

Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission, Town of Branford, Connecticut
Regular Meeting of October 19, at the Joe Trapasso Community House Honoring Branford World
War II Veterans, 46 Church St.

Present: Commissioners Esborn, Kovi, Radulski, and Redman; absent: Masotta.

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

The minutes of the previous meeting, August, were approved, with the motion to accept by Commissioner Redman and the second 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, called in by phone, and the 'punchlist' of requests for maintenance/repair items was discussed. Director Palluzzi also mentioned two additional items: The water supply to the Park has (mostly) been turned off, with (at the time of the meeting) one or two fixtures still to be secured for the Winter, and, three dead trees have been removed (one from the driveway circle near the flagpole, another from near the seawall midway between the bathhouse and the flagpole, and a third from near the bathroom building)

Correspondence: Members of the public have been contacting Commissioners with requests regarding memorial benches (one donation is pending) and other items – see the request regarding a kayak rack below, in the "New Business" section.

Old Business:

1. The July update to the 'punchlist' of requests for maintenance/repair items, sent to Director Palluzzi, was reviewed with Director Palluzzi via phone conversation during the meeting. That 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. There are several utility-furnished lights not working (see the October 2021 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 at the main gate to reflect the time of sunset.
3. Commissioner Redman noted that a requested road sign is still needed, "Slow Down - Children Playing" by the cottages.

New Business:

1. Before the meeting, Director Palluzzi forwarded a request from a resident that the Commission have a kayak-storage rack installed in the Park near Big Rock. After considering the issue of the space available there, as well as the security of the area, the Commission decided not to proceed with investigating the ways and means necessary to move that request forward. Commissioner Radulski is to inform Director Palluzzi of the decision.
2. The Commission decided to allow walking of dogs in the Park and decided to allow it starting October of 2023 and allowing it to run every year from October 15th to April 1st. The groundwork needs to be laid to make this change – public announcements (specifically, that all dogs must remain leashed while in the Park and that no dogs, per Town ordinances, are allowed on Town beaches at any time), changing the signs in and around the Park, and pursuing the installation of a walking path from the area of the bocce court to Big Rock and from Big Rock up to the cottages' parking area. Commissioner Radulski is to discuss the walkway idea with the Town's Engineering Department and the Department of Public Works.

3. The Big Rock beach was discussed, specifically that phragmites have encroached greatly on the amount of beach available, Commissioner Radulski is to contact the Town Engineer's office to determine the path forward.

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. 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 2022; the Commission discussed this and had no objection to allowing parking after sunset, so long as the parade organizers provide security. Nothing further has been heard by Commissioner Radulski about this.
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, November 16th, 2022, 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 8:29 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman

The Parker Memorial Park Commission requests that appropriate action (repair, remediation, etc.) be taken regarding the following items:

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. 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. 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 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.
5. 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).
6. 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.
7. Removal or covering of graffiti that has been reported at the water's edge near Big Rock.
8. Completion of the repairs to the screen door of the men's bathroom (hardware cloth is needed on both sides of the recently installed screen material).
9. Removal of any mulch piled close to tree trunks, which can cause rotting of the bark and (eventually) the death of the affected tree.
10. 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.
11. Cleaning/painting or replacement of any rusted railings on the top of the bathhouse.
12. Painting of any rusted/corroded areas on the Parks' decorative benches.
13. 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.
14. 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.
15. 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 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.
16. 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 – for reference:

1. Summer: 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. 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,
3. Fall/Winter: The Commission requests your input as to when the bathroom water will be shut off, to avoid freezing.
4. 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.
5. Fall/Winter: The Commission requests removal of the brush and dirt piled in the small turnout just west of the bathroom building.
6. 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.
7. Fall/Winter: The Commission requests removal of a PVC pipe that’s at the northwest part of the Big Rock beach.
8. Winter: The Commission requests that a “No Dogs” sign be installed at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building
9. 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.
10. Winter: The Commission requests that a “No Smoking” sign be added at the handicapped parking area near the bathrooms.
11. 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.
12. Summer: The Commission requests that the east-facing light on the bathroom building be restored to service.