

PARKS COMMISSIONERS
TOWN HALL/SELECT BOARD'S MEETING ROOM
334 MAIN STREET
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA
MONDAY, MARCH 13, 2017
5:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

PAUL GIBBONS

KAREN SMITH

CHARLES BOUTEILLER – 5:10 p.m.

STEPHEN BANNON - ABSENT

THOMAS NORTON

PATRICIA SALVI

KATHY PLUNGIS

ANTHONY TROIANO – ABSENT

ONE VACANCY

ALSO PRESENT: **SEAN VAN DEUSEN**
 CHRISTOPHER REMBOLD

Paul Gibbons called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. February Minutes were not ready. They will be reviewed and voted at the next meeting.

2. **PARKS USAGE REQUESTS:**

A. Devon Arnold and Kristen Hewitt to use the Town Hall Park on Sunday, September 10, 2017 from approximately 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. for a wedding ceremony (Discussion/Vote). There was a brief discussion if liability insurance was necessary in this situation.

MOTION: Karen Smith to approve the use of the park for the event without liability insurance because there will be no alcohol or food served.

SECOND: Pat Salvi

VOTE: 5-0

3. **PARKS CARE AND MAINTENANCE:**

A. Updates from Sean VanDeusen, DPW Superintendent – The signs have been ordered. Verizon fixed the telephone at Lake Mansfield. Sean noted he is trying to schedule increased garbage pickups at the lake and in town. Sean said he would check on the animal proof trash container for the lake. Paul noted he has the purchase order but hasn't received a bill. It is a collaborative with Lake Mansfield Alliance.

4. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Laura Harner – Berkshire South – Housatonic Village Playground – a permanent rules board is supposed to be installed there. There will be a community meeting sometime in April at the Housatonic Community Center to discuss dogs being allowed at the park. Sean said he would check on the availability of the Housatonic Community Center.

B. Recommendation on Parks Policies and Procedures (Discussion/Vote) Paul noted he passed out the information at the last meeting for review and to possibly vote at this meeting. Karen noted that Sean and Chris Rembold were going to discuss procurement with the Town Manager which is part of the Policies and Procedures. Sean noted that this discussion has not taken place. It was suggested not to discuss that section until the discussion has taken place with the Town Manager. Paul stated that this is not law but a guideline for the commissioners to follow when people approach the board.

MOTION: Kathy Plungis to approve the draft of the Policies and Procedures and deliver it to the Town Manager for her input and decision with the exception of the procurement process section.

SECOND: Pat Salvi

VOTE: 5-0

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Citizen's Petition to see if the Town will vote to transfer a portion of the land between Gilmore Avenue and Hillside Avenue north of the Southern Berkshire District Court ("former Dewey School") to the charge of the Great Barrington Parks Commission (Discussion/Vote) Nick Diller was present to explain the request. He said it is 0.81 acres and it is already used as a town park. He said he would like it to be a permanent town park. The DPW mows it and that is all that is currently done. Andrew Blechman said it is used as a playground and it is still part of the courthouse grounds. It was not divided off. Andrew noted that they want to make it a permanent part under the Parks Commission. Karen said we will need to have it surveyed and then have it split off from the court house. There will be a cost to do this. We also need to know what the court house lease involves. Karen suggested that Nick obtain a copy of the lease from the Town Manager's office. Then meet with Sean and check with Town Council as to how to get the boundaries split.

MOTION: Karen Smith that the Park and Recreation Commission support the idea and that further information is needed in order to facilitate it.

SECOND: Kathy Plungis

VOTE: 5-0

B. Bench Mark and Chris Rembold to discuss the Memorial Field/Co-op Market Project as it applies to Memorial Field. Michael Charles and Brian Cohan were present representing Benchmark. Michael Charles presented a plan of the site as it will be developed. There will be a parking lot that will abut Memorial Field. Behind the parking lot is a second building. A wall is being created along the parking lot which becomes a terraced wall. The sidewalk is along Bridge Street. There will be an access road that will come off of Bridge Street which is providing handicapped access to parking spaces. The access road will be permanent. It will be used for access to the dumpster for the back building. A sidewalk will be put along the access road. It will be a parking lot, wall and terraced area. He noted he would like a representative of the parks

commission to work with them on details. The access road and terraced wall will be on town property. The Planning Board recommended the access road to be 20' wide. It was also noted that the backstop and fencing will be replaced. After discussion, it was decided that Karen Smith, Charlie Bouteillier and Paul Gibbons would serve on a subcommittee to work with Benchmark.

C. Sign Code amendment for signs at ball fields: Review and recommendation to the Select board (Discussion/Vote) Chris Rembold noted that the Parks Commission asked about amending the sign code to allow banners at the ball fields. Chris said he wrote what the amendment to the code could look like. It is under the sign code that talks about signs allowed in business and industrial zones. Both Memorial Field and Olympian Meadows are in the B Zone. Business and Industrial districts require a permit from the Building Inspector and payment of a fee. It says temporary signs located at town owned sports fields may be displayed during the playing season only and are limited to 2' by 4' in size and only single sided. It may be attached to the inside of the perimeter fence or the score board and the message side facing the playing field. Only one sign is allowed per business establishment but there is no limit to the total amount allowed at the field. Chris asked: 1) does this meet the parks objective for allowing signs, 2) Does the commission want to be involved in approving signs and 3) what types of signs do you want to allow. Do you want veto power over certain business or certain messages that may not be appropriate? Charlie said little league put up signs advertising businesses and charged a fee for a sign. This was done as a fund raiser. Kathy said something could be added in regard to visuals and language and the Parks should have the right to approve or veto the signs. Karen said the money should go to a fund to maintain the fields. Paul said they are sponsorship signs that support whatever organization that is using the fields. The town would get a fee for the permit application. It was asked of Chris to look at the new law again and maybe we can do this without a bylaw. Can we do it outside of the sign code? Chris said he would be in touch with Paul. Paul said it is the same as a company sponsoring a uniform.

6. **CITIZENS SPEAK:**

A. None

7. **COMMISSIONERS SPEAK:**

A. Tom said we need to get the word out on the April meeting date and location. Karen said she would notify the Edge. Sean noted he would contact Sonny Tarnawa and confirm that the community center is available.

8. Kathy reported that her committee has been reviewing other towns and their policy on charging a fee for parks usage. She provided a list of what other towns do. She noted overall there is no charge. There is no allowance for closing down a park totally for your own use. This was taken under advisement and will be discussed/voted at the next meeting.

Kathy Plunges provided a letter of resignation to be effective after the April meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carolyn Wichmann
Secretary