardship programs, internship programs and more. The timing of renovation would align well with other recent additions to the Back River Trail and would serve as the headquarters for the Trail and associated events and programing.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Stephen Reilly', written in dark ink.

Stephen Reilly  
Director  
Town of Weymouth Parks & Recreation Department  
[sreilly@weymouth.ma.us](mailto:sreilly@weymouth.ma.us)