

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

Regular Meeting of November 8, 2018, Held at Fire Headquarters, 45 North Main Street, Branford

Present: Commissioners Esborn, O'Neill, Redman, and Radulski (Absent: Masotta). The meeting was called to order at 7:02 PM. The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed, but a vote for approval was tabled in order to move directly to the public comments, there being a member of the public present.

Public Comments: Mr. Ed Fay was present to speak. He mentioned that some of the benches donated recently to the Park appear to be of a quality that would lead to deterioration/corrosion more rapidly than other commercially available benches might be, and recommended several alternative benches, with some details. He also mentioned that the Park's trash cans (presently 55-gallon drums) might be replaced, with better alternatives be available.

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.

Old Business:

1. Regarding the deteriorated road surface of some parts of the Park road, 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 performed. Commissioner Radulski is to contact Mr. Cosgrove for action by Town departments and/or contractors; the Commission noted that this work may be funded under the next Fiscal Year's budget if no funds remain in the budget for the present Fiscal Year.
2. Regarding dead/deteriorated trees, the Commissioners will survey the Park after leaves are off the trees to check for trees and limbs 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) were noted to possibly be presenting such an issue. Mr. Alex Palluzzi, Director of Parks and Recreation, mentioned at the previous meeting that a tree near the bathrooms is slated for removal shortly, and Commissioner Radulski mentioned at this meeting that he'd seen that the tree has been taken down. Commissioner Radulski is to set a date for walking through the Park once the leaves have fallen.
3. 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. This was tabled, with Commissioner Masotta absent.
4. The smoking ban was discussed. Commissioner Redman is to request of the PWD that a "No Smoking" sign be added at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building.
5. A "No Dogs" sign is needed at the north-central (pedestrian) entrance to the Park and at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building. Commissioner Redman will be requested to ask that of the PWD.
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. Mr. Palluzzi stated at the previous meeting that he'd have the dumped materials removed, and Commissioner Radulski stated that he'd installed a "No Dumping" sign at the south end of Cove Terrace in order to allow straightforward enforcement. This was noted by Commissioner Radulski to be an important issue for the Fall yard-cleaning season.
8. For memorial benches, Commissioner Radulski will communicate to PWD which benches are the correct ones to install (in the past, Belson Renaissance with ipe-wood slats; see the Public Comment notes above for newer information); it was discussed that some benches recently installed may not be in conformance with these guidelines. The Commissioners will set a date and time to walk through the Park and inspect all benches.
9. 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. Commissioner Radulski is to prepare drafts of a pass to use.

10. 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 (this may have been completed since the previous meeting).

New Business:

1. Mr. Alex Palluzzi, Director of Parks and Recreation, was present at the previous meeting and was then informed that the two decorative lamps on the Dock are not operating at night. Commissioner Radulski is to check whether they're operational now, and report that to Mr. Palluzzi for action.
2. At that meeting, Mr. Palluzzi was made aware that leaf cleanup will be needed this Fall in order to keep grass from being killed off, especially in the area of the picnic benches near the stone escarpment and along the Park's boundary with Harbor Street. Commissioner Radulski is to check in Mr. Palluzzi for action on those areas.
3. Commissioner Redman announced that the Branford Garden Club would be assisting with beautification of the circles at the Town Dock and the flagpole and with the area along the east side of Harbor Street south of the southernmost private residence down to the Dock parking area.
4. Commissioner Redman noted that the "No Dogs Allowed" sign at the main entrance to the Park is rusted and should be cleaned up or replaced.

Continuing Items to Monitor:

1. 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 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. It was reported at this meeting that a grill may have been brought into the area; Commissioner Radulski is to check on that and report to the Commission
2. The PWD will be requested to place a sign to notify drivers of the speed bump, with no action as of this meeting; the Commission will follow up next Spring, as the speed bumps are to be removed this Fall.
3. It was noted at a previous meeting that the Town Dock at the south end of Harbor Street is often trash-strewn and has many weeds growing; 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. See the fourth "New Business" item above for updated information.
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. 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.
6. 2019 is the Town's official 375th anniversary year, and some events might focus on the Park.

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 7:49PM; the next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 13, 2018, at 7 PM, at Branford Fire Headquarters, 45 North Main Street, Branford.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman

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