

Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission, Town of Branford, Connecticut
Regular Meeting of November 15th, at the Joe Trapasso Community House Honoring Branford
World War II Veterans, 46 Church St.

Present: Commissioners Masotta, Radulski, and Redman; absent: Commissioners Esborn and Kovi. The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM. The minutes of the October meeting were reviewed and approved, with the motion to accept by Commissioner Redman and seconded by Commissioner Masotta.

Public Comments and Budget: There were no members of the public present, and no budget report, as the Commission's funds have been transferred to the Town's Parks and Recreation Department (P&RD).

Correspondence: Members of the public have been contacting Commissioners with requests regarding memorial benches (one donation is apparently pending delivery, one received and installed). The Commission expects to receive a request from the Harbor Lights community group for their luminaria event on December 16th.

Old Business:

1. The most recent update to the 'punchlist' of requests for maintenance/repair items, sent to Alex Palluzzi, Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, have been removed from the body of the minutes, and the remainder of the action items below reflect items within the Commission's area of responsibility. Commissioner Radulski performed a walkthrough of the Park for this meeting and updated the punchlist for the Commission's review, with a map of the relevant areas/items.
2. Regarding walking of dogs in the Park, refer to the previous minutes; in brief, the gate guards have requested additional enforcement actions regarding dogs being walked in the Park, and, at a previous meeting, the Commission reconsidered the issue and voted to not allow dogs in the Park at any time of the year (versus the previous vote to allow dogs to be walked in the Park during the non-peak season). The December 20th meeting will include a discussion with representatives of Animal Control, Police, P&RD, the Park guards, and possibly the First Selectman. Commissioner Radulski is to research whether the Park's dog-related rules are based on Town ordinances or Commission rules.
3. Commissioner Redman noted in May that she'd recently observed pedestrians walking in the roadway near Big Rock and that action will be needed to prevent an accident between vehicles and pedestrians. Refer to the previous minutes for discussion of the Department of Public Works installing a pedestrian path off of the road; Commissioner Radulski has discussed that with the Department of Public Works and followed up, but no schedule/forecast completion date was available as of this meeting. In addition, Commissioner Radulski will check on the regrowth of vegetation that was trimmed this Spring and remove regrowth as necessary.
4. Issuance of parking stickers was discussed again; Commissioner Radulski contacted Town Hall as to how it might be advantageous to residents to have the stickers be configured to be adhered inside windshields, specifically on the driver's side, instead of on bumpers, and was told that that process is already under discussion at Town Hall.
5. It was discussed whether gate guards should be moved off their duties on rainy days and reassigned to fair-weather days to assist the guard at the gate by patrolling the Park; that is to be discussed by Commissioner Radulski with Director Palluzzi for 2024.
6. The Commission received a request previously that the use of an electric mower for Park use be investigated; Commissioner Masotta was to follow up with Director Palluzzi of the P&RD on that possibility.

7. The Commission discussed a request that the large lights in the Park be modified so that they can be turned off for special events such as the Town fireworks; Commissioner Radulski is to research that topic.
8. Several Parkgoers have reported that they've seen animals in trash cans and suggested that tops be installed on the cans; Commissioner Radulski has contacted Director Palluzzi regarding that request.
9. A Parkgoer requested installation of an additional baby swing; Commissioner Radulski is to address that with Director Palluzzi.
10. There appear to be fewer recycle boxes in the Park; Commissioner Radulski is to address that with Director Palluzzi and to check in the bathhouse for extra boxes.
11. During a recent beach closure, a parkgoer remarked that the East Shore District Health Department closure signage was not very prominent, and Commissioner Radulski contacted Director Palluzzi with a request that the Recreation Department and ESDHD work together to produce more and more-prominent signs for the public in the future.
12. An inquiry was received as to why the dumpster was removed from the parking lot near Big Rock and placed in the main parking lot – Commissioner Redman is to follow up with the P&RD and, if necessary, the waste-removal company..

New Business: None

Continuing Items to Monitor:

1. The area near the bocce court has been reported to sometimes have had personally owned items near it. Commissioner Radulski is monitoring the area.
2. The operability of the lights at the main gate and dock are being checked by Commissioner Radulski periodically, and he's been adjusting the timing of the lights at the main gate to reflect the time of sunset.
3. Commissioner Radulski reported at a previous meeting that he'd heard from several members of the public that the main beach appears to have a steep dropoff; he stated that he'll investigate this at the next convenient low tide and report his observations to the Commission.

The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, December 20th, 2023, at 7 PM, via whatever means are available, allowing for safety; the location will be stated in that meeting's agenda and will likely be the Joe Trapasso Community House Honoring Branford World War II Veterans, 46 Church St.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman

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The Parker Memorial Park Commission requests that appropriate action (repair, remediation, etc.) be taken regarding the following items, some of which are continuing items to monitor:

1. Repair of the main beach's jetty, which has deteriorated areas and a section which has collapsed; this must be repaired in the interest of public safety.
2. Installation of an off-the-road walking path from the bocce court to the cottage area using the route and materials discussed in Spring 2023; this must be accomplished in the interest of public safety.
3. Repair (if possible, likely by welding) or replacement of any deteriorated installed metal grills. These must be repaired in the interest of public safety.
4. Installation of an additional 'baby' swing in the Playscape.
5. Repair/replacement of any broken fence rails near the main gate and around the Playscape (there was one as of November 2023).
6. Painting of any rusted/corroded areas on the Parks' decorative benches (several completed as of November 2023)
7. Installation of a "No Dogs" sign at the Big Rock parking lot. A parkgoer reported to Commissioner Radulski that a "No Dogs" sign in that area had been removed; therefore, the Commission believes that a very robust form of affixing the sign to a post will be needed, as well as a well-secured signpost.
8. Inspection and remediation of erosion on the secondary sledding hill (which runs from the north side of the top of the main easterly hill down toward the bathroom building).
9. Removal of phragmites growing at the north part of the Big Rock beach, because it's significantly reduced the useable area of the beach. Some clearing was performed earlier in 2022, but the phragmites is growing back.
10. Removal or covering of graffiti that has been reported at the water's edge near Big Rock.
11. Completion of the repairs to the screen door of the men's bathroom (hardware cloth is needed on both sides of the newly installed screen material).
12. Removal of any mulch piled close to tree trunks, which can cause rotting of the bark and (eventually) the death of the affected tree.
13. Installation of a light (solar-powered if feasible, to be mounted at the top of the flagpole so that the light shines downward and does not contribute to light pollution) on the flagpole is needed to keep the flag illuminated so that it can be flown at night.
14. Cleaning/painting or replacement of any rusted railings on the top of the bathhouse.
15. Research item: Whether there's a good option for using an electric mower.
16. Research item: Whether the large lights in the Park be modified so that they can be turned off for special events such as the Town fireworks
17. Research item: A solution as to how the bathhouse shower drains' clogging can be resolved; at the present time, the issue is being addressed by cleaning out the system after clogging has occurred.
18. Research item: A solution as to how the clogging of the bubbler near the bathroom building can be resolved; at the present time, the issue is being addressed by cleaning out the system after clogging has occurred.
19. Research item (if heavy congestion resumes in the Summer): It's been discussed, after difficulties encountered by gate guards with cars blocking in other cars in the main parking lot, whether parking spaces ought to be designated (via the use of lime, paint, or another method); this will also maximize the number of spaces available. It was noted at a previous meeting that it may be necessary to mark only the main parking axis from each concrete block, and the first

few spaces, in order to guide parkgoers as to where to park. The Commission requests that you research this topic for action, if action proves to be feasible.

20. Research item (if a cost-effective solution can be found): The Commission requests your research about possible installation at the main gate of a keypad-operated gate with a lifting or swinging arm.

Also, the Commission requests information as to whether the top of the bathhouse needs its periodic resealing.

Please contact me if you have any questions or need any further information.

Respectfully Submitted,
Matt Radulski, Chairman

Past items – completed – along with standard, recurring maintenance items – for reference:

1. *The Commission requests installation of a sign stating, "No bicycles off paved areas" on the road near the west edge of the Park near the cottages.*
2. *The Commission requests your input as to when the concrete blocks in the main parking area should be moved to enclose the graveled area, which will reduce the wear on the grass areas over the winter,*
3. *The Commission requests your input as to when the bathroom water will be shut off, to avoid freezing.*
4. *The Commission requests that a concrete block or several blocks, as needed, be positioned to preclude parkgoers' vehicles from parking in the area north of the bocce court; parking there blocks access to the north pedestrian entrance.*
5. *The Commission requests removal of the brush and dirt piled in the small turnout just west of the bathroom building.*
6. *The sinkhole that reappeared along the railing in the Park's property in the southwest corner of the Park was recently filled in; the Commission had previously inspected the sinkhole during a walkthrough and determined that it is caused by a collapsed drainage pipe. The Commission requests that the drainpipe be repaired, in order to permanently eliminate the sinkhole.*
7. *The Commission requests removal of a PVC pipe that's at the northwest part of the Big Rock beach.*
8. *The Commission requests that a "No Dogs" sign be installed at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building*
9. *The Commission requests placement of signs to notify drivers of the in-Park speed bumps, and the Town Engineer's office has confirmed that such signs are to be installed.*
10. *The Commission requests that a "No Smoking" sign be added at the handicapped parking area near the bathrooms.*
11. *Research item: The Commission requests any further input regarding new uses/repurposing of the bathhouse. Background: Because the changing areas are reported to be used rarely; possible new uses discussed have been a snack bar, an open-air pavilion with tables, etc., while maintaining storage for lifeguard gear in the summer and for trash cans in the winter. Please note that the Commission has concerns about health/food safety issues.*
12. *The Commission requests that the east-facing light on the bathroom building be restored to service.*
13. *Repair of the concrete on the railing walkway right at the main beach's jetty, which has deteriorated areas and a section which has collapsed; this must be repaired in the interest of public safety.*

Matt Radulski
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