

Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission
Special Meeting of January 11, 2017, Held at Branford Fire Headquarters, 45 North Main Street,
Branford

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Present: Commissioners Esborn, O'Neill, Radulski, and Redman; Absent: Commissioner Masotta. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted unanimously by the Commission, with the motion to approve ('MTA') by Commissioner Redman and the motion to second ('MTS') by Commissioner O'Neill.

Public Comments: No members of the public were present to speak; the period was held open by unanimous vote, with the MTA by Commissioner Esborn and the MTS by Commissioner O'Neill.

Budget: No report (the Commission's funds have been transferred to the Town's Board of Recreation).

Correspondence: Members of the public have been contacting Commissioners with various requests/input regarding memorial benches and event dates. No other correspondence was noted. It was reported at the previous meeting that, after public school started and gate guards were no longer in place at the Park entrance, the Park was very busy on several days and that having gate guards in place to enforce the possession of resident parking stickers would have reduced the crowding in the main parking lot. The Commission will review this going forward. As noted in previous minutes, communications with other Town departments should include that the Recreation Department should equip the lifeguards with bullhorns, and the Police Department is to be directed to have guards reconnoiter the beach hourly (events/conditions permitting) and walk a loop through the Park every two hours (events/conditions permitting).

Old Business:

1. Regarding dead/deteriorated trees in the Park, the Chairman has requested that the Town's Tree Warden walk through the Park to inspect for unsafe tree/limb conditions (refer to previous minutes for more information regarding tree care/removal). Commissioner Radulski is to contact the Commissioners early in the Spring to conduct another walkthrough and send the results to Mr. Zielinski of the Department of Public Works ("DPW") regarding any further tree-related issues
2. Regarding the deteriorated road surface of some parts of Parker Memorial Park Drive, discussed at previous meetings, the Commission has recommended to the Town that a large section of road should be entirely repaved. Repaving is recommended to reduce/eliminate hazards to pedestrians and thereby reduce Town liability; the Chairman is to discuss this with the Recreation Director and DPW. Brought up at the previous meeting was that there is a large pothole near the westernmost private house.
3. Permanent fencing has been installed at the sides of the entrance road, from the inside of the main gate to the second pedestrian walkway. Commissioner Masotta is to follow up with the Public Works Department as to closing up the gaps between the main-gate pillars and the easternmost ends of the fencing.
4. The smoking ban was discussed. Commissioner O'Neill followed up with the DPW and got a new sign installed at the main entrance; that's now reported to be missing, and a new sign (or signs) is/are needed.
5. Regarding the presence of tents/canopies on the main beach, the Commission is reviewing what limits to set on tents (which are prohibited by Town ordinance), canopies, and "sun shades" and umbrellas. The initial takeaway is that structures five feet high and shorter, with a continuous fabric structure touching the sand (and with no "legs" holding up a canopy surface), and covering less than sixty square feet, would be allowed. The Commission is to discuss this further.

6. The Land Trust's Canoe/Kayak Branford River Parade took place on September 16th; some adjustments (such as landing on the main beach if the event takes place after Labor Day) are to be discussed for the next Parade, with the Commission to decide upon safety measures to protect any beachgoers.
7. The issue of whether Parker Memorial Park Drive is a Town road is still open, with the discussion to continue after further research.
8. Having a "No Parking" sign installed on the first bend on Park Drive (near the bocce court) was discussed, as was having the stones there moved to inhibit parking
9. The Commission has eliminated the entry of "guest" vehicles on Summer weekends and Summer holidays due to recent higher volumes of Park usage – updated information sheets are to be given to Town Hall for distribution with the new stickers going out this year, by Commissioner Radulski. The text of these updated sheets was discussed in detail.
10. Whether commercial concerns can launch watercraft at Big Rock beach was discussed, and is to be discussed further.

New Business: None, as this is a special meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 PM; the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, February 8, 2018 at 7 PM, at Branford Fire Headquarters, 45 N. Main Street.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman