

Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission, Town of Branford, Connecticut  
Special Meeting of June 30, 2021 at the Joe Trapasso Community House Honoring Branford World  
War II Veterans, 46 Church St.

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Present: Commissioners Esborn, O'Neill, Redman, and Radulski (Absent: Masotta). The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted, with the motion to accept by Commissioner Esborn and seconded by Commissioner O'Neill.

**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. Branford's Director of Recreation, Mr. Alex Palluzzi, attended the meeting.

**Correspondence:** Members of the public have been contacting Commissioners with various requests/input regarding memorial benches (one has recently been received at the Public Works Department ('PWD'), and another donation is pending) and personal gatherings in the Park.

**Old Business:**

1. With the repaving of the Park's road and regravelling of the main parking lot now completed, Commissioner Radulski is to determine what actions are needed to limit the space available for cars to park illegally in the turning circle near the flagpole – specifically, how much room is needed for emergency vehicles to maneuver around the circle and how the paved area will be restricted to the proper dimensions. Commissioner Radulski consulted the Branford Police Department and was referred to the Branford Fire Department. Also, Commissioner Redman noted at a previous meeting that there's some cracking in the asphalt near the cottages. Finally, it has been discussed whether parking spaces ought to be designated (via the use of lime or another method) in the main parking lot in order to maximize the number of spaces available and also to avoid cars being parked in by other cars, several instances of which have occurred during the past month; Director Palluzzi is to investigate the price and feasibility of marking the parking spaces.
2. Regarding dead/deteriorated trees, Director Palluzzi coordinated a walkthrough with a contracted tree-removal service and Commissioner Radulski, and several of the damaged/fallen trees have now been removed and some fallen trees have been sectioned and left in place. Among the trees removed were one leaning over the bocce court and a distressed tree near the flagpole. Also, see the note below about incorrect mulching.
3. Mr. Walt Romblad, former head of the Park's work crew, reported the following items at previous meetings (items already addressed by Director Palluzzi have been deleted):
  - a. The flagpole requires repainting and its halyard requires replacement; Director Palluzzi is working on those items. At the May meeting, the Commission recommended that a solar-powered light be installed to keep the flag illuminated so that it can be flown at night.
  - b. (This will be on hold while repairs at the Town Dock are in progress): The "No Parking" lines on the Town Dock require repainting so that Park maintenance vehicles have enough room to park to empty the trash barrels there (the Town Dock is, strictly speaking, outside the Commission's area of responsibility).
4. It was determined at a previous meeting that the gaps between the main gate's pillars and the easternmost ends of the fencing should be closed by planting thorn bushes there; Director Palluzzi has had shrubs planted.
5. The smoking ban was discussed. Commissioner Redman has requested of the PWD that a "No Smoking" sign be added at the handicapped parking area near the bathrooms.
6. "No Dogs" signs are needed at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building and at the Big Rock parking lot. For the latter, 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. Commissioner Redman has requested the former from the PWD and will report back if/when it’s been installed; Commissioner Radulski will follow up with the PWD on both items. In addition, the Commissioners noted that, during the winter, the no-dogs rule was routinely violated, and enforcement efforts have been restarted now that the gate guards are back on duty. As practicable, the Commissioners and gate guards will remind any violator of the rule when they see an infraction and then contact the Branford Police Department if offenders refuse to take their dogs out of the Park.

7. The PWD has been requested by Commissioner Redman to place signs to notify drivers of the in-Park speed bumps; Director Palluzzi reported at a previous meeting that these might not be necessary due to the bumps’ distinctive stripes. The Commissioners decided at this meeting that the signs are needed and so stated to Director Palluzzi; Commissioner Radulski is to contact the Town Engineer to request any input of his office regarding this.
8. The lights at the main gate and dock are now operational and are to be checked by Commissioner Radulski periodically. Also, per a report from Commissioner Redman, there’s a utility light out on Parker Park Memorial Drive, near the FitzGerald house, and, per a report from Commissioner Radulski, one of the lights near the bathhouse is out. Commissioner Redman is to contact Town Hall with that information.
9. Director Palluzzi is to request that the PWD have repairs performed to 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. Commissioner Radulski is to follow up on this.
10. Commissioner Masotta reported at a previous meeting that he’d received a request from an East Haven resident for the resident’s wedding to be held in the Park around July 15, 2021, likely on a Sunday afternoon; the Commission approved issuance of fifteen parking permits for the event and requested that Commissioner Masotta stress to the applicant that several important rules apply to any use of the Park (no glass or alcohol allowed, no tents/awnings allowed, no reservations of any kind apply, etc.).
11. Commissioner Redman previously reported that there is an accretion of concrete left over from the seawall repairs in the Park area in the southwest corner of the Park. A sinkhole that appeared (reappeared) along the railing in that area of the Park has recently been filled in; the Commission inspected the sinkhole during a walkthrough and determined that it has been caused by a collapsed drainage pipe. Commissioner Radulski requested of Director Palluzzi that action be taken to remove the concrete, and also to repair the drainpipe and thereby permanently eliminate the sinkhole.
12. The Commissioners approved at the December 2020 meeting that the Park’s entrance would, in the short term, be secured with a chain and combination lock; this is being delayed in order to work through logistical issues. In the longer term, the Commission is to work with Director Palluzzi to have installed a keypad-operated gate with a lifting or swinging arm, which will need to be funded through the Board of Recreation.
13. Commissioners Esborn and Radulski will be inspecting the trees near the Playscape for any dead or interfering limbs and taking action as appropriate.
14. Regarding notification of gate guards of upcoming special events to avoid surprises, Commissioner Redman has developed communications for this.
15. The Town fireworks were held on June 26<sup>th</sup> at Foote Park versus Parker Memorial Park. Director Palluzzi asked the Commission’s opinion as to whether the fireworks should be held in Parker Memorial Park again, and the Commissioners are to consider the question.

16. There's brush and dirt piled in the small turnout just west of the bathroom building, and Director Palluzzi is to have that removed. Commissioner Radulski will follow up on that.
17. The Commission and Director Palluzzi compared notes on the progress of a recognition ceremony for a Branford citizen, including date, attendees, bench placement, and award. Director Palluzzi is to check on the bench supplier's forecast delivery date.
18. Director Palluzzi reported on the following maintenance/repair items: The top of the bathhouse may need its periodic resealing; the bathhouse shower drain has been clogging and will be cleared, and the same drain-clogging issue applies to the bubbler near the bathroom building. Also, the Commission noted that some of the railings on the top of the bathhouse are rusted and require cleaning/painting or replacement.
19. The Commission reported to Director Palluzzi that a parkgoer's truck has been seen several times parked in a spot which blocks access to the north pedestrian entrance, and a concrete block or several blocks, as needed, should be positioned to preclude that.

**New Business:** None, as this was a Special meeting.

**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 to monitor the area.
2. Regarding the presence of tents/canopies on the main beach, the Commission has set the following limits on tents (which are prohibited by Town ordinance), canopies, and "sun shades": Structures are allowed to be five feet high or less, with a continuous fabric structure touching the sand (and with no "legs" holding up a canopy surface), and covering fewer than sixty square feet.
3. The online rules about entry for non-stickerholders were incorrect at one point; Commissioner O'Neill is to monitor the Park-related information and check it periodically.
4. Some of the Park's trees have mulch piled close to the trunks, which can cause rotting of the bark and (eventually) the death of the affected tree, and the mulch will need to be pulled away from the trunks. Commissioner Radulski reported this to Director Palluzzi for action at a previous meeting after checking several trees.
5. Contrary to the Park's rules, some parkgoers are riding bicycles off of paved areas. Director Palluzzi and the gate guards are to keep an eye out for that activity.
6. 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); Commissioner Radulski is to continue to check on that and to report about it to the Commission.
7. Dumping of yard waste has been noted at the north-central part of the Park, at the 'back' entrance by which pedestrians can enter the Park; the "No Dumping" sign there needs to be replaced, and Commissioner Radulski will do this and monitor the area. His latest report is that there were no signs of any additional dumping.

The next meeting is to be held on Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2021, at 7 PM, via whatever means are available, allowing for safety.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman