

Members present:     Allen R. Phillips                     Christopher A. Rucho  
                             Valmore H. Pruneau                     Kevin M. McCormick  
                             John B. DiPietro, Sr.

Mr. Phillips convened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**Read and acceptance of Minutes from Previous Meeting:**

Motion Mr. McCormick to accept the meeting minutes of January 7, 2009 seconded by Mr. Rucho, all in favor.

**PARKS COMMISSION**

Parks Commission Chairman Patrick Inderwish and Commissioners Peter Desy and Robert Monk joined the Board. Commission Tim Duplin joined the meeting a little later.

The first item Mr. Inderwish updated the Board on was the damage to the parks from the ice storm. It will be a challenging upcoming season as there was a large amount of damage to the fencing, gates, backstops, structures, electrical, bleachers, lights, courts, dugouts, signs, scoreboard, concession stands and the football goal posts will need to be looked at. They met with DPW Director John Westerling who is getting estimates and putting together a work plan. Once the list is finalized with Mr. Westerling it will be given to the Board of Selectmen as the Commission is still in the process of inventorying all the damage.

Mr. Inderwish reports the biggest safety concern is the Pine Grove, as it sustained substantial damage both to the interior and exterior. As there are still limbs hanging in the Pine Grove and pedestrians were walking in that area after the ice storm, the Parks Commission took a vote to close the area until it can be cleaned up. There are also large trees down in the pool area and the Commission would like to keep people out of there until they can give it the attention they would like. Mr. Phillips questioned whether MEMA would cover the costs of those infrastructure items if the town were to remove the trees. Mr. Gaumond is still waiting for his kick off meeting with FEMA officials, however, his understanding is that as long as we document certain things with photographs, showing the before and after, that we could make the case to have those expenses covered. He would like an opportunity to review the list of items; however, he feels that the Pine Grove would be covered as it is public land and presents a hazard. The 75% reimbursement is only for the removal and not for replanting.

Mr. Gaumond received an invitation to attend a meeting in Worcester with the Congressman and City Manager on a massive tree planting initiative not just for the Asian long-horned beetle. He plans to get information on tree replacement. Mr. Phillips asked Mr. Inderwish if he is looking for anything from the Board of Selectmen at this time on the ice storm damage. Mr. Inderwish would like to keep an open line of communication and once we do get the MEMA funding he will schedule a meeting with his Commission, the DPW Director and the Town Administrator to establish an action plan going forward.

Mr. Rucho questioned where the other 25% would come from. Mr. Gaumond explained that the state government has stepped forward and indicated that they would like to cover a portion of that, however, he also feels that there will be a component of the costs covered by the town and we may need to use funds from our Stabilization Fund. He stressed the need to document certain expenses and encouraged the Commission to photograph the damages so that we can provide documentation for reimbursement. We will have to coordinate and prioritize our approach to be able to replace everything we lost. Mr. Phillips would like to review the list of parks items to determine what costs FEMA will cover. Mr. Inderwish indicated that he could complete that list by their February meeting. He also cautioned the Board that April is not that far off and we have a lot of work to do before we are ready to

go as within the parks system there is a significant amount of debris in addition to fencing issues which need to be addressed.

Mr. Phillips recommends having our DPW remove items from the parks and he would like to get verification from MEMA that those costs would be covered under our reimbursement. Mr. Gaumond does not believe the town would be reimbursed for work done by our DPW during normal business hours. Should the DPW work overtime or we hired an outside person, those costs would be covered only up to the 75%.

Mr. DiPietro asked if it was possible to have a contractor and tradesman's appreciation day at which people in town could donate their time by taking branches to the Oakdale brush dump or have a mason fix the dugout. Mr. Gaumond thinks that idea is possible and noted that in the past we have utilized volunteers, who were covered under our liability insurance. He does not think coordinating that for public safety items is a good idea, however, it could be done for other things. He is also concerned with the quality of the work. Mr. Gaumond informed the group that the Army Corps of Engineers will be calculating the cubic yards of brush on the sides of the roads.

Mr. Rucho questioned whether some of the things on the list could be covered by our insurance. Mr. Gaumond advised that FEMA says insurance is the first course of action. According to Mr. Phillips volunteer hours can be counted.

The Commission also requested the Board's approval to change a safety item listed on the town meeting safety list from the softball field dugout to the installation of fencing behind the softball field backstop. There is a ravine behind the back stop and the installation of a 150-foot fence would eliminate public access to the drop off. The DPW has secured a quote of \$4,824 and they have until March to spend the funds from the town meeting appropriation.

Mr. DiPietro requested the Commissioners secure three quotes for the work. According to Mr. Inderwish, Mr. Westerling did secure three quotes and the one for \$4,824 is the one he provided to the Commission. Mr. Phillips asked if the estimate for the dugout work was about the same. Mr. Inderwish advised that it would have been very close to that and there is a balance of \$9,731.89 for safety repairs. Mr. Pruneau noted that the area is where the drainage pipe is located and questioned whether it is eroding. Mr. Inderwish noted that this is being proposed by Mr. Westerling and he does not think it would cause a problem. He also pointed out the fact that Mr. Westerling has been very diligent in spending the funds approved by the town. The idea is to restrict access to the back side as it drops off. It was also noted that Pride Park funds are kept separate.

Motion Mr. McCormick to approve the change in the safety repair list to remove constructing a dug out and include the installation of the 150-foot fencing, seconded by Mr. Pruneau. Vote on the motion – Messrs. Phillips, Pruneau, McCormick and Rucho yes; Mr. DiPietro abstains.

The next item is review of the 2009 Parks Priorities. Mr. Inderwish noted that the biggest challenge is making sure that they do the best they can to clean up the parks and get the fields ready for play. They have to get grass growing in the outfield, which was damaged during the bicentennial event and the multi-purpose field and baseball fields prepared. He anticipates a busy spring. As far as repairing the damage on the fields from the bicentennial, Mr. Pruneau suggested some grading of the area. Mr. Inderwish noted that the right field is all ledge and is on the February agenda for discussion. Mr. McCormick doesn't think we should spent a lot of money grading the fields because it is all ledge in the outfield and the slope is so bad you have to run up hill to get to first base. Mr. Inderwish feels the field is completely overused because of the lack of fields in town and the only time it gets a rest is when it is under snow. Mr. Westerling will be giving the Commission a recommendation on the field. Mr. Rucho feels the outfield looks like this every year at this time because of use. Mr. Inderwish

agreed with that statement and feels if we continue the same usage of the field it will look the same next year. Mr. Monk noted that when it rains the field always puddles.

The next issue is securing the pool. Mr. Inderwish met with Mr. Westerling to come up with a plan to secure the pool, which also sustained damage during the ice storm. Mr. McCormick suggested filling in the pool with sand. Mr. Monk asked about getting quotes for demolition. Mr. Phillips noted that we needed to have the facility inspected for asbestos and he thinks that was the concern because it was such a difference in the price.

Mr. Phillips explained that a few months ago we had an issue with a men's Brazilian soccer team from Leominster playing on our fields, and doing damage without getting permission, paying a fee, or providing insurance to the town. Mr. Inderwish explained that the general public uses our fields for free. He noticed a high school team from Worcester coming out to practice on our field without getting permission, paying or fee or providing insurance. He called the Superintendent's Office in the City of Worcester and contacted the principal who was not aware, looked into it, and called back to say it would not happen again. The Parks Commission has come up with a plan for monitoring and scheduling. The schedule will be posted on the town's web site and updated when permits are approved. The posting will indicate each facility in use and copies of the permits will be given to the DPW and Police.

Mr. Phillips questioned whether the fields are posted. Mr. Inderwish indicated that the fields were posted, however, they need to be replaced to say organized groups need to have permission. Mr. Phillips' concern is people from town need to provide proof of insurance and pay a fee to use the field and to him it is not fair for people from out of town who come in and do not do the same. Mr. Desy noted that when the offenders are found they are removed by the Parks Commission or the Police Department. According to Mr. Phillips, in the case of the Brazilian soccer team, somebody told them they could play without insurance. Mr. Inderwish recalls seeing the email and he is looking at what the Parks Commission is going to do going forward. Whenever they are notified he or Mr. Desy go out to the field. He also met with the Police Department and they have removed people from the fields. He also agrees it is not fair that the town groups have to pay a fee and provide insurance as those fees are used to upkeep the fields. Mr. DiPietro informed the group that the Brazilian Soccer Team members belong to a church here in town and they were told by the church that they could use the field. He will get all the particulars to the Parks Commission.

Mr. Monk noted that in the past when he was on the Commission and since coming back on, he monitors the fields and with the new scheduling system he can check it out. Mr. Phillips feels the posting of the schedule and notification to the Police Department will be helpful.

Mr. Inderwish thanked the Board and stated that he looks forward to having these discussions more often. Mr. Rucho asked if going forward Mr. Inderwish plans to discuss the ice storm issues with Mr. Gaumond. Mr. Inderwish indicated that biggest challenge is the electrical issues within the parks system. Mr. Phillips thanked the Commissioners for attending the meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

1. Consider request from Town of Kingston to support legislation to amend the Community Preservation Act to allow funds to be utilized for Green Energy Initiatives (See recommendation from Community Preservation Cmte.)

At the Board's request, this item was carried over from the last meeting to get a recommendation from the Community Preservation Committee. The Commission voted unanimously not to support the Kingston's request. Mr. Phillips questioned why the committee voted not to support the request and Mr. Gaumond deferred to Mr. Rucho, who is a member of the committee. Mr. Rucho explained that the committee felt the language was vague and next week there could be another project.

They were also concerned that it would take away from other projects. Mr. McCormick's understanding is that this was another 10% category and he would like clarification from Kingston. Mr. Gaumond agreed to contact the Town Administrator in Kingston to get clarification.

Mr. DiPietro would like Mr. Gaumond to find out how many towns are involved in alternative energy projects. Mr. Phillips would like to know if the amended legislation would allow for another 10% category as we have a number of projects in town for the funds. Mr. Rucho requested this item be put off until the February 18<sup>th</sup> meeting as the CPC has a meeting scheduled for February.

## 2. Creation of Sustainability Committee

At the December 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Board, the Board asked Mr. Gaumond to examine the possibility of creating an Energy Committee. He advertised, had a lot of interesting conversations, and is recommending the town form a Sustainability Committee charged with the mission of advising the Town Administrator, Board of Selectmen and Town Meeting on policies, programs and issues promoting environmental sustainability in the town. The scope of their duties would be to provide leadership, technical assistance, education and outreach to members of the public, schools, local business and town departments on innovative programs to promote environmental sustainability through energy conservation, solid waste reduction and recycling, water conservation, pollution prevention, transportation efficiency and other means. They would also review studies and initiatives from other communities on sustainability issues. The committee would become familiar with the principals of 'smart growth' and provide advice to the Municipal Buildings Committee on alternative energy projects.

Mr. Gaumond recommends a committee of seven residents, appointed for two year terms by the Town Administrator. If the Board agrees with the mission statement and scope of duties, Mr. Gaumond will post the vacancies and interview those who have already shown an interest.

Motion Mr. DiPietro to create a Sustainability Committee with the mission statement, scope of duties and make up as outlined by Mr. Gaumond, seconded by Mr. Pruneau, all in favor

## 3. Amend Goals for 2009

When Mr. Gaumond provided the Board the list of goals, continue to advocate for Tivnan Drive Project, goal #10 was left off. Everything else on the list remains the same.

## NEW BUSINESS

### 1. Vote to accept donations and gifts in the amount of \$919.00 on behalf of the Beaman Memorial Public Library

Mr. Pruneau recessed himself.

Motion Mr. DiPietro to accept donations and gifts in the amount of \$919.00 to the Beaman Memorial Public Library, seconded by Mr. Rucho, all in favor. Mr. Pruneau returned.

### 2. Presentation of Town Administrator's Commitment to Excellence Award for 2009

Mr. Gaumond noted that annually in the month of January he presents the Town Administrator's Commitment to Excellence Award. This is the second year of the award. He stated that we ended this past year with one of the most devastating natural disasters to hit the town in recent years, the Ice Storm of December 2008. During the storm emergency thousands were left without power, roads were closed due to debris and downed power lines and most were without heat and a warm meal. From the first day of the event, he personally witnessed the dedication, competence and

excellence of our municipal staff, including those West Boylston employees who do not come under the Town Administrator. It was truly an honor for him to work along the sides of those terrific men and women who came together in the face of adversity to serve the citizens of West Boylston. To honor those who helped the town in its hour of greatest need Mr. Gaumond determined that the annual Commitment to Excellence Award should not go to one individual but to all the employees of West Boylston who went above and beyond the call of duty during the ice storm. This also includes the many volunteers who provided assistance and guidance during the event as well as the employees from other towns who came into town during this emergency. To the Municipal Light Plant workers, and employees of the Department of Public Works, Fire Department, Police Department, Town Hall and Cemetery employees, School and Library employees as well as the many volunteers who kept the emergency shelter open and operational, Mr. Gaumond extended a thank you and commended all for a job well town. The award will be on display at the town offices for years to come.

### 3. Review request to sand Stockwell Road

The agenda package contains an issue which first came before the Board in 1996. It is a request to have Stockwell Road sanded by our DPW after winter storms. Mr. Westerling prepared a response to the request. Although he agrees that Stockwell Road is in need of sand after each storm he does not recommend that the task be done by the DPW as Stockwell Road is a private road and there are liability issues associated with doing public work on private property and it is a steep and narrow road with blind corners. The road does not have an area where the truck could turn around and it would require the DPW to back up the entire length. Stockwell Road is plowed by a private entity and Mr. Westerling recommends that the sanding also be provided by that entity. Mr. Westerling further notes that sanding a private road would set a precedent and invites other residents to request the town perform public work on private property.

Based upon the recommendation of Mr. Westerling, Mr. Gaumond requests the Board concur with the recommendation. Mr. DiPietro noted that a sickly woman lives on the road and questioned what would happen if an ambulance needed access. It was explained that should an ambulance be called the DPW would go in front of the ambulance to ensure the vehicle could pass. Mr. Pruneau feels that we need to stay within the lines of our bylaws as we did with the Oxford Street request. He added that it is unfortunate that it is a private street and should the town get involved he feels we would have many others come forward.

Motion Mr. McCormick to agree with the recommendations outlines in the DPW Directors' memo, seconded by Mr. Rucho, all in favor.

## **MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

1. Announce that the town has applied for and received two state grants for FY09, with 100% funding and no Town match required. The first is \$5,296.00 for the replacement of portable two-way radios from the Department of Fire Services and the second is \$3,664.62 for our annual Student Awareness Fire Education (SAFE) Program from the Department of Fire Services
2. January 23 & 24, 2009 – MMA Conference in Boston
3. January 25, 2009, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. – Oakdale Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing Center Open House. Members wishing to attend should notify the office so that we can respond to the invitation.
4. January 28, 2009, 7:00 p.m. – Joint meeting of Board of Selectmen, Finance & School Committees

## **FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Rucho asked the status of brush pick-up in the beetle area. He noted that they did come into the neighbors before the snow. Mr. Gaumond reported that the response to the pick-up was a mixed bag as some residents were pleased and some very upset as they left more than they picked up. He feels it became clear to the USDA that this was a bigger project than expected and they expected FEMA reimbursement which was denied. They realized that if they continued they would be out of money and not be able anything on the Beetle Eradication Program. Promises were made that as the weather got better they would continue the process of brush removal and would put in a few days in the various towns. Now, the Department of Conservation and Recreation is working with the USDA in trying to come up with a brush removal program for all the towns, which they will oversee and be responsible for. According to Mr. Gaumond those details are still in the works and have yet been finalized. Should there be one contract for the four towns in the beetle area, we might make out better. Mr. Gaumond advised all the residents that under their reimbursement policy FEMA will cover brush removal from public ways. He also pointed out that the removal will not be done as the gentleman from the USDA previously stated. They will not be going into people's back yards raking things up, however, they will remove brush from the public ways. DEP is allowing an earlier burning season and we have issued quite a number of burning permits. He also has a request in to reopen Tivnan Drive for brush. The concern with that site is over security and people taking the wood for firewood. It was agreed to include this item as a regular agenda item going forward.

Mr. Rucho asked when the Board would be meeting with DCR and the Wachusett Earth Day group. Mr. Gaumond explained that both our legislators requested the meeting be on February 4.

Motion Mr. McCormick at 8:25 p.m. for the Board to enter executive session under the provisions of MGL Chapter 39, Section 23b, Part 3 to discuss strategy with respect to contract negotiations, and the Board will not be going back into open session, seconded by Mr. Rucho. Roll call vote: Mr. DiPietro yes, Mr. Pruneau yes, Mr. Phillips yes, Mr. McCormick yes, Mr. Rucho yes.

Motion Mr. McCormick at 10:15 p.m. for the Board to come of executive session, seconded by Mr. Rucho. Roll call vote: Mr. DiPietro yes, Mr. Pruneau yes, Mr. Phillips yes, Mr. McCormick yes, Mr. Rucho yes.

With no further business to come before the Board, motion Mr. Pruneau at 10:15 p.m. to adjourn, seconded by Mr. McCormick, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Nancy E. Lucier

Approved: February 4, 2009

---

Allen R. Phillips, Chairman

---

Valmore H. Pruneau, Vice Chairman

---

John B. DiPietro, Sr., Selectman

---

Kevin M. McCormick, Selectman

---

Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman