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EDWARD J. MASOTTA
TOWN CLERK

Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission, Town of Branford, Connecticut Regular Meeting of September 10, 2020 via Zoom, with public access offered via the contact information in the published agenda

Present: Commissioners Esborn, Masotta, Radulski, and Redman (Absent: O'Neill, absent with notification to the Commission beforehand). The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. The minutes were accepted by unanimous vote, with the motion to accept by Commissioner Esborn and the second by Commissioner Masotta.

Public Comments: There were no members of the public present.

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 personal gatherings in the Park.

Old Business:

1. Regarding the measures being taken to prevent COVID-19 transmission in the Park, Commissioner Radulski has contacted the Director of the Town's Recreation Department, Mr. Alex Palluzzi, to request that any changes in Town/Department policy concerning COVID -19 prevention in the Park be communicated to the Commission.
2. Regarding the deteriorated road surface of some parts of the Park road, discussed at previous meetings, paving has now been completed; Commissioner Radulski has asked Director Palluzzi to determine what actions are going to be taken 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, using that amount of room as a guide.
3. Regarding dead/deteriorated trees, Director Palluzzi reported to the Commission at a previous meeting that approximately \$20,000 has been requested by his department for removal of dead/deteriorated trees from the properties his department oversees. General history/background: Commissioners surveyed the Park in December 2018, after leaves were off the trees, to check for trees and limbs presenting danger to Parkgoers. Commissioner Radulski generated a map detailing the issues noted during the walkthroughs and tendered a copy to Director Palluzzi at a previous meeting to pass on to the First Selectman. At this meeting, the Commission determined that another walkthrough should be carried out this Fall. Commissioner Radulski stated that he will walk through the Park's trails to determine if any clearance work is needed and will report back to the Commission regarding that. Also, it's felt by several Commissioners that this is the right time of year to reseed any margins which are still bare of grass, and Commissioner Radulski is to pass that information along to Director Palluzzi.

4. Mr. Walt Romblad, head of the Park's work crew, reported the following items at previous meetings (items addressed more recently by Director Palluzzi have been deleted):
 - a. The flagpole requires repainting and its halyard may require replacement; Commissioner Radulski is to check on those items and to report to the Commission and Director Palluzzi regarding them.
 - b. 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).
5. The bocce courts are still closed to encourage COVID-19 social-distancing measures.
6. 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 in the appropriate spots; Director Palluzzi stated that his personnel would be planting them. It was discussed at August's meeting that a better method might be to add a section of wire mesh or other fencing material; no action has been noted to date, and Commissioner Radulski is to follow up with Director Palluzzi regarding that.
7. 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.
8. A "No Dogs" sign is needed at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building. Commissioner Redman has requested that from the PWD and will report back when it's been installed. In addition, the Commissioners noted during the Winter that the no-dogs rule is routinely violated during the Winter, and it was decided to restart enforcement efforts now that the gate guards are back on duty. As practicable, the Commissioners will individually remind violators of the rule when they see an infraction in the Park, as well as reminding the Park gate guards to enforce the rule.
9. It was noted at a previous meeting that there's 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), which Commissioner Radulski is to continue to check on and to report about to the Commission.
10. The Public Works Department ('PWD') has been requested by Commissioner Redman to place a sign to notify drivers of the in-Park speed bumps; Commissioner Redman is to contact Director Palluzzi and request that he relay that request to the PWD.
11. 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; there is a "No Dumping" sign there, and this area is being monitored by Commissioner Radulski. His latest report is that, as of July 8, there were no signs of any additional dumping.
12. The lights at the main gate and dock are now operational and are to be checked by Commissioner Radulski periodically. Per a report from Commissioner Redman, there's a utility light out on Parker Park Memorial Drive, near the FitzGerald house, and Commissioner Redman is to contact the utility with that information.
13. The Commission had previously determined that the stop sign on Harbor Street near the main gate should be moved several yards north to encourage drivers to make full

stops before turning into the Park; it was determined at a later meeting that installing a “stop ahead” sign would be a more effective measure, and Commissioner Masotta is to contact the appropriate Police Commission members to move this forward.

New Business:

1. The progress of seawall maintenance was discussed, and Commissioner Radulski is to contact the PWD via Director Palluzzi to request further maintenance of the jetty on the main beach, which has several deteriorated areas and now has a section which has collapsed and must be repaired in the interest of public safety.
2. Commissioner Masotta reported 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 apply, etc.).
3. It was reported that, contrary to the Park's rules, some parkgoers are riding bicycles off of paved areas. Director Palluzzi and the gate guards will be asked to keep an eye out for that activity.

Continuing Items to Monitor:

1. The Branford River Parade for canoes/kayaks/stand-up paddleboards, organized by the Branford Land Trust, to be held on September 12th, 2020, has been cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns.
2. The area near the bocce court has been reported at several times to have a number of personally owned items near it. Commissioner Radulski is to continue to communicate to persons using the court, once it reopens, that only Town-furnished items are allowed to remain in the area when bocce-court users are not there.
3. 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.
4. It was reported at a previous meeting that a parkgoer stated to a gate guard that the rules posted online about entry for non-stickerholders are incorrect; Commissioner Redman reported that she'd checked the online information and found all information to be correct at that point in time. The Commission will check this periodically.
5. The swings' fittings should be checked for wear and damage; Commissioner Radulski is to check on that and to report to the Commission and Director Palluzzi regarding it.
6. 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 has reported this to Director Palluzzi for action, and is to check on that again and to report to the Commission and Director Palluzzi regarding it.

The next meeting is to be held on Thursday, October 8, 2020, at 7 PM, via whatever means are available, allowing for safety.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:224 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman