

Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission, Town of Branford, Connecticut  
Regular Meeting of May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at Parker Memorial Park

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Present: Commissioners Esborn, Kovi, Masotta, Radulski, and Redman; absent: None.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved, with the motion to approve from Commissioner Redman, seconded by Commissioner Esborn.

**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 Board of Recreation. Alex Palluzzi, Director of the Town's Parks and Recreation Department, was present.

**Correspondence:** Members of the public have been contacting Commissioners with requests regarding memorial benches (two donations are pending) and event dates.

**Old Business:**

1. The April update to the 'punchlist' of requests for maintenance/repair items, sent to Director Palluzzi was reviewed; Director Palluzzi requested that several items be directed to Gary Zielinski, Acting Director of the Department of Public Work ('DPW'). Director Palluzzi also reported that (A) work on removing sectioned tree trunks and any dangerous standing trees would continue, (B) the Big Rock parking lot would receive fresh stone, with the Gopal to have that completed before the Town fireworks on June 25<sup>th</sup>, (C) the water had been turned on and the bathhouse shower heads reinstalled (the general target dates for turning on the water being April 15<sup>th</sup>, and turning off the water October 15<sup>th</sup>), and (D) the Town and the Rotary Club had carried out improvements in the Harborview 350<sup>th</sup> area. An updated punchlist is attached to these minutes. The punchlist items 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.
2. With the repaving of the Park's road now completed, Commissioner Radulski has discussed with the Town's Fire Marshall if any specific turning radius is needed for the Fire Department's vehicles in the turning circle near the flagpole, and the response has been that any emergency vehicle can be backed out of the circle. Commissioner Radulski will make a recommendation to the Commission as to the width needed, the aim being to eliminate the space available for cars to park illegally in the turning circle near the flagpole and will transmit that information to Director Palluzzi and the Department of Public Works for action.
3. There are several utility-furnished lights not working (see the October minutes for a list); Commissioner Redman has contacted Town Hall with that information and stated that she'd continue to follow up. The operability of the lights at the main gate and dock are being checked by Commissioner Radulski periodically; he's been adjusting the timing of the lights to reflect the time of sunset.
4. The Commission discussed how to limit the distribution of special parking permits for the summer months; details are in the October minutes. Commissioner Radulski discussed this with the First Selectman and was informed that the method of collecting parking fees should be discussed with Director Palluzzi.
5. Commissioner Redman held an organizational meeting with the gate guards and Director Palluzzi on May 9<sup>th</sup>. This defined expectations and Park rules and answered any questions from the gate guards. Commissioner Kovi has generated a gate-guard

schedule for the summer season, as well as a "Point of Contact" list of the personnel involved in Park operations. As noted in the previous minutes, important dates identified so far are the last Spring day of Branford public schools (June 25<sup>th</sup>) and the resumption of school (September 1<sup>st</sup>).

6. The discussion continued regarding the allowing of food vendors to operate in the Park. Before the previous meeting, Commissioner Radulski discussed the issue with the First Selectman, including various methods of ensuring vendors equal and impartial access to the opportunity, such as a bid system. The Commission reiterated at this meeting that it would proceed on a trial basis, with Commissioner Redman having contacted food vendors who have the required Town and Health District permits/inspections in place and invited one at a time to set up in the Park inside the work-truck access area by the north water fountain, with the vendor then to give the Commission feedback as to whether they think a food vendor would be interested in having a presence there long term. If so, a bid or lottery system could be used in 2023 to select one or two food vendors to operate at hours of their own choosing. As noted at the previous meeting, this will exclude the day of the Town Fireworks (June 25<sup>th</sup>), as the Fireworks Committee has a process in place for selecting food vendors for that event.
7. Commissioner Redman noted that several road signs are still needed, including "Slow Down - Children Playing" by the cottages and "No bicycles off pavement" in the area leading to the 'jumping rock' by the west side of the Park.

**New Business:** Commissioner Radulski reported 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.

**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. Commissioners Esborn and Radulski will be inspecting the trees near the Playscape for any dead or interfering limbs, and then taking action as appropriate.
3. The Town fireworks are to be held in Parker Memorial Park on June 25<sup>th</sup>, per a report from Commissioner Redman.
4. Commissioner Radulski reported at a previous meeting that he'd heard from a member of the public that there may be some type of evening/nighttime boat parade on the Branford River in 2021; the Commission discussed this and had no objection to allowing parking after sunset, so long as the parade organizers provide security. Commissioner Radulski reported at the August meeting that the event has been postponed until 2022.

The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 7 PM, via whatever means are available, allowing for safety; the location will be stated in that meeting's agenda.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman

1. Spring: The Commission requests 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. Spring: The Commission requests 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.
3. Spring: The Commission requests repair (if possible, likely by welding) or replacement of the installed metal grills. These must be repaired in the interest of public safety.
4. Spring: The Commission requests that the repairs to the screen door of the men's bathroom be completed (hardware cloth is needed on both sides of the recently installed screen material). The bathroom ramp's railing also requires some repairs.
5. Spring: There is 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); the Commission requests that inspection and remediation be performed.
6. Spring: The Commission requests that the east-facing light on the bathroom building be restored to service.
7. Spring: The Commission requests that phragmites growing at the north part of the Big Rock beach be dug out, because it's significantly reduced the useable area of the beach. Some clearing was performed this Spring, but the phragmites is growing back.
8. Spring: The Commission requests removal of any mulch piled close to tree trunks, which can cause rotting of the bark and (eventually) the death of the affected tree.
9. Spring: The Commission requests that a "No Dogs" sign be installed at the Big Rock parking lot. A parkgoer recently 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.
10. Spring: 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.
11. Spring: It's been discussed that 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. The Commission requests that you research this topic for action in the Spring, if action proves to be feasible.
12. Spring: The Commission requests your research as to whether signage can be installed on the road leading south from the Big Rock area to warn motorists of pedestrians on the roadway.
13. Spring: Some of the railings on the top of the bathhouse are rusted and require cleaning/painting or replacement.
14. Spring: The Commission requests information as to whether the top of the bathhouse needs its periodic resealing.
15. Spring: The Commission requests a solution as to how the bathhouse shower drains' clogging can be resolved.
16. Spring: The Commission requests a solution as to how the clogging of the bubbler near the bathroom building can be resolved.
17. Spring: The Commission requests that mowing of the southwest Park area near the cottages be monitored.

18. Spring: The Commission requests removal or covering of graffiti that has been reported at the water's edge in the same area.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman

Determined to be not feasible due to budget limitations:

1. Spring: It had 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 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.
2. Spring: Installation at the main gate of a keypad-operated gate with a lifting or swinging arm.

Past items – completed – for reference:

1. Fall/Winter: 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,
2. Fall/Winter: The Commission requests your input as to when the bathroom water will be shut off, to avoid freezing.
3. Fall/Winter: 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.
4. Fall/Winter: The Commission requests removal of the brush and dirt piled in the small turnout just west of the bathroom building.
5. Fall/Winter: 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.
6. Fall/Winter: The Commission requests removal of a PVC pipe that's at the northwest part of the Big Rock beach.
7. Winter: The Commission requests that a "No Dogs" sign be installed at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building
8. Winter: 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.
9. Winter: The Commission requests that a "No Smoking" sign be added at the handicapped parking area near the bathrooms.
10. Winter 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.