

PARKS COMMISSIONERS MEETING

MASON LIBRARY

231 MAIN STREET

GREAT BARRINGTON, MA

MONDAY, JULY 13, 2015

Present: Paul Gibbons, Steve Bannon, Tom Norton, Karen Smith, Pat Salvi and Donovan Lally

Absent: Andy Troiano, Charles Bouteiller and Kathy Plungis, audience 6

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** S. Bannon motion to approve June 8, 2015 minutes, T. Norton second, K. Smith would like to keep names consistent, unanimous vote 6-0

2. **PARKS CARE AND MAINTENANCE:**

A. Updates from Joe Sokul – DPW Superintendent:

J. Sokul presented tree quotes for Housatonic Park. Wards Nursery-\$5,500.00, Dennis Gibbons-\$6,225.00, and Windy Hill Farms-\$6,376.80. Additional costs will be \$1,316.00 for removal of Norway Maple by Haupt Tree. Also grinding of the stump would be around \$250.00. Discussion regarding money that has been spent on park on Housatonic Park. It was decided that the Parks Commission will finish what was started nearly 3 years ago. J. Sokul stated that nearly \$60,000 has been spent in the last 3 years on Housatonic Park. K. Smith stressed the need for Housatonic to give a donation to help the town with the park. T. Norton stated that it was the town's responsibility to keep the park presentable. S. Bannon motion to approve bid to Wards Nursery for tree quote of \$5,500.00, \$1,316.00 for tree removal and \$250.00 for stump grinding, T. Norton second, 1 abstain, 1 oppose, 4 yes. Motion passes.

J. Sokul discussed Lyme prevention signs, K. Smith motion to approve Prevent Lyme Disease signs and distribute as necessary, S. Bannon second, unanimous vote, 6-0

Park Identification Signs 18"x24", double sided, metal signs, wooden post and ornamental bracket, cost is \$125.00 per sign. Signs would be installed in 10 parks. K. Smith motion to approve, S. Bannon second, unanimous vote, 6-0.

K. Smith questioned L. Harner regarding sign at skate park reassuring that bikes are allowed at Skate Park. L. Harner stated that the sign has been changed to allow bikes in Skate Park.

J. Sokul gave an update on resurfacing skate ramps. J. Sokul has a group that works with skate light material and will get quotes. Skate light has a life of 5 years and the skate ramp hasn't been resurfaced for 8 years. Town Manager noted that getting feedback from skateboarders would be a great help. It was noted that both the skate bowl and the ramps are in need of

repair. J. Sokul will work with Bill Whitaker to get assistance, contacts and feedback from skateboarders. It was noted that 3 basketball nets were replaced and 3 more basketball nets need to be replaced.

B. Berkshire South Regional Community Center:

L. Harner stated very positive feedback at the Community Center and everyone is enjoying the water fountain. Free swim lessons are being held at Lake Mansfield with lifeguards and 18 children are enrolled. Number to call for swim lessons is 413-528-2810 at Berkshire South. K. Smith would like an event schedule from Berkshire South. Parking has always been a challenge at Lake Mansfield since the parking lot is not adequate. Question regarding possibility of cutting brush back to make more parking spots. J. Sokul mentioned the road is very narrow road and cutting back would be a problem with drainage. It may take 5 years to repair the road and have adequate parking. J. Sokul will replace the speed bump at Lake Mansfield. L. Harner mentioned that attendance at Housatonic Park is 15 Children per hour and skate Park is 8 children per hour.

3. PARKS USAGE REQUEST:

- a. Karen Watkins, Mahaiwe Theater to use the Town Hall Park Gazebo and grounds outside Gazebo on Friday, August 14, 2015 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for Free Fun Friday. Entertainment will be the Bindlestiff Family Circus with stilt walking, jugglers and unicyclists. S. Bannon motion to approve, K. Smith second, unanimous vote 6-0
- b. William Whitaker, The Garden to use Memorial field Skate Park on Saturday, August 22, 2015 from noon to 5:00 p.m. for Shred 4 Keenan/Colm "Flatground" S.K.A.T.E. Event. Free skate event, no food. K. Smith motion to approve, S. Bannon second, unanimous vote 6-0.

4. OLD BUSINESS:

a. Community Preservation Plan:

K. Smith is the representative for the CPP. This grant is available for Affordable Housing, Open Space/ Recreation and Historical Preservation. Parks Commissioners reviewed guidelines but it must go through Town Manager. Memorial Field handicap bathrooms was a possibility. Completely renovating Skate Park would be another possibility. CPP grant will not pay for maintenance. Commission plans to investigate and pursue the CPP grant. S. Bannon motion to begin phase one of the grant and explore handicap bathrooms at Memorial Field which is due September 1, 2015, P. Salvi second, unanimous vote 6-0. P. Salvi will work with J. Sokul on this project.

b. Housatonic Park Equipment:

Discussion regarding John LaRue's plan for Housatonic Park. Everyone was in agreement to have plan established before buying equipment. P. Gibbons has requested J. Tabakin to carry forward around \$30,000 from FY 2015 into FY2016. S. Bannon suggestions for September agenda are as follows: J. Sokul research picnic tables/benches for prices and sturdiness, T. Norton research donations from Housatonic

the Beautiful, and to finish the project which may involve more funds. P. Gibbons agreed to put these items on September agenda. Also on the September Agenda- Gerry Smith regarding Lake Mansfield cost about \$4,000-\$5000 which would be done in Spring 2016.

5. NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Jennifer Tabakin, Town Manager, noted that this was her first meeting with the parks Commission as Town Manager. J. Tabakin presented her ideas regarding:
 - i. Parks Maintenance: is a concern because there isn't a budget to care for grounds. Balancing budget and issues with grounds is a concern. There is an increasing need for planters, trees, landscaping and planting in general.
 - ii. Gardeners: J. Tabakin stated that the DPW does a fantastic job but there is a need for additional help.
 - iii. Recreational Events: J. Tabakin questioned a possibility of recreational events such as bike racing and sports added to the program. Various people came to town hall with requests for bike racing, art programming and sports events.
 - iv. Friends of Parks: Hopefully organize a group of people to help out with all the parks. The town does not have a budget to care for the grounds.
- b. S. Bannon requests Friends of Parks for the September Agenda.
- c. S. Bannon requests Community Preservation Plan for August Agenda.

6. **CITIZEN SPEAK:** No

7. **COMMISSIONERS SPEAK:** S. Bannon made a request to move Parks Usage as second item on agendas immediately under Approval of Minutes.

8. **NEXT MEETING DATE:**

- a. **Monday, August 10, 2015**

9. **ADJOURNMENT:** K. Smith motion to adjourn at 6:30 p.m., P. Salvi second, unanimous vote 6-0.

Terry Walker



Secretary

