

MEETING MINUTES  
PARKS COMMISSIONERS (VIA ZOOM)  
GREAT BARRINGTON, MA 01230  
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2020  
5:00 PM.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Parks Commissioners will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on town's website, at [www.townofgb.org](http://www.townofgb.org). For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen to the meeting may do so in the following manner: See instructions at the top of the agenda. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

\*\*\*\*ALL VOTES ARE ROLL CALL\*\*\*\*

Present: Karen Smith, Paul Gibbons, Stephen Bannon, Tom Smith, Ilana Siegal – Absent: Charlie Boutillier and William Meier (Ilana left at approximately 5:30 p.m.)

1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER

5:00 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Minutes of September 14, 2020

MOTION: Stephen Bannon to approve as written.

SECOND: Tom Norton

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Karen –	Yes
Paul -	Yes
Stephen -	Yes
Tom Norton -	Yes
Ilana Siegal -	Yes

MOTION PASSED: 5-0

3. PARKS USAGE REQUESTS:

A. Ruby Aver, Moving with Change Tai Chi/Chi King to use the Housatonic Community Center for Tai Chi Class Monday and Wednesday, from 4:45 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. (Discussion/Vote) Ruby noted that she has been teaching 7-8 pupils in Housatonic outdoors. She has two groups of Tai Chi students. It was noted that the Town has no policy of letting private organizations using Town Buildings. There needs to be a system to unlock/lock the building. She was advised to contact Sean VanDeusen in regard to possibly getting a key. She was advised to attend the December parks meeting to give an update.

MOTION: Paul Gibbons to allow the use of the building for two days a week from 4:45 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

SECOND: Tom Norton

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Karen –	Yes
Paul -	Yes
Stephen -	Yes
Tom Norton -	Yes
Ilana Siegal -	Yes

MOTION PASSED 5-0

4. PARKS CARE AND MAINTENANCE:

A. Updates from Sean VanDeusen, DPW Superintendent – The DPW is fully staffed now. (See Old Business for more information).

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Policies and Procedures re: COVID 19 situation – Phase 3 – We are continuing to be updated on procedures.
- B. 2 vacancies for Parks Commissioners
- C. Dog Park – There was a letter from someone in regard to the fact that we don't allow dogs to run off leash in the parks. There was a question from this person asking if we would be willing to open the parks up for certain hours to be used to have dogs run. The bylaws in Great Barrington are very clear that you can't let dogs run off leash. They must be leashed.

**MOTION:** Karen Smith that the Parks Commission supports the bylaws within the Town of Great Barrington that no dogs are to be off leash.

**SECOND:** Stephen Bannon

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** Paul – yes  
Karen – yes  
Stephen – yes  
Tom – abstained  
Ilana – No

**MOTION FAILED** **3-1-1**

**MOTION:** Ilana amended the motion that the Parks Commissioners support a dog park created by a private citizen or on donated land. Town property is not appropriate for dogs to be off leash.

**SECOND:** Stephen Bannon

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** Paul – Yes  
Karen – Yes  
Stephen – Yes  
Tom Yes  
Ilana Yes

**MOTION CARRIED** **5-0**

- D. Sridevi Reddy - She submitted a letter of interest to be a member of the Parks and Recreation Committee. Ms. Reddy was present.

**MOTION:** Ilana to recommend to the Town Manager that Sridevi be appointed as a Parks Commissioner.

**SECOND:** Paul Gibbons

**ROLL CALL VOTE:** Karen – Yes  
Paul - Yes  
Stephen –Yes  
Tom Yes  
Ilana Yes

**MOTION PASSED** **5-0**

6. **OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. Status of Sign for Dewey Park – The sign is up. Sean said a fence will be put up on one portion of the park.  
Bench for Dewey Park – There has been a donation for a bench at the park. Karen asked if Sean could come back to the Commission with a suggestion of the bench style. Karen asked Martha and Nick to send her an e-mail where they would like the benches located. We may need to wait on the bench until we have the design done.
- B. Tighe & Bond Park Inventory, Needs Assessment, and Mapping – Sean said they started working on that a month ago but he doesn't have any updates right now. He noted he would reach out to get a time frame and report at the November meeting.
- C. Berkshire South – Andrew submitted a report. (Copy attached to these minutes) Andrew noted that a handicapped parking space should be created at Lake Mansfield. Sean noted there is no handicapped access. One place would be pretty far north on a flat area. We need to have a gravel access for a wheelchair. Something will be done before redoing the road. Andrew noted that they would like a better Police presence and a bigger sign. Karen asked Andrew to gather all the information he would like on the sign and submit it to Sean over the winter. There will be new sand put at the beach this spring per Sean.
- D. Railroad Street Youth Project – A year-end report will be submitted in November. Regina said they have been enforcing parking. Signs have been put up in regard to not parking in certain areas. Some staff are working until 5 and others until 7. There has been a lot of traffic due to the trail. They are still requiring people to sign in at the park. There will be skate lessons over the weekend hosted by the skate park coordinator, Gregg.
- E. Ball field update all 4 – Paul and Sean – Olympian Meadows & Memorial Field – Tom Ingersoll is going to be doing the little league field and the minor league field. If we need to water it, either Tom or the DPW staff will do it. We will repeat the process in the spring. All the fields will be seeded and fertilized in the spring as

well as this fall. The weeding of the infield at Memorial Field – Tom was there two weeks ago and the staff was there for more than a day dealing with the weeds. There is still a lot of work to be done. The door on the little league shed needs to be replaced and the shed needs to be emptied out and organized and some shelving needs to be put up. Karen said there was an exchange of e-mails between Paul and some of the baseball people. Basically, they said the Town threw everything in the shed. Some of the fence topping could be put back on. The vinegar arrived with the spray tanks.

- F. Status of Powerhouse Square Memorial Field Renovation  
Tabled until further notice.

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

8. COMMISSIONERS SPEAK:  
Tom wondered if the Parks responsibility is just to the park area itself, swimming area and parking lot. Do we have jurisdiction where people are using boats, and fishing? Karen said she would try to obtain clarification on that. We could put signs up saying no fishing in the swimming area.

Paul said there will be a conflict on Monday and Wednesday between the Tai Chi classes and the basketball people. He wants to be sure the basketball people are notified that they will have to wait until 6:30 p.m. on those days.

Karen said that Berkshire South and the Town Departments along with town staff got through the summer with grace without a lot of resources to deal with. She said this winter we will be able to get things on the path with the baseball fields. We will take Berkshire South's suggestions up one at a time. Karen also noted she is looking forward to working with Sridevi.

9. NEXT MEETING  
Next Meeting is Monday, November 9, 2020

10. ADJOURNMENT:  
MOTION: Paul made a motion to adjourn.  
SECOND: Stephen  
ROLL CALL VOTE: Paul – Yes  
Karen – Yes  
Tom - Yes  
Stephen - Yes

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Carolyn Wichmann  
Recording Secretary