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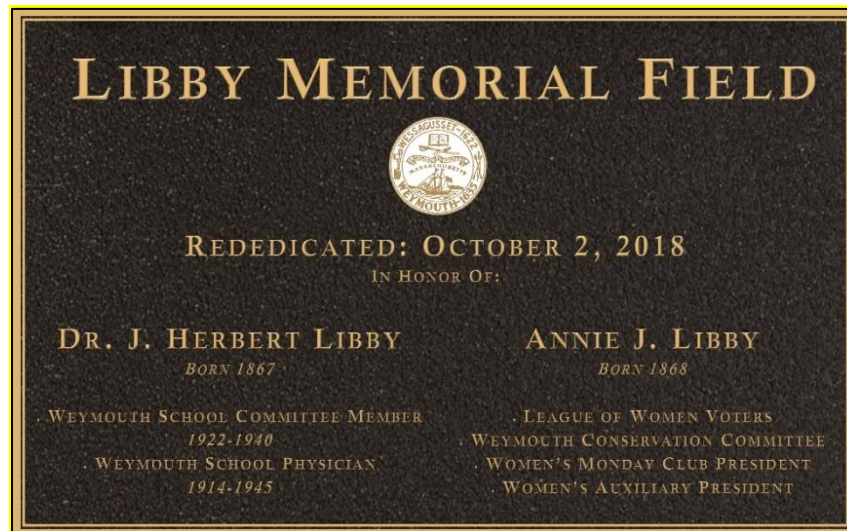
# Press Release

For Immediate Release – October 5, 2019

## Town celebrates completion of first artificial-turf ball park at Libby Field

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Weymouth, MA – Today, Mayor Robert Hedlund joined with Councilor At-Large Jane Hackett, School Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Curtis-Whipple, School Committee Chair Lisa Belmarsh, students from the Abigail Adams Middle School, and members of the Weymouth High School baseball and various youth baseball programs to celebrate the completion and revitalization of Libby Field, the Town's first synthetic-turf baseball diamond and new home of the Weymouth Wildcats boys' varsity baseball team. Mayor Hedlund unveiled a new plaque to commemorate the park's namesake, Dr. J. Herbert Libby, as well as celebrate the field's transformation into one of the region's premier baseball facilities. The new dedication plaque [reads](#):



"It's been said before, but I think it says it all: Weymouth has gone from some of the worst playing fields to among the best on the South Shore," **said Mayor Robert Hedlund**. "Students of baseball deserve the same opportunities as their football, soccer, and lacrosse peers to practice and perform on a state-of-the-art field provided by their community. This new park is the first artificial-turf baseball diamond in our town's history. It's among the finest ball fields in the region, and it's what our high school and youth baseball players deserve in a ball park – one that's equal in quality and opportunity to the fields available at Legion and Lovell."

"The School Department is extremely grateful and excited about the new Libby Field," **said Weymouth Public Schools Superintendent, Dr. Jennifer Curtis-Whipple**. "Students at the Chapman Middle School and Abigail Adams Middle School have already begun to use this state-of-the-art turf field as part of their daily curriculum and afterschool programming. The staff at both schools are enthusiastic to have this beautiful field just steps away from each campus. Our high school baseball team is beyond appreciative for the opportunity to play on a field that rivals all surrounding towns. Thank you to everyone who supported this project!"

Libby Field is a 6.4-acre ball park located off Middle Street, opposite the Abigail Adams Middle School and Veterans' Memorial Wall. Between 2017 and 2018, the park underwent approximately \$3 million in renovations to develop the Town's first artificial-turf baseball diamond, enhance recreational opportunities for local youth and high school baseball teams, and support beautification of the Town's Civic Center Historic District. Plans for the new park were prepared by Activitas, Inc. of Dedham, with construction completed by Green Acres Landscaping & Construction Co. of Lakeville.

The new Libby Field features a standard-size, artificial-turf baseball diamond with 90-foot base paths, a 60-foot pitching distance, and up to 395 feet between home plate and the outfield fence. Additional ball field amenities include team bullpens and sheltered dugouts, a digital scoreboard, an LED sports lighting system for evening games, a pair of bleachers with capacity for up to 200 spectators, and a batter's eye, or sight screen, located in center field that allows batters to see the pitched ball and alleviates sun glare.

Additional improvements at Libby Field include a quarter-mile perimeter walking path, a handicapped-accessible entrance off Chard Street, and 460 linear feet of streetscaping along Middle Street, including sidewalk extensions, granite seating blocks, and spectator railings.

"This park is another great addition to the growing inventory of high-quality playing fields available in our community," **said Recreation Director Steve Reilly**. "Libby Field has instantly become the envy of the South Shore and the pride of the baseball community here in Weymouth. Having a field as impressive as this sets a goal for younger players and encourages them to stick with the sport – if they continue playing, then one day they'll be playing at Libby."

Renovations at Libby Field were completed as part of a [\\$11.4 million capital investment](#) by the Town to improve 13 active outdoor recreational facilities across the community. These projects were spearheaded by Mayor Hedlund, with unanimous support for funding from the Town Council.

Weymouth's parks improvement program was undertaken in November 2016 without the need for a debt exclusion or tax override. Earlier plans for improvements had been limited to Lovell Field, which alone carried a price tag of approximately \$11 million prior to Mayor Hedlund taking office. After the construction cost for Lovell Field was cut nearly in half through a re-design initiative led by Mayor Hedlund, a responsible borrowing strategy was developed by the Mayor's Chief of Staff, Ted Langill, enabling the Town to finance sweeping improvements to the community's open space infrastructure, including renovations to the baseball and softball diamonds at Libby Field and Weston Park.

Since opening Libby Field in April 2018, the new park has hosted upwards of 200 baseball games and practices, with one game played nearly every week night and multiple games played most Saturdays and Sundays. "Fall ball" has also become more popular this year, presumably due to the high-quality playing surface now available for fall play.

Principal user groups of the new Libby Field include the Town's high school baseball teams, Weymouth Youth Baseball, Babe Ruth Baseball, the Cranberry Baseball League, the AAU South Shore Baseball Club, and the Weymouth Junior Legion.

### *A Brief Bio. on Dr. J. Herbert Libby and Annie J. Libby*

Dr. Jesse Herbert Libby was born in Denmark, Maine on February 14, 1867, two years after the end of the American Civil War. Dr. Libby was educated in the public schools of Cambridge, Massachusetts, as well as at the Cornish Academy in Maine. He graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1882.

In 1895, Dr. Libby came to East Weymouth, where he practiced medicine and later joined the Massachusetts Medical Society, serving as one of its councilors. Dr. Libby became the Town's School Physician in 1914. Apart from his time as an assistant surgeon in the U.S. Army Medical Corps during World War I, Dr. Libby served in this position for the next 31 years.

Dr. Libby was one of 12 physicians at Weymouth Hospital when it opened its doors in 1922. That same year, Dr. Libby became a member of the Weymouth School Committee. He served as a School Committee member for 18 years.

Dr. Libby married his wife, Anna "Annie" Jane Price of Boston, in 1889. Mrs. Libby was elected president of the American Legion Auxiliary in 1920 and served as president of the Monday Club, a philanthropic organization of Weymouth women, from 1921 to 1923. Mrs. Libby also served on the Home Service Committee of the Red Cross and was a member of the League of Women Voters and the Weymouth Conservation Committee.

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