

**BEACON FALLS PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016**

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

CALL TO ORDER

B. Egan called the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Beacon Falls Parks and Recreation Commission to order at 7:00 PM and then led the assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: D. Ferretti, B. Egan, D. Taylor, D. Brooks, S. Ruhl, M-E Fernandes

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: A. Sirowich

OTHERS PRESENT: T. Wrogg, E. Wrogg, Deborah Ferretti, Amanda Varhol, S. Zyla

MINUTES

D. Ferretti made a motion to approve the August, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented. D. Taylor seconded the motion. All ayes.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Sophie Zyla from Rimmon Hill Road of the Audubon Society has been doing some young naturalist programs at the Matthies Park. Her latest program is a macro and vertebrate sampling coming up this Saturday. She handed the commission some of the materials she uses for her programs. The programs are offered for free and run by volunteers, publicized through the library, at town hall and on the Audubon website. She would like to use Matthies Park for more programs, as Matthies has a lot of species and wonderful samplings of wildlife. She will do a winter tracking in January.

She also presented the commission with a form from the State of Connecticut which needs to be returned reporting any steps the Town has taken to deal with problem geese. S. Zyla also asked about putting up a wood duck house in Matthies Park. She has gotten funding for bluebird houses in the past and she then monitors the birdhouses. She knows there are wood ducks in the park and would like the commission's approval on this project.

M.E. Fernandez and S. Ruhl entered the meeting at 7:05 PM.

S. Zyla also noted that she is aware of the dumping issue at Matthies Park from a home on the Oxford side. She knows the dumping flows into the vernal pools which have a hefty population of amphibians. The park has some great wildlife and they should be protected.

Amanda Varhol approached the commission to introduce herself and speak about a proposal for her Gold project for Girl Scouts. She is a WRHS student and a member of Deborah Ferretti's Girl Scout troop. Letterboxing has a history in Matthies Park and she wishes to revive the program. Her plan is to include in the letterboxes information about the park and its rich history. She would also updates the boxes with GPS coordinates for geocaching. The prior letterboxes

**BEACON FALLS PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016**

were publicized locally through the Library, so she would like to keep this connection with the library. Her hope is that the letterbox project would allow the Girl Scouts to partner with the community to promote the park and the town's history and increase use of the green space. She may do an event to launch the program – A “Find It” Day at the park. Letterboxes would not be publicized digitally on the internet because it is a town park. Ms. Varhol is interested in studying environmental science in college, and this is another reason to do this project.

Amanda provided a number where she can be reached and B. Egan noted that the committee will discuss the proposal and get back to her. If project is approved, she will need a commissioner to be a liaison and she would also need letter of endorsement from the Commission.

T. Wrogg asked about dumping which was mentioned by S. Zyla. B. Egan explained that there is a home in Oxford where there has been dumping and run off that has been draining into the park and into the vernal pools. The town is aware of the problem and officials are working on a solution.

OLD BUSINESS

A. MATTHIES PARK

1. There was a wedding at Matthies Park this past weekend.
2. B. Egan was with Public Works foreman, Robert Pruzinsky this past Thursday and he did not bring up any current projects at the park.
3. None of the Town's organizations have stepped up to host the Haunted Hayride this year, so the event will not take place.
4. M.E. Fernandes asked if volunteers would be able to come into the park to clean up some of the existing trails there. She asked about bringing in a small machine, like a brushhog to help with the clearing. B. Egan responded that there is liability if a volunteer is using a machine in the park. B. Egan stated that he would talk to Chris Bielik about this issue.

B. PENT ROAD

1. Last month, RACBL and Beacon Falls Softball complained about pipes hanging from the netting over the backstop, and the Girls League couldn't get in their shed.
2. B. Egan addressed these issues with Public Works and a tree service such as Schruyver's needs to come in to reach the pipes/netting which need to be fixed.
3. Both the Leagues and the commission would like to see the light switch for Field #2 moved out of the Sugar Shak to the outside of the door. This would prevent so many people from having access to the Sugar Shak each season. The switch should be moved and put in a better spot. B. Egan will talk to Rob Pruzinsky about the costs of accomplishing this.

C. RIVERBEND PARK

1. The Riverbend Park Committee met across the hall tonight. The park is moving along and trees are being cleared. E.J Smith is under contract to complete a lot of the work. It has been too dry and dusty and this has caused some issues recently.

**BEACON FALLS PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016**

2. EJ Smith has been working on adding the J-Hook for the break in the river. The drainage pipe went in Friday.
3. The Riverbend Committee hopes to have the work completed by the middle of November, with dedication in the middle of the spring.
4. D. Brooks asked about refuse down there. She has picked up fishing twine, debris and the dumping needs to stop. B. Egan said there are garbage cans and benches which will be installed. Fishing line receptacles can also be constructed by the Scouts.
5. S. Ruhl asked if Riverbend will eventually be lined up with the river walkway, so the park will go to the fence with the provision that there can be a gate put in. Eventually the walkway could be extended to the park with possibility of constructing a bridge to Toby's Pond. These projects would be very expensive and they are long term Greenway projects.
6. B. Egan noted there will be a boat launch with access for trailers.
7. There will also be Porto lets and lighting and seating.

D. SPORTS LEAGUES

1. Fall Baseball and Softball Leagues have begun practice and games.
2. Woodland Jr. Hawks and Flag Football, Prospect Soccer, and Collegiate Baseball all have applications in. The groups have been instructed to work out conflicts as they arise.
3. The sports subsidies requests are coming in and checks have been going out to the leagues.

E. PARK ACTIVITIES

1. The only Region 16 program coming up at Laurel Ledge is Zumba for Kids on Wednesdays after school. Tracy Brody will teach the class and S. Ruhl is working on getting access to book the space in the school for the program.
2. Ann Cook sent a request for the Commission to help sponsor Readers Theatre program, which she is working on with the library. The group needs to pay for the scripts and rights to the show that they wish to perform. The request was for \$250.00 from Parks & Recreation to help fund the program. **S. Ruhl made a motion to fund \$250.00 for the Readers Theatre program. D. Ferretti seconded the motion. All ayes.**

NEW BUSINESS

- A.** S. Ruhl noted that at the most recent Land Use Committee Meeting there was talk of turning Toby's Pond over to Parks & Recreation. The Commission expressed concern about this proposal as upkeep on the current parks is already stretched thin. There was concern that something will fail, if they add Toby's Pond under the umbrella of Parks & Recreation. The consensus of the Board is that they do not want the responsibility for Toby's Pond.
- B.** D. Brooks noted that she would like to see Toby's Pond better maintained and currently the park does not look very good. Without upkeep, the park can begin bringing in an element

**BEACON FALLS PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016**

that is unfavorable. She would like to see more support in town for more maintainers for the parks. She is also interested in what volunteers can do to help.

- C. B. Egan circulated the 2016 Facility Use Application and explained the application to the new members. He outlined the fees and noted that we do not charge Scouts or other non-profit groups for use of the pavilions. He reviewed some issues with the application which need to be addressed, as follows:
- a. Addition of an Email address to contact the applicant.
 - b. He would like it noted that the applicant will receive the signed and approved copy.
 - c. He also wants to be sure that all the parties receive a copy: Police Dept., Public Works, etc.
 - d. There should be no reference to alcohol, as there is no alcohol allowed in the parks.
 - e. He also noted that with regard to use of the lower pavilion at Pent Road, groups have brought in moon bounces, waterslides, and needed electric power and water for their event. This should all be addressed in the application
 - f. Matthies Park is rented to town residents only.
 - g. At Pent Road the park is not closed when the pavilion is rented, they are not renting the whole park.

B. Egan asked the commissioners to review the application in detail and at the October meeting; all of the revisions will be addressed, so that there is a final version of the 2017 application. The revisions will then be reviewed by our insurance company.

- D. Our new insurance company CIRMA, also has a tenant usage insurance policy, which an applicant can complete. They would then take out the policy for their event. This policy could be used in place of \$1,000,000 insurance coverage which the application requires. This information should be added to the application as well.
- E. The commissions spoke about liability at the parks and B. Egan was aware of a claim from the middle of August which was a foul ball injury.
- F. Regarding Amanda Varhol's letterbox Gold Project, B. Egan stated that the Scouts have done a lot for the parks and they have always done a great job. We appreciate their work. D. Ferretti is willing to be her sponsor/liaison and she is a valued member of the WRHS community and the Girl Scout Troop. **S. Ruhl made a motion to approve Amanda Varhol's Letterbox Gold Project with D. Ferretti as her sponsor. D. Brooks seconded the motion. All ayes.**

CORRESPONDENCE

None at this time.

APPLICATIONS

B. Egan recently approved a birthday party application on 10/8/2016 for a family party at Pent Rd. pavilion.

GRANTS

The CCF grant application is due on October 2, 2016. E. Schwarz will send information to D. Brooks.

**BEACON FALLS PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
SEPTEMBER 19, 2016**

PAYMENT OF BILLS

There was one bill from clerk, Erin Schwarz. **S. Ruhl made a motion to pay this bill. D. Brooks seconded the motion. All ayes.**

BUDGET

Review of budget items that the commission is responsible for and to date expenses. Sports subsidies are being requested. There is approximately \$5,000 remaining in Recreation Programs and Activities line.

OTHER BUSINESS

None at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

D. Ferretti made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 PM. ME Fernandes seconded the motion. All ayes.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin A. Schwarz
Clerk, Parks & Recreation Commission