

PARKS COMMISSIONERS
MEETING MINUTES
MASON LIBRARY
COMMUNITY ROOM
231 MAIN STREET
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230
AUGUST 12, 2019
5:00 P.M.

PRESENT:

KAREN SMITH, CHAIR

PAUL GIBBONS – VICE CHAIR-not present

THOMAS NORTON

PATRICIA SALVI

ILANA SIEGAL

STEPHEN BANNON- not present

CHARLES BOUTEILLER- not present

LIZ HIRSCH

WILLIAM MEIER

1. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Minutes of July 8, 2019

MOTION: Pat Salvi to approve

SECOND: Tom Norton

VOTE: 6-0

2. **PARKS USAGE REQUESTS:**

A. Great Barrington Independent Storytelling (GBIS) to use the Town Hall Gazebo on Thursday, August 29, 2019 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Thursday, September 26, 2019 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (Discussion/Vote) Mr. Jeff van de Visse was present to explain the request. Mr. van de Visse said he wanted to bring back open mic to the town by doing adult story telling. Karen suggested making this event part of the Park and Recreation programs that way we would show support for it and he wouldn't have to prove liability insurance. He was advised to begin with the August 29th event, with no music to start with and then return to the September 9th meeting.

MOTION: Tom Norton to approve the August 29, 2019 date request.

SECOND: Pat Salvi

VOTE: 6-0

B. Smash the Stigma Rally Health Fair and Awareness Walk at Memorial Field Saturday, October 5, 2019 (Rain date – Saturday October 12, 2019) from 11:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. (Discussion/Vote) Gary Pratt and Rebecca Jurczyk were present to explain the request. They explained this has been done two years in a row in Pittsfield. The resources in Great Barrington need to be brought into awareness. People with any type of addiction are invited to come to the event. There may be a small music component. The Board of Health isn't sponsoring it. Rebecca noted she is a member of the Southern Berkshire Opioid Task Force and this is being brought to South County. The liability insurance is under Railroad Street Youth Project.

MOTION: Ilana Siegal to approve.

SECOND: Pat Salvi

VOTE: 6-0

3. **PARKS CARE AND MAINTENANCE:**

A. Updates from Sean VanDeusen, DPW Superintendent – Sean stated that the chess board behind Town Hall has been relocated. This is because of the Giggle Park extension. The GB bushes were shocked by the excessive heat. They are being watered and fertilized. An L pitching screen was ordered for Memorial Field. The equipment is coming for Giggle Park. The Gaga Ball pit has arrived. It will be discussed at the September meeting to decide where to locate it. The same vendor was solicited for the swing set at Dewey Park that was used for Giggle Park. Benches will be put there too.

B. Memorial Field Maintenance – Power House won't be doing anything at Memorial Field for a year or two. They are going to do the demolition of the co-op and once that is done and they begin to encroach on Memorial Field is when it will be done. They can't do the next building until they do the field.

C. Dewey Park Review – Liz Hirsh – Liz noted before they put in a swing set she would like to do a site visit to determine where to locate it.

D. Open Space and Recreation Task Force – Survey Questions to assess open space needs and opportunities. Liz Hirsch – Liz noted The Task Force is in the process of updating the plan that was done in 2013. Part one is to send out a survey to Great Barrington residents to assess people's interest and desires of open space. She said we have been asked to go back to our appointing boards to see if there are questions about parks that they would like on the survey. A suggestion was made to produce a web page of the parks and what is available at the parks. It was also suggested that this be printed at least once a year. A consultant could be hired to do this for us. We can apply to the CPA for funding.

E. 5 Year Capital Plan/Discussion of operating budget – Sean said he would have an outline for next month.

4. **OLD BUSINESS:**

Karen said the money from the Sheffield Kiwanis for the defibrillator was received. Karen explained The "Dutch Reach" method which encourages drivers and passengers to use the hand farthest from the door to reach across their body to open the door after parallel parking. Research shows this reminds people to look back for cyclists before exiting the vehicle which can help prevent "dooring" crashes.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Berkshire South – Nick noted that the parks and lake programs are finishing up. The swim area at Lake Mansfield is small. Ilana noted that there may be a benefit of having a graduated swim area. Karen suggested that Nick discuss how to make a bigger swim area with Bill and Sean. Sean noted that the weed fabric cost is \$4,000 to bring it out and in. Sean said it may be \$8,000 to \$10,000 to extend the weed fabric.

B. Railroad Street Youth Project – Sean McTeigue – he said Officer Storti came down to the Skate Park two weeks ago. He noted it was a good visit. Karen said she spoke to the Town Manager about talking to the Police Chief to set up a schedule for the police to visit the park on a regular basis. It was also noted that the litter needs to be picked up. A skate park data sheet of attendance at the park was given to the Commissioners. (A copy of attached to these minutes).

C. Police Presence at Memorial Field Skate Park – already discussed.

D. Extending Swim Area – already discussed.

E. Selling Lemonade, baked goods and bracelets at Lake Mansfield. Some kids inquired about selling products at Lake Mansfield. They were advised that they can't sell on Town property.

6. **CITIZENS SPEAK:**

None

7. **COMMISSIONERS SPEAK:**

William Meier said he would like to see better access to the Housatonic River for boat launching. Liz suggested that he come to the community meeting in regard to that. It was noted that the natural resources council is working on it. It was noted that there are 3 river accesses now where in 2013 there was only one. Bill noted in Stockbridge they have a floating dock that you can walk out on.

It was noted that the land conservancy is starting a trail south along the river walk. A portion will go by Railroad Street Youth and a portion to Olympian Meadows.

Tom said he went to the bike path meeting as the representative to Parks. He had a map that they are working on showing trails that are in existence, and trails they are working on. He noted they would like to do a trail from Housatonic to Great Barrington. They have branched out to other communities.

Sean said we control a property on East Sheffield Road that has river front access. It would give a place to launch a boat. Once the house has been torn down then it should come before the Parks and Select Board as a boat launch/park.

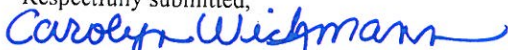
8. **NEXT MEETING**

Next Meeting is Monday, September 9, 2019 – MASON LIBRARY – 5:00 P.M.

9. **ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Carolyn Wichmann, Recording Secretary