

PARKS COMMISSIONERS
MASON LIBRARY
231 MAIN STREET
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230
MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2013
5:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

PAUL GIBBONS

CHARLES BOUTEILLER

THOMAS NORTON

STEVE BANNON - ABSENT

PATRICIA SALVI - ABSENT

KATHY PLUNGIS

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

MOTION: Mr. Norton to approve the Minutes of February 11, 2013.

SECOND: Mr. Bouteiller

VOTE: 4-0

2. **PARKS CARE AND MAINTENANCE:**

Mr. Sokul advised the DPW/Parks will focus on installing the fitness equipment at South Street Park when the weather gets better. The materials are being ordered for the shed at Olympian Meadows. Wilkinson's will be installing the water/sewer lines by the end of the month.

3. **OLD BUSINESS:**

Lake Mansfield – Swing Set Replacement

MOTION: Ms. Plungis to replace the swing set at Lake Mansfield with the same type that was installed at Grove Street Park.

SECOND: Mr. Norton

VOTE: 4-0

4. **BERKSHIRE SOUTH**

Laura Martin – she did not attend the meeting at she had no issues.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

6. **PARKS USAGE REQUESTS:**

A. Southern Berkshire Youth Football to use Olympian Meadows. (No one was present from the organization, so no action was taken).

B. Great Barrington Little League to use two fields at Olympian Meadows from April 1, 2013 through July 31, 2013. The times requested were 4/1 – 5/31 from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday beginning 6/1 to 7/31 every day from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Brian Mead was present to explain the request. It was noted that once a season schedule is created, liability insurance will be provided.

MOTION: Ms. Plungis to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Bouteiller

VOTE: 4-0

The commissioners advised Brian Mead that the town would be extending the water line at the field. He advised that they are looking at locations to place the snack bar in the future.

C. Great Barrington Girls Softball to use Olympian Meadows beginning April 1, 2013 through July 1, 2013. Terry Chamberland was present to explain the request. He noted that he would have the liability insurance after registration begins. Terry mentioned that there is a dead tree outside of the fence. Joe advised that he has been talking to National Grid about taking it down as it is their tree.

MOTION: Ms. Plungis to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Bouteiller

VOTE: 4-0

D. Southern Berkshire Babe Ruth will attend the meeting in April.

E. Great Barrington Millers – They will be attending the meeting in April.

F. Monument Mountain Regional High School/Berkshire Hills Regional School District to use Memorial Field from April 1, 2013 through May 31, 2013, 1-5 days from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. if there is a problem with the high school field.

MOTION: Ms. Plungis to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Norton

VOTE: 4-0

G. Fairview Hospital to use the Great Barrington Bandstand Green on Saturday, September 28, 2013 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. Amy Rudnick was present to explain the request. She noted that they closed off the parking lot about noon last year and had a police officer present. They will be applying to the Board of Selectmen for an alcohol license. There will be a dinner/cocktail party in the tent from 6-8. The commissioners questioned having alcohol on town property. It was decided to discuss this with the Board of Selectmen in the future.

MOTION: Mr. Bouteiller to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Norton

VOTE: 4-0

H. Berkshire International Film Festival to use the Town Hall Park from Wednesday, May 29, 2013 through Monday, June 3, 2013 from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Kelly Vickery was present to explain the request. It was noted that it is a 4 day festival. Mr. Sokul said that the Design Review Team which consists of all department heads discusses events like this. Kelly said they are looking at Thursday, Friday and Saturday with set up on Wednesday, May 29. It is planned to do the film showing first and then approximately 600 people will possibly be going to the restaurants in town. The tent will be used between 8:00 p.m. to 10:30 or 11:00 with music and

dancing. There will be flaps on the tent to contain the music. The catering company will take care of the trash and the rental equipment will be locked in a container. Kelly also advised that the Co-op approached them about having an event on Sunday. It was also noted that there is a rider on BIFF's liability policy for alcohol. Ms. Plungis said the music should shut down by 10:30 p.m. and the event needs to be closed by 11:00 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Bouteiller to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Norton

VOTE: 4-0

I. Great Barrington Land Conservancy Picnic – Lake Mansfield – Christine Ward was present to explain the request. She noted that there will be a brief meeting and a potluck picnic to honor the teen groups that have maintained our local trails. She noted that she would provide liability insurance as their policy runs out in July. The event is planned for Friday August 3, 2013 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

MOTION: Mr. Bouteiller to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Norton

VOTE: 4-0

J. Lake Mansfield Alliance Clean-up Day to use Lake Mansfield Beach Area Sunday April 28, 2013 (Rain date Sunday May 5) from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Christine Ward was present to explain the request. She noted that the Lake Mansfield Alliance will host its annual clean-up day to remove trash from the beach area, road and lake edges. She also noted that they will install replacement weed fabric signs that were removed by vandals. She advised that the Lake Mansfield Alliance would like to be reimbursed for the signs. It is planned to contact the weed fabric installers and to assist in installing the swimming ropes. Berkshire South has provided a water safety guard. The DPW will pick up the trash. There will be a potluck lunch. Christine noted that she would send Paul an e-mail in regard to contracting for the weed fabric installation.

MOTION: Mr. Bouteiller to approve.

SECOND: Mr. Norton

VOTE: 4-0

Christine also spoke on the Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force 2012 Report. A copy of the report will be attached to these minutes.

Housatonic Playground:

Mr. Norton updated the committee on the Housatonic Playground. He said at the last meeting it was determined that the old structure will be replaced. He suggested doing a separation by installing a tot lot, remove the old bars, put in replacement equipment for 5 to 12 year olds and install adult exercise equipment and benches.

Ms. Plungis said she narrowed it down to 4 designs. She advised the Acclaim is for 5-12 year olds, and has 9 stations for \$16,500 to \$22,000. (Page 76)

The Pinnacle only has 5 stations and that costs from \$19,300 to \$24,500. (Page 75)

The Explorer has 10 stations for \$26,645. (Page 72 – 73)

The Achiever has 12 Stations for \$29,200. (Page 64 and 65)

Mr. Gibbons asked Mr. Norton to contact John Lanoue to see when he can visit the parks. He and Ms. Plungis can meet with him and have him site the area, make sure he is on the state bid list, and obtain the cost including instillation cost of the piece that they choose.

A motion was made by Ms. Plungis to adjourn and seconded by Mr. Bouteiller

The meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn Wichmann
Secretary

Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force: 2012 Report

Provided to: the Great Barrington Board of Selectman and to the Committees represented on the task force

2012 Task Force Members:

Christine Ward, Chair (Citizen at Large), Ron Dlugosz, co-chair (Citizen at Large), Deborah Phillips (Select Board), Joseph Sokul (DPW Superintendent), Dale Abrams (Lake Mansfield Alliance) Nina Evans (Lake Mansfield Alliance alternate), Jessica Dezieck (Conservation Commission), Suzanne Fowle Schroeder (Planning Board), Amanda Sewall (Conservation Agent, ex-officio) Chris Rembold (Town Planner, ex officio). No representative served from the Parks and Recreation Commission

In March 2006, the Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force was created by the Board of Selectmen and charged with the development and implementation of a Lake Improvement Plan. The plan would provide for public safety, use and accessibility, water quality improvements, protection of the watershed and stewardship of the Resource area. In 2012, the Task Force continued to meet in order to provide guidance and direction for the care of the Lake Mansfield Recreation area. Below is a report on this effort as well as actions and goals for 2013.

I. Water Quality Improvements and Assessments:

- a. One of the major threats to the Lake's health, runoff from the Castle Hill Avenue storm drain system, will be addressed by a \$266,500 grant from Massachusetts DEP. This project will reconstruct the catch basins and storm drains on Castle Hill Avenue, to better catch and filter the runoff before it empties into the Lake. Engineering work and bid documents were prepared in 2012. Construction is planned to begin in April 2013. The grant will be matched at 40% by Town funds including volunteer and staff time. The Task Force and the Town Planner will work to educate the public about the scope of work and impact on regular traffic in the area of upper Castle Hill Avenue preceding the commencement of work. This work will have a significant impact on the water quality at Lake Mansfield by eliminating the significant annual contribution of sediments to the lake.
- b. The unpaved parking area at the beach continues to contribute sediments the lake in form of unfiltered run-off during storm events. Unmitigated storm water is also a concern along Lake Mansfield Road and where Knob Hill enters Lake Mansfield Road in the boat launch area.
- c. The Conservation Commission funded a Lake Mansfield 2012 Aquatic Vegetation Survey prepared by Geosyntac in September 2012. This report provides an updated assessment of the composition and distribution Lake Mansfield's aquatic vegetation community, to aid lake management planning efforts.
- d. The summer season's water testing results, provided weekly by The Town's Health Agent, showed that Lake Mansfield waters were healthy for swimmers throughout the 2012 swimming season.
- e. New signage and a dispenser for Clean Boat Certification Forms were maintained at the beach area, providing information on ways to protect the lake from the threat of zebra mussels and other invasive species. Clean Boat Certification Forms, required to be completed by all boaters, are made available at the kiosk and are also provided at www.mass.gov/lakesandponds.
- f. A grant through the Massachusetts Environmental Trust was sought but declined in 2012. The proposed project was designed to determine the lake's overall water quality and chemistry; to judge the impact of nonpoint source stormwater on lake health; to judge the impacts and benefits of the Town's nonpoint source stormwater improvements; and to establish an educational partnership program with college students of Bard College at Simon's Rock. Alternative ways to accomplish this work must be sought in 2013.

II. Protecting the Buffer Zone and Sensitive Habitats – Application of the Massachusetts Wetland Protection Act

- a. The mowing policy developed for the Lake Mansfield Recreation Area aimed at supporting sensitive habitat area and encouraging plant growth that can help prevent erosion was successfully applied in 2012

- b. A small stand of invasive phragmites south of the outlet brook has been targeted for removal. The task force has requested that the Conservation Commission seek and fund services aimed at eliminating this invasive plant species in 2013.

III. **Use and Accessibility** – 2012 once again saw an increase in Recreation use of the lake, beach area, forest trails and Lake Mansfield Road for Recreation. Although the greatest number of users are noted in the summer season, the Recreation Area is a popular destination throughout the year. The task force was without a representative from the Parks and Recreation Department in 2012. It will be important to work at filling this seat in 2013.

- a. The strong summer programming provided through the Parks Commission is essential to our safe and well maintained waterfront. In 2012, lifeguards logged 15,670 Lake Mansfield visitors May 31st through August and 52 children were provided with swimming instruction.
- b. Improvement of the cross walk speed hump, recommended for the safer crossing from the parking area to the beach area scheduled for April 2012 was not able to be accomplished. The Task force strongly urges that this work be completed as early as possible in 2013 in order to enhance the safety of these much used space.
- c. Trails in the Lake Mansfield Conservation Forest are improved and maintained through the efforts of Lake Mansfield Alliance (LMA), a project of Great Barrington Land Conservancy, and the oversight of the Conservation Commission. This work, overseen by Lake Mansfield Alliance, is provided by volunteers, LMA donations & grant funding. 2012 efforts included regular trail maintenance, clearing of fallen trees due to storm damage, hand-pulling and cutting of invasive species and the development of an improved trail map and trail brochure (accomplished in partnership with Housatonic Heritage through the grant supported GB Trails 2012 Collaborative Trail Project). A number of community volunteers and local students were engaged in the work. Greenagers was hired by LMA for summer a ½ day of summer trail maintenance. Goals for 2013 include the continuation of trail maintenance and efforts aimed at invasive species control, the installation of benches to provide resting spaces for trail users, and the development of Trail Internships aimed at connecting with and developing the skills of our future resource area stewards.

IV. **Public Safety** - While use increases, the safety of recreational users continues to be a priority for the Task Force.

- a. Obsolete telephone poles, carrying only two telephone lines and constricting the roadway and pose potential risks, long targeted for removal, were removed in 2012.
- b. The condition of Lake Mansfield Road, including the degradation of the bank and road surface which challenge motorists and makes multi-use (two-lane traffic, pedestrians, bicyclists, etc.) passage difficult, continues to be of primary concern. The task force strongly urges that these conditions continue to be carefully monitored and that solutions be provided for in upcoming planning & budgeting. An engineering study to be funded through Chapter 90 funds is proposed by the DPW for 2013. This study is essential to providing the community with the information needed to plan for the future improvement of this much challenged area.

V. **Continued work In the Coming Year** - The Lake Mansfield Improvement Task Force (LMITF) will continue to work to provide for the health and safe recreational use of the Lake Mansfield Recreation Area. We appreciate the Town's dedication to this invaluable natural resource and recreation area.

Provided by Christine Ward, chair

January 23, 2013