

**BEACON FALLS PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 22, 2011**

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

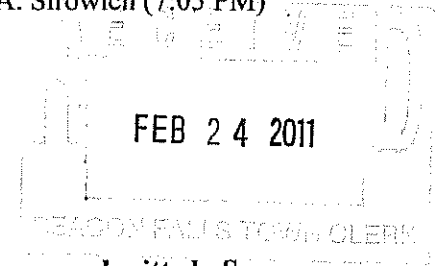
CALL TO ORDER

B. Egan called the Special Monthly Meeting of the Beacon Falls Park and Recreation Commission to order at 7:00 PM.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: B. Egan, J. Rodorigo, S. Osowiecki, S. Ruhl, A. Sirowich (7:05 PM)

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: R. Kunz, L. Swanson

OTHERS PRESENT: None.



MINUTES

J. Rodorigo called for the approval of the January Special Meeting Minutes, as submitted. S. Osowiecki seconded the motion. All ayes.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

OLD BUSINESS

A. MATTHIES PARK

1. J. Rodorigo has met with two separate park historians. He is looking into preserving the history of Matthies Park and creating signage which speaks about Bernie Matthies and the configuration of the park. Both of these historians will have presentations prepared to go before the commission at the regular March meeting.
2. The Eagle Scout Council has moved from a written application process to an electronic process, so the two Eagle Scout candidates needed to resubmit their Matthies Park projects electronically, which has been done. Both of the Scouts plan to move forward on their projects in the early spring. Eagle Scouts have their 18th birthdays as a deadline and both scouts are currently 17 years old.
3. S. Ruhl inquired about preserving the footprint of the house of the island, from a historical perspective. J. Rodorigo stated that both historians advised Historical Preservation grants may be available, which would not require the town to open the park to people outside of Beacon Falls residents. S. Ruhl asked about CT Trust information, which will be included in the presentations next month. Both historians advised that the house should be put on the National Historic Registry, so there is a long-term record of the property.
4. B. Egan has located his notes on the plaque for the pavilion and playground area. He plans to place the order this week.

B. PENT ROAD

1. The overhead roll garage door, side door and screen door are supposed to be completed by the end of February. The cost is approximately \$5,000 coming out of the Grounds Maintenance line item.
2. J. Rodorigo met with Shawn Donovan from Turf Products, who will be lending the town crew two different models of large-sized mowers for one week each. The mowers are more suitable for mowing the grass at the complex and should greatly reduce the number of hours

**BEACON FALLS PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 22, 2011**

FEB 24 2011

spent mowing Pent Road. The mowers are \$42,000 and the entire complex could be mowed in 3 ½ hours with a large mower. Currently, it takes over a day to mow the complex.

3. J. Rodorigo met with the town crew about the Robert A. Cole Baseball League wish list. The crew was mostly in agreement with the commission's assessments. The two items that the town crew questioned were the timing of cutting in the warning track. There is not enough time in the spring to complete this project before the baseball season. The warning track could be accomplished in July or August in time for Fall Ball.
4. The wish list second item in question was the flagpole. There was a suggestion that the Boy Scouts could conduct a flag ceremony at the start of the All-Star games, in lieu of erecting a flagpole. The town crew was in agreement that there is no good place for the warm-up cages using the current figuration.
5. Both leagues have contacted J. Rodorigo about Opening Day. The 3rd Saturday of April is the traditional date for Opening Day and that falls on April 16th this year. It gives the town crew only 2 full work weeks in April to get the fields ready. The commission recommends that Opening Day be held on April 23rd to give the crew necessary time to get the fields ready. There is weather related damage to the fields from this winter which needs to be repaired. S. Ruhl stated that the fields must be safe and playable and that is the priority.
6. The leagues want to purchase a "Dolphin" roller, which sops up puddles on the fields and they provided pricing to the town. The town is looking into this equipment.

C. SPORTS LEAGUES

1. Correspondence was sent to the Robert A. Cole Baseball League in response to their wish list and outlining the Commission's discussions in their January meeting.
2. No applications have been received from the leagues to date.

D. PARK ACTIVITIES

1. A. Sirowich reported on current after-school programs running: Drawing class, the Salmon project and two LEGO programs connected to STEM learning.
2. Zumba and USA Martial Arts Karate continue and there is interest from another karate studio to offer lessons, sponsored by Parks & Recreation.
3. The commission received a \$4,000 grant from the Connecticut Community Foundation for after school programs presented through the Eli Whitney Museum. 15 classes have been scheduled from March through May and the cost per class will be \$10. Classes will be offered for students from Grades K through the middle school. The commission has set aside spots in each of the classes for Title 1 students at a cost of \$2, which is being coordinated with the help of the administration at Laurel Ledge. The programs align with the CMTs and they are exciting.
4. B. Egan has booked several concerts for the summer concert series in June, July and August. June 25, 2011 is Angelo Ruggiero, July 23 is RBO, July 30 is the Kerry Boys and August 20 is the Red Dirt Road Band. There will be more concert dates to report on in the near future.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. The proposed Land Use Ordinance was defeated by an 11-6 vote recently. The Land Use Committee is meeting again on Wednesday, February 23rd to review and revisit the Ordinance again. S. Ruhl and J. Rodorigo plan on attending this meeting.
- B. J. Rodorigo advised that the Ordinance has been defeated twice and the document did not have significant changes from the 1st attempt to the 2nd vote. 50% of the document deals with the town's liability for open space, parks, etc. State laws changed several years ago and

**BEACON FALLS PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 22, 2011**

FEB 24 2011

municipalities were no longer exempt from liability. Currently, there are several bills currently in the House/Senate legislation which will exempt municipalities from litigation, in the event of a claim based on passive use. These bills are in front of State legislation. J. Rodorigo will state this case at the meeting tomorrow night.

- C. Also, the Land Use Ordinance defines the role of the Conservation Commission, whereas no other board or commission has a role that is defined by ordinance. Planning & Zoning, Parks & Recreation, and Inland Wetlands do not have ordinances defining their roles. The Ordinance elevates the Conservation Commission's authority as a result.

CORRESPONDENCE - None.

APPLICATIONS

There is one application for use of the Matthies Park pavilion from Rachel Smith for a baby shower on April 30, 2011. There is no charge for using the Matthies pavilion and the insurance certificate is included in the application. J. Rodorigo will sign off on the application.

GRANTS

- A. A. Sirowich is currently researching a STEAP grant.
- B. The Katharine Matthies grant application for 2011 is due May 31, 2011. The commission needs to discuss what is needed at Matthies Park, and what to apply for.
- C. Connecticut Community Foundation has program applications 3 times a year and A. Sirowich would like to see how the Eli Whitney programs run and will consider applying again in the fall, 2011.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Two bills from clerk, Erin Schwarz, one invoice for work and a receipt for reimbursement. **J. Rodorigo made a motion to pay these bills. S. Osowiecki seconded the motion. All ayes.**

BUDGET

- A. The commission reviewed the draft budget which was submitted to the Selectmen's Office in late January. The line items which are currently most vulnerable to cuts include: Settling Ponds Maintenance, Matthies Park, and Independence Day Celebration.
- B. The Selectmen's first town budget workshop will take place on Tuesday, March 1st. Commissioners should be available to present the budget to the Selectmen and the Board of Finance at future workshop meetings. Capital expenditures which may be mentioned in the budget include a new lawnmower and possibly a new parks truck. The town budget should go to referendum in April, prior to the Region 16 budget.

ADJOURNMENT- A. Sirowich a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 PM. S. Ruhl seconded the motion. All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,


Erin A. Schwarz

Clerk, Park & Recreation Commission