

PARKS COMMISSIONERS
MASON LIBRARY
231 MAIN STREET
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230
MONDAY, JUNE 11, 2012
5:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

PAUL GIBBONS

CHARLES BOUTEILLER – NOT PRESENT

THOMAS NORTON

KATHY PLUNGIS – NOT PRESENT

ELIZA CRESCENTINI – NOT PRESENT

STEVE BANNON

KAREN SMITH

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

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. Minutes of May 14, 2012

MOTION: Mr. Bannon to approve.

SECOND: Ms. Smith

VOTE: 4-0

2. **PARKS CARE AND MAINTENANCE:**

A. Updates from Joe Sokul – DPW Superintendent

Mr. Sokul advised that the parks are continuing to be cleaned up. He noted that Mr. Avery will be retiring as of September 7, 2012. His last day will be July 20th because of personal time and vacation time that he wants to use.

Mr. Sokul advised that the state contract ran out May 1. The Commonwealth is slow to extend the contract but the Town Manager may accept the contract as it is. The purchase order for the exercise equipment is over \$5,000 and we can assume it is under the state contract and we won't have to do a written contract with the vendor.

Mr. Sokul said that the summer parks position is still being discussed so no one has been hired yet.

Mr. Gibbons said he received a note from Rachael Siegel about the swing set for Grove Street Park. The swings will be installed within the next two weeks. John MacGruer e-mailed him about the bees. Mr. Sokul said he has instructed Mr. Avery to use what ever methods he needs to address the bees. The fence has been replaced around the ball court at Grove Street Park. John said he thought the Board was going to review the entire fence. John noted that the fence on the northwest corner the pavement is broken and now the fence comes down to the level of the pavement that was there. Mr. Sokul said he would do a site visit on the fence, etc. It was also noted that the handles on the horse at the Grove Street Park need to be replaced.

The restoration of the trees is with the Tree Committee and is in the planning stage now. John noted trees should be planted to buffer the Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Mr. Gibbons said he talked to Brian Mead about the potential of removing the bathrooms at Olympian Meadows and reconstructing them closer to where the majority of the people are. Mr. Gibbons said he discussed with Brian the possibility of it being a cooperative effort with the Town supplying the materials and them supplying experienced labor. He advised that when we get to that point we could have a meeting to discuss what we can and cannot do.

3. **OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN UPDATE:**

A. **Chris Rembold** – He noted that the draft goals and strategies for the Master Plan have been developed after public input. Natural resources open space talks about continued good maintenance of the parks. It was noted not increase the Parks and DPW Budgets, get information out about existing parks and open space resources, signage, maps, etc. A goal is to continue to evolve the parks of changing needs like with fitness equipment, market them with the hospitality community, and connect neighborhoods with sidewalks, parks trails, etc. We are trying to sustain the value of the quality of life in Great Barrington. On June 21, there will be a public forum to hear about it in more depth. The Master Plan will be published in the newspaper and newsletter. Ms. Smith said we need to maximize the Park and Recreation space we have already and within budget before we do anymore. When there is a planning source, we need a budget to maintain it. The community needs to assist in the maintenance of parks. We need to see if we can organize neighborhood park groups for gardens, weeding, etc. Lake Mansfield, River Walk has good examples of partnership that has worked. There needs to be ways to set it up for example Grove Street. (Neighborhood partnerships need to be put on a future agenda). There will be another open space targeted meeting in July per Chris.

4. **BERKSHIRE SOUTH REGIONAL COMMUNITY CENTER:**

A. **Laura Martin** – Laura thanked Mr. Sokul for getting the drinking fountain fixed at the Skate Park. Laura noted the R.F.P. was resubmitted. Mr. Sokul said he missed the deadline by 2 days as far as advertising in the local paper. Mr. Sokul noted that he contacted the Inspector General's office asking if the chief procurement officer could make the judgment if we can do what is best for the Town. He said it is a statute and that option could not be done. Mr. Sokul said he has to wait until July 3rd before he can move forward with it. He advised he discussed the two extra days with the Town Accountant, July 1, and 2 and we will get that covered and July 3 we will have a new contract. It will be a three year contract covering FY 13, 14, and 15. Laura said a skate park manager has been hired, Angela Pevzner. She is reinforcing the helmet rules and smoking rules. Mr. Gibbons said that no smoking signs have been ordered and should be in by the end of the week. Laura advised that there is fencing lying on the ground by the river. Mr. Sokul said he would look at it. Laura said we have a Lake Mansfield coordinator, Adrien Cushwa. Mr. Sokul advised that the sand will be brought in to the beach area in the next couple of weeks.

Paul said when it gets to the point when we need to have the portables emptied twice, call Carolyn and she will call Mt. Everett.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. **Scheduling Town Hall Park.** Mr. Gibbons said he met with Kevin O'Donnell and the Parks and Recreation is in charge of scheduling everything that goes on in that area with the exception of the concerts that are scheduled by the Cultural Council. The cultural council will let Carolyn know the dates and they will be on the Town website. Parks and Recreation will schedule events around them.

Mr. Gibbons wondered if Mr. Ruth could move his program away from the Gazebo. Mr. Ruth noted that he is going to offer Tai Chi from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. for 3 weeks. Mr. Gibbons said we can advertise in the Shopper's Guide and the Parks and Recreation will pay for the charge. Ms. Smith said to advertise on "Gotta Love Great Barrington" on Face Book. Also this should be posted on the Town's website.

Mr. Ruth asked for something in writing to verify that he is covered under the Town's liability insurance. Ms. Smith said to speak to the Town Manager.

Mr. Bannon said there was a complaint to the Board of Selectmen about a group of guys using the Gazebo this weekend to jam and they were very loud and the police were called in. In the future we need to set rules for parks and put signs up. After discussion, it was decided to turn on the power for events and put it on a schedule for the staff to turn it on Saturday and turn it off afterwards.

MOTION: Ms. Smith that the Parks and Recreation Commission instruct the DPW to only have the electricity on for scheduled events.

SECOND: Mr. Bannon

VOTE: 4-0

B. **Capital Improvement Plan** – Mr. Bannon said he would like to begin talking about plans at the July meeting for the new Fiscal year. Mr. Gibbons said he would like to carryover about \$27,000. We need to have a plan for it by September 1.

ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Mr. Gibbons said he received an e-mail from Eliza that said that because of her new job she is unable to attend 5:00 p.m. meetings. She stated she would be available between 5:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. It was decided to hold off on making a decision until the next meeting. Mr. Gibbons said he would ask her if 5:30 p.m. would be o.k. and if a different day would be better.

Paul McNeil from Railroad Street Youth Project. They would like to use Memorial Field on June 23rd for a 3x3 Basketball Tournament and Skate Competition from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Dance Party from 8:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. This is in conjunction with Berkshire Co-op Markets Summer Solstice. Paul McNeil stated that he had no plans for food at this time. Paul submitted an up-to-date insurance certificate. Kira Smith from the Co-op Market was also present. She noted that their event will end at 4:00 p.m. and the Railroad Street begins at 6:00 p.m.

MOTION: Ms. Smith to recommend that it be approved.
SECOND: Mr. Bannon – for discussion
VOTE: 4-0

Mr. Bannon asked about parking. Kira said she has been in contact with Wheeler and Taylor about parking. She noted that they do not have permission from them yet; however, they are getting back to her. She said they are allowed to use their parking lot during off business hours. She also noted that they have contacted the owners of Kwik Print and Harland Foster for parking. Mr. Bannon suggested that Paul call Town Hall for contact information on the Searles property. The owner is Paul Rabinovitch.

Rain date request from Co-operative Market for Summer Solstice: Kira Smith noted that she is requesting June 30th as a rain date. Mr. Gibbons advised that Babe Ruth is on an All Star break and the Great Barrington Millers will be away so the field is available on that date.

MOTION: Mr. Bannon to approve.
SECOND: Ms. Smith
VOTE: 4-0

Mr. Norton said that there were about 15 plus people doing T Ball at the Housatonic School Playground. Mr. Bannon thought it was probably T-Ball practice. Mr. Gibbons said they had no intention of using it but the school gave two groups permission to use the same spot. Mr. Gibbons said he would let Brian Mead know about obtaining permission.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Carolyn Wichmann
Secretary