

MEETING MINUTES
PARKS COMMISSIONERS (VIA ZOOM)
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2020
5:00 PM.

Present: Karen Smith, Paul Gibbons, Ilana Siegel, William Meier, Stephen Bannon (left at 5:40 p.m.)
Absent: Charlie Bouteiller, Thomas Norton

1. **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

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

2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

A. Minutes of August 10, 2020

MOTION: Paul Gibbons made a motion to approve as written

SECOND: Stephen Bannon

ROLL CALL VOTE: Karen yes
Paul yes
Ilana yes
William yes
Stephen yes

MOTION CARRIED **5-0**

3. **PARKS USAGE REQUESTS:**

A. Pick Enroll, Inc., Patrick Hanavan to use the Housatonic Community Center (Housy Dome) from September through November for a small group basketball training. (Discussion/Vote)
Patrick Hanavan was present to explain his request. He noted he would like to do free/private basketball by invitation only because of COVID. There would be 10 players in the junior division and 10 in the senior Division. He noted this is self-funded. He noted in the past he has secured the Housy Dome from November to March in the past. There would be approximately 16 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Tuesday and Thursday there would be 20. It would be Monday through Friday from 5:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

MOTION: Stephen Bannon to approve the request.

SECOND: William Meier

ROLL CALL VOTE: Stephen yes
William yes
Ilana yes
Karen yes
Paul Abstained

MOTION **4-0-1**

4. **PARKS CARE AND MAINTENANCE:**

A. Updates from Sean VanDeusen, DPW Superintendent – 2 ½ years ago there was an agreement with Powerhouse to do improvements to Memorial Field. We had a timeline with Benchmark to make improvements in order for them to build access to their proposed second building by Memorial Field. It was agreed that the improvements would be completed in December of this year. Benchmark informed us that they would not be able to meet the terms of the agreement because of slow tenant leases because of the pandemic. Benchmark could not provide a date to complete the improvements nor did they offer any form of consideration to guarantee that they would make the improvements. The Parks Commission has been talking about making needed improvements to the field for several years and at this point the Commission will have to decide to wait for Benchmark to make improvements under a partnership agreement or if the Town should move forward without Benchmark. Karen said her suggestion is that this be tabled until all options are examined. We are hoping to have our direction at our meeting in October.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

A. Policies and Procedures re: COVID 19 situation – Phase 3 - Things change every day.

B. 2 vacancies for Parks Commissioners – Shridevi Redi was present to explain her interest in being a Parks Commissioner. She noted that she and her children use many of the parks in town. It was noted that Parks and Recreation can't make a recommendation to the Town Manager until next month because of lack of a quorum.

6. **OLD BUSINESS:**

A. Tighe & Bond Park Inventory, Needs Assessment, and Mapping – The Asset Management plan – They are going to start the work this week. Foresight will give a proposal this week of a rough cost of the engineering of the fields. Sean

said when they are received he will forward them to the commissioners. We will ask for bid documents to repair the two softball fields and Memorial Field. We need to make sure Mark Viola is invited to the design meeting. Paul said he appreciates the work that the DPW staff has done even though they are short staffed. Karen noted that Olympian Meadows looks really good. There needs to be over seeding in the fall. The drag mats have been ordered

B. Berkshire South - The summer was pretty much incident free except for some parking issues at the lake. Andrew noted that Berkshire South talked about staffing the Housatonic Playground in the fall but the resources aren't available. There was discussion of hiring high school kids to volunteer. There might be a small fee to cover costs. The average for the month of August for the lake was 143. Basketball, soccer, crafts, etc. continued in August at the Housatonic Playground. Andrew noted he would have a report next month.

C. Railroad Street Youth Project – Ananda, Gregg and Regina were present. In August there was approximately 100 people averaging 15 to 20 each day. Signs, masks and hand sanitizer are available. Gregg is doing free skateboard lessons on Saturday morning from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. There are 3 people working at the skate park. There will be afternoon hours through October. Ananda noted that all their programming is virtual or outside.

D. Ball field update all 4 – Paul and Sean – Olympian Meadows & Memorial Field – discussed earlier.

E. Status of Powerhouse Square Memorial Field Renovation – discussed earlier.

7. CITIZENS SPEAK: Chair will recognize individuals at this time who wish to speak

8. COMMISSIONERS SPEAK:

A. Ilana said that she has been sitting in on the Lake Mansfield Tax Force for a while. She noted she would contact Bill Meir about sitting in on the meetings.

Karen said between Railroad Street and Berkshire South – given the parameters they were given this year, both organizations have done a great job. Karen gave a personal thank you to Sean and his team for all their hard labor. She also thanked Paul Gibbons for all the work at the baseball parks.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: William to adjourn.

SECOND: Ilana

ROLL CALL VOTE:

| | |
|---------|-----|
| Karen | yes |
| Paul | yes |
| Ilana | yes |
| William | yes |

VOTE 4-0

The meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Carolyn Wichmann, Recording Secretary



Pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 20 (e) (f), meetings of the Great Barrington Parks Commissioners are regularly recorded. Any member of the public wishing to speak at the meeting must receive permission of the Chair. The listing of agenda items is those reasonably anticipated by the chair which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law.