

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

### **Special Meeting of December 12, 2019 at Canoe Brook Center, 11 Cherry Hill Road, Branford**

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

**Public Comments:** No members of the public were 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 event dates; as the Commission was notified previously, a memorial bench in the Park was dedicated to Mr. Ted Aub on November 23. Also, another "Bench 57" DuMor bench has been reported to have been received, in a damaged condition, and the donor/purchaser has been notified. Additionally, Commissioner O'Neill stated that she'd sent a note of congratulations to the Town's Director of Parks and Recreation, Alex Palluzzi, upon the Commission learning that he'd been awarded the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association's Distinguished Service Award.

#### **Old Business:**

1. 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.
2. "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.
3. The seawall along the main beach is missing some mortar and requires repointing, 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. Significant progress has been made on seawall repairs in the Park's property between several of the privately owned cottages within the Park. It was also noted 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 the Commission is to monitor.
4. The speed bump in the Park has been removed for the season. The PWD is to be requested to place a sign to notify drivers of the in-Park speed bump.
5. 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. Also, there are no trash cans set out in the Park for the winter as of this meeting, and Commissioner Radulski has discussed this with Director Palluzzi, with Commissioner Radulski to set out cans at Big Rock and the northeast corner of the beach.
6. The lights at the main gate and dock are now operational and are to be checked by commissioners periodically; it was mentioned at the 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. In addition, Commissioner Redman is to request of the Rec Department and the PWD that a temporary section be placed on the lower sign at the main gate stating that the Park closes at sunset (as per the larger 'rules' sign) versus 10 P.M., as the lower sign presently states.

**New Business:** None

#### **Continuing Items to Monitor:**

1. The permanent fencing that's been installed at the sides of the entrance road, from the inside of the main gate to the second pedestrian walkway, requires some additional work, and Director of Parks and Recreation Alex Palluzzi has been informed of those items. One item is to close 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; another is that some parts of the fence have sharp, 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.

2. 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. At the September 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. Commissioner Redman is to call Mr. Cosgrove before the next meeting with a reminder that the repaving is still needed.
3. Regarding dead/deteriorated trees, the latest update (from September'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. Also, the Commission is to monitor leaf removal before the next meeting to check whether the leaves along Harbor Street have been removed.
4. The issue of whether Parker Memorial Park Drive is a Town road is still open, with the discussion to continue after further research.
5. The Branford River Parade for canoes/kayaks/stand-up paddleboards, organized by the Branford Land Trust, was held on October 12<sup>th</sup>, Commissioner Radulski announced, and the next one will be in mid-September 2020.
6. 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.
7. 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; while much of this has been corrected, 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. Commissioner Redman announced at the November 2018 meeting 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. This work has been in progress.

The next meeting is to be held on Thursday, January 16, 2020, at the Branford Community House at 46 Church Street, Branford.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:33 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Matt Radulski, Chairman

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