

**Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission,
Town of Branford, Connecticut**

TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE
BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT

Regular Meeting of September 13, 2018, Held at Fire Headquarters, 45 North Main St.

Present: Commissioners Esborn, Masotta, O'Neill, Radulski, and Redman (Absent: None), and Mr. Walt Romblad, head off the Park's work crew. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted unanimously by the Commission, with the motion to approve ('MTA') by Commissioner Redman and the motion to second ('MTS') by Commissioner Esborn.

Public Comments: No members of the public other than Mr. Romblad were present to speak; the period was held open by unanimous vote, with the MTA by Commissioner O'Neill and the MTS by Commissioner Masotta.

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 event dates. No other correspondence was noted. As noted in previous minutes, communications with other Town departments should include that the Recreation Department should equip the lifeguards with bullhorns. At the June meeting, Director Palluzzi noted that the Commission can have information/schedule items included in his Department's newsletter, of which he presented an example.

Old Business:

1. Regarding the deteriorated road surface of some parts of Parker Memorial Park Drive, discussed at previous meetings, the Commission has recommended to the Town that a large section of road should be entirely repaved. The road was inspected by Selectman Cosgrove during the walkthrough of April 11. Repaving is recommended to reduce/eliminate hazards to pedestrians and thereby reduce Town liability; some spot patching has been accomplished. Commissioner Redman is to contact Selectman Cosgrove for action by Town departments and/or contractors.
2. Permanent fencing has been installed at the sides of the entrance road, from the inside of the main gate to the second pedestrian walkway. Commissioner Masotta is to follow up with the Public Works Department ('PWD') regarding closing up the gaps between the main-gate pillars and the easternmost ends of the fencing, perhaps by having thorn bushes planted in the appropriate spots. In addition, it was reported that some parts of the fence have sharp, bare wires sticking up, and Commissioner Masotta is to request suitable action to remedy this, as well.
3. The smoking ban was discussed. Commissioner Redman requested of the PWD that a "No Smoking" sign should be installed at the Big Rock parking area as well, as should a "No Littering" sign, and a "No Smoking" sign at the center entrance to the main beach. These items have been completed. Such a sign is also needed at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building, it was noted this month.
4. Regarding the presence of tents/canopies on the main beach, the Commission is reviewing what limits to set on tents (which are prohibited by Town ordinance), canopies, and "sun shades" and umbrellas. The initial takeaway has been that structures five feet high and shorter, with a continuous fabric structure touching the sand (and with no "legs" holding up a canopy surface), and covering fewer than sixty square feet, would be allowed. The Commission is to discuss this further. Mr. Palluzzi stated at the June meeting that he'd inform the lifeguards of this information, and that he'd give the gate-guards rules to the lifeguards; Commissioner Redman gave him a copy of those rules at a previous meeting.

5. The Branford Land Trust's Canoe/Kayak Branford River Parade took place on September 16th, 2017; some adjustments (such as landing on the main beach if the event takes place after Labor Day) are to be discussed for the next Parade, with the Commission to decide upon safety measures to protect any beachgoers. The next Parade is scheduled for September 22nd, 2018.
6. The issue of whether Parker Memorial Park Drive is a Town road is still open, with the discussion to continue after further research.
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 area was inspected by Selectman Cosgrove during the walkthrough. Commissioner Radulski has requested of the First Selectman's office that it direct the responsible Town employee to investigate and, if warranted, then inform the responsible party/parties (likely a nearby landowner) that the materials must be removed; Commissioner Radulski reported that he'd discussed this with Selectman Cosgrove and been told that a sign (referring to the applicable Town ordinance, to be identified by the Police Department) should also be posted in order to allow straightforward enforcement. This was noted by Commissioner Radulski to be an important issue for the Fall yard-cleaning season.
8. The area near the bocce court is reported to have a number of personally owned items near it. Commissioner Radulski is to communicate to the persons using the area that only Town-furnished items are allowed to remain in the area when bocce-court users are not there. Commissioner Radulski reported that a recent look at the area showed no personal property present at that area.
9. A majority of the benches in the Park have been painted green, as per Commission discussions in 2017, and the Commission will request of the Town Board of Recreation that the remainder be painted green. Two were left to be painted green as of the previous meeting, per Commissioner Redman; these have now been painted green.
10. The office of the First Selectman inquired of the Commission whether it would welcome a census of a local plant species by the New England Wildflower Society; the Commission agreed to this taking place, and Commissioner Radulski responded to Mr. Cosgrove with that information. No further information had been received as of this meeting.
11. Mr. Alex Palluzzi stated at a previous meeting that Mr. Greg Nobile is requesting permission to place a piano in the Park as part of a Town-wide effort to place pianos in public spaces, time and place to be discussed; the Commission agreed in principle but decided that more details will be needed before issuing approval. No further information had been received as of this meeting, and this item will be removed from the next meeting's minutes.
12. Commissioner Redman reported that she'd requested of the PWD prior to this meeting that a sign be placed to notify drivers of the speed bump, with no action as of this meeting. She will be following up with the PWD and reporting at the next meeting.
13. It was reported at a previous meeting that new "No Dogs" signs are needed at the handicapped-parking area at the south end of the main beach (and reported at this meeting that this has been done) and at the north-central (pedestrian) entrance to the Park. It was also reported at this meeting that such a sign is also needed at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building.
14. It was noted at a previous meeting that the Town Dock at the south end of Harbor Street is often trash-strewn; Commissioner Radulski is to track this, and report any recurrence of this to the Board of Parks and Recreation's Chairman Criscuolo and Director Palluzzi for their attention.

15. It was reported that a parkgoer stated to a gate guard that the rules posted online about entry (specifically, no weekend entry for non-stickerholder) are incorrect; Commissioner Redman reported that she'd checked that and found all information to be correct. The Commission will check this periodically.
16. For memorial benches, the Commission's policy going forward (in addition to those items discussed at previous meetings) is that new benches will be used primarily to replace old benches presently in the Park, as many of those old benches have deteriorated. Also, Commissioner Radulski will communicate to PWD which benches are the correct ones to install (Belson Renaissance with ipe-wood slats).

New Business:

1. Regarding dead/deteriorated trees, the Commissioners will survey the Park after leaves are off the trees to check for those presenting danger to the public. Two trees (one at the northern end of the large ledge north of the bathhouse, and another along the drive southwest of the bocce court) may present such an issue.
2. Regarding special permission for non-stickerholders to enter the Park, the Commission discussed methods to assist the gate guards in checking permission and will discuss further at future meetings, with a conclusion to be reached before April 2019.
3. The seawall along the main beach is missing some mortar and requires repointing; Commissioner O'Neill is to contact the PWD and request that the repairs be performed.

The public-comment period was closed by a vote, with the motion to approve ('MTA') by Commissioner Redman and the motion to second ('MTS') by Commissioner O'Neill. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 PM; the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 11, 2018, at 7 PM, at Branford Fire Headquarters, 45 North Main Street, Branford.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman