

Meeting Minutes of the Parker Memorial Park Commission, Town of Branford, Connecticut
Regular Meeting of March 12, 2020 at the Joe Trapasso Community House Honoring Branford
World War II Veterans, 46 Church Street, Branford

Present: Commissioners Esborn, Masotta, O'Neill, Radulski, and Redman (Absent: None). The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM. Review of the minutes was tabled in order to hear from two Town staff members, Mr. Alex Palluzzi (Director of the Parks and Recreation Department) and Mr. Walt Romblad (head of the Park's maintenance crew), present at the beginning of the meeting. The minutes were later accepted by unanimous vote, with the motion to accept by Commissioner Esborn and the second by Commissioner Redman.

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; as the Commission was notified previously, and as reflected in the December 2019 minutes, a "Bench 57" DuMor bench was reported to have been received at the Town's Public Works Department ('PWD') in a damaged condition, and the donor/purchaser has been notified.

Old Business:

1. Regarding the deteriorated road surface of some parts of the Park road, discussed at previous meetings, Director Palluzzi reported to the Commission that approximately \$95,000 has been requested by his department for repaving the Park's road surfaces, including installing asphalt speed bumps. As noted in previous minutes, the Commission has recommended to the Town that, at a minimum, a large section of road should be entirely repaved. At the September 2019 meeting, a commissioner described the road condition as "horrible". History/background: The road was inspected by Selectman Cosgrove during the walkthrough of April 11, 2018, and again on May 23, 2019. Repaving is recommended to reduce/eliminate hazards to pedestrians and thereby reduce Town liability; some spot patching has been performed. The Chairman appointed the four Commissioners as a subcommittee to monitor the plans and make recommendations should the funding be approved.
2. Regarding dead/deteriorated trees, Director Palluzzi reported to the Commission that approximately \$20,000 has been requested by his department for removal of dead/deteriorated trees from the properties he oversees. The Commission decided to perform a walkthrough this Spring to generate an updated list of trees and limbs presenting danger to Parkgoers. The latest previous update (from September 2019's meeting) is that the locust trees along Harbor Street should be trimmed of dead branches. 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.
3. Director Palluzzi also reported that the storage sheds' garage doors had received repairs.
4. Additionally, Director Palluzzi reported that the Park's work truck might be replaced by one to be purchased from a member of the public.
5. Gate-guard shifts might be filled by Recreation Department personnel if the regular gate-guard personnel are not available, Director Palluzzi reported.
6. Mr. Walt Romblad, head of the Park's work crew, reported the following items; all but the first item were reported at a previous meeting:

- a. The bathhouse might benefit from having several stalls removed.
 - b. The flagpole requires repainting and its halyard may require replacement.
 - c. Several of the new grills which he has on hand are to be installed in the Spring as replacements for deteriorated grills, with the installation to be coordinated with the PWD, and he may need several additional replacement grills.
 - d. Some new picnic tables may be needed near the rock face near the flagpole due to deterioration of the existing ones, and the picnic table nearest the circle near the flagpole may require PWD attention to remove rusted, broken-off bench legs.
 - e. Some of the Park's trees have mulch piled too close to the trunks, and the mulch will need to be pulled away from the trunks.
 - f. The bathrooms need refurbishment, possibly to include toilet replacement and also clearing of the floor drains, which appear to be blocked (or partially blocked), as they are draining slowly.
 - g. He'll be checking the swings' fittings for wear and damage in the Spring.
 - h. 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).
7. As previously noted, the top layer of wooden stringers on the bocce court requires inspection and, as necessary, replacement; Director Palluzzi reported that the material needed is in stock at the PWD.
 8. The gaps between the main-gate pillars and the easternmost ends of the fencing will be closed by planting thorn bushes in the appropriate spots; Director Palluzzi stated that Mr. Romblad would be planting them.
 9. As previously noted, some parts of the fence in the area of the main gate have bare wires sticking up, and Director Palluzzi was requested a previous meeting to have this remedied. Commissioner Esborn has recommended nailing smooth lath strips over the exposed areas.
 10. The smoking ban was discussed. Commissioner Redman is to request of the PWD that a "No Smoking" sign be added at the handicapped parking area near the bathrooms.
 11. "No Dogs" signs are needed on Cove Terrace at the north-central (pedestrian) entrance to the Park and at the handicapped parking spaces near the bathroom building. Commissioner Redman has been requested to ask that of the PWD and will report back when it's been requested, and installed. In addition, the Commissioners noted that the no-dogs rule is routinely violated during the Winter, and it was decided to restart enforcement efforts in the Spring when 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.
 12. 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 check on and report about to the Commission.
 13. The PWD is to be requested by Commissioner Redman to place a sign to notify drivers of the in-Park speed bump.
 14. 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 to be monitored by the Commission.

15. The lights at the main gate and dock are now operational and are to be checked by commissioners periodically; it was mentioned at a previous meeting that the lights at the main gate appear to be mistimed, and Commissioner Radulski is to check that and correct it as needed, with the turn-off time to be 8 P.M. until the Park hours are extended to 10 P.M. on April 1.
16. It was noted that this year is the year for biennial renewal of resident stickers, and that the Commission should look for the Recreation Department to advertise this, as in past renewal years.

New Business:

It was recommended that the stop sign on Harbor Street near the main gate be moved several yards north to encourage drivers to make full stops before turning into the Park; Commissioner Radulski is to refer that to the Board of Police Commissioners.

Continuing Items to Monitor:

1. The Branford River Parade for canoes/kayaks/stand-up paddleboards, organized by the Branford Land Trust, was held on October 12th; Commissioner Radulski announced that the next one will be on September 12th, 2020.
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 the persons using the area that only Town-furnished items are allowed to remain in the area when bocce-court users are not there, and will post a sign to that effect in the Spring.
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 seawall along the main beach is missing some mortar and requires repointing, along Harbor Street; there's a gap in the jetty on the beach (some stones have been placed under the hole, but there is still a significant amount of mortar missing), and other seawall maintenance is needed throughout the Park.

The next meeting is to be held on Thursday, April 16, 2020, 7 PM, at the Joe Trapasso Community House Honoring Branford World War II Veterans, 46 Church Street, Branford.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman

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RECREATION DEPARTMENT