

**PARKS COMMISSIONERS**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 9, 2010**  
**5:30 P.M.**  
**MASON LIBRARY**

**PRESENT:**

**PAUL GIBBONS, CHAIRMAN**

**CHRISTINE WARD**

**KAREN SMITH – NOT PRESENT**

**STEVE BANNON**

**CHARLES BOUTEILLER – NOT PRESENT**

**ALSO PRESENT: JOE SOKUL, DPW SUPERINTENDENT**  
**JENISE LUCEY – BERKSHIRE SOUTH**

The meeting of the Parks Commissioners was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** Mr. Bannon to approve the minutes of the June 14, 2010 meeting.

**SECOND:** Ms. Ward

**VOTE:** 3-0

**MOTION:** Mr. Bannon to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2010 meeting

**SECOND:** Ms. Ward

**VOTE:** 3-0

2. **PARK CARE AND MAINTENANCE:**

A. **Updates from Joe Sokul**

Mr. Sokul advised that at Grove Street Park there are two new picnic tables and a trash can, an additional trash can at Lake Mansfield, the Shed at the lake has been painted and the shed has now been placed at Memorial Field. He advised that hinges and a door are needed and Mr. Brown needs clarification on what type of equipment to order. After discussion, it was decided to have the hinges on the left, have the door open out, and a dead bolt with a key set. Mr. Gibbons advised he would advise Mr. Brown to contact Herrington's for the additional materials for the shed. Mr. Sokul also noted that the shed will need to be stained.

The top layers of the stumps were ground at Grove Street Park. Mr. Sokul advised that he is waiting on one tree that National grid has a guide wire on. Once that comes down, that will be cleared up. He also noted that there is a tree at Stanley Park that came down during a storm. Mr. Sokul advised that he is waiting for National grid to install a new guide pole at that location and then that will be removed and ground up as well.

Mr. Bannon requested that the DPW look at the warning track at Memorial Field as it needs raking. Mr. Sokul said he would follow-up on this.

Ms. Ward advised that she received an e-mail from Laura Martin from Berkshire South that the weed fabric had been disturbed and dragged onto the beach area. Ms. Ward noted that she removed it and put it in the shed. There was some disturbance outside the safety ropes too. It was suggested to inquire if it can be secured in a different way. It was also suggested to put a sign noting "Restrooms" where the portalets are located so people recognize they are available.

Mr. Sokul advised that the sandbox at Housatonic school will be removed because the cats in the neighborhood are using it.

Mr. Sokul advised that the Town should purchase certified mulch for the Housatonic Playground that has already been processed for playground use. He said he would turn up the old mulch to see how much is needed.

3. **PARKS USAGE REQUESTS:**

A. Lake Mansfield Alliance, Great Barrington Garden Club to host a planting day and senior picnic at Lake Mansfield Beach Area, Monday, September 13, 2010 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. (Discussion Vote). She also requested that the portalets remain through September. Mr. Gibbons advised that to avoid the requirement of submitting liability insurance, that it should be a Town sponsored event. Ms. Ward noted that the Senior Center is also sponsoring the event.

**MOTION:** Mr. Bannon to approve.

**SECOND:** Mr. Gibbons (stepped down a Chairman)

**VOTE:** 3-0

Ms. Ward stated that she does have a conflict of interest in the subject but her vote is necessary because without her vote, there would be no quorum.

B. Southern Berkshire Youth football to use Olympian Meadows August 9, 2010 through November 21, 2010 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. (Monday through Friday). (Discussion/Vote) Mr. Tinker was present representing Southern Berkshire Youth Football. He submitted a complete application along with liability insurance naming the Town of Great Barrington as certificate holder.

**MOTION:** Mr. Bannon to approve.

**SECOND:** Ms. Ward

**VOTE:** 3-0

C. Mr. Gibbons said he received a Parks Usage Request by e-mail from Robert Flower to continue to use Memorial Field from August 31, 2010 through October 23, 2010 for Southern Berkshire Babe Ruth. It was noted that a copy of their liability insurance is on file.

**MOTION:** Mr. Bannon to approve.

**SECOND:** Ms. Ward

**VOTE:** 3-0

4. **UPDATES FROM BERKSHIRE SOUTH:**

Ms. Jenise Lucey from Berkshire South advised that participation at the parks is slowing down. There is more activity on the weekends. There is basketball at the skatepark everyday at 3:00 p.m. with another pick-up game at 5:00 or 6:00. People are generally gone by 8:30 p.m. Ms. Lucey advised that more specific rules need to be spelled out on the Town's website for the parks as to what the Great Barrington Parks and Recreation Commission's expectations and rules are. She noted that there have been incidents at the Housatonic Playground where staff has had to intervene. Ms. Lucey also explained that fliers with rules and regulations were handed out to people as they attended the playground. Mr. Gibbons advised that he would like to discuss what authority Parks and Recreation has in regard to banning people from a public park. It was suggested to review other city and town websites in an effort to coordinate what Great Barrington would like to have. Mr. Bannon said he would like to see something on the website by February 1, 2011. A flier was given to everyone who attended the Housatonic Playground called "Welcome to Housatonic Playground" noting the requirement of not using the playground as a camp and providing water, etc. for the child. Mr. Bannon said that it would be interesting to put together a survey flier for the Housatonic program to see if expectations were met. Ms. Lucey noted that she would compile something for Housatonic and the Lake Mansfield Swimming program.

5. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Kickball Tournament – July 31, 2010 – Mr. Gibbons noted that he received a call from Kate Feuer and she noted that they would like to change the tournament date next year to the end of May rather than having it in July. She was concerned about Little League Baseball and conflicting with their dates. Mr. Gibbons advised her to chose a date and things should be worked out with Little League.

6. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. **Trail Update in the Lake Mansfield Conservation Forest**

Ms. Ward advised that funding has been received for the next phase of the trail work. Lake Mansfield Association is coordinating this work for October 2010 with spring of 2011 as a backup. Ms. Ward advised that \$29,141.00 reimbursement was received from Massachusetts DCR Recreation Trails Grant Project, \$6,000 from Fields Pond Foundation for trail building materials, and \$2,000.00 was awarded and received from Berkshire Environmental Endowment Fund. (Additional information is available in the file).

B. The Great Barrington Walk About, Saturday, September 11, 2010 to support the pedestrian access and a fundraiser for connecting Great Barrington Trails. The walk will be a 3.5 mile downtown loop that will link the River Walk and the Lake Mansfield Trail System to the connecting neighborhoods or a 1 mile loop – which is downtown and the River Walk. (Information is available in the file).

Mr. Gibbons noted that the portalets are to be removed from Lake Mansfield October 1, 2010 and Memorial Field after Columbus Day – October 11, 2010.

C. Fall Baseball – discussed in Item C under Parks Usage Requests.

D. Capital projects – Needs assessment for Grove Street Park. Mr. Gibbons advised that the Town Manager has allowed \$4,000 to be carried forward but it cannot be used for capital expenses. He advised that there is \$15,000 to be used for capital projects and it needs to be used in this fiscal year so a decision needs to be made as to where it will be spent and what it will be spent on. This will be discussed further at the September meeting.

Mr. Bannon noted that it was implied by somebody at a Selectmen's Meeting that the Parks Commissioners neglected to inspect the playground equipment behind Searles/Bryant School. He requested that Mr. Gibbons advise the Town Manager that the equipment was inspected and was found to be unusable. Also Ms. Iredale is donating money toward playground equipment to be installed behind Town Hall. He noted it would be very helpful if the Town would come before the Parks Commissioners for advice.

E. Dog Bag dispensers for the Housatonic Playground – It was noted that money for Parks Improvements could be used to purchase a dispenser for the playground area.

F. Paint for the snack shack at the Little League Field and the Building at Lake Mansfield. It was noted that the building at the Little League Field does not belong to the Town and the storage shed at Lake Mansfield has already been painted.

Ms. Lucey noted that the staff at the skate park at Memorial Field would like to paint the shed. Mr. Sokul said he would supply the brushes and paint, but would prefer a solid color. Mr. Gibbons said that if someone had an idea for doing a design, they could present it to the Committee at a meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Wichmann  
Secretary

The next meeting of the Parks Commissioners will be September 13, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. at the Mason Library.