

**PARK COMMISSION
MINUTES APRIL 13, 2011
Un-APPROVED**

Present: Donald Black, Chairman; Donald Billingsly; David Howes; Jonathan Strauss; Jeffrey Ohringer
Also Present: April Iannacone, DPW Administrative Assistant

Mr. Black called the regular meeting to order at 7:00pm and reviewed the agenda for the public.

Mr. Black made a motion to waive the reading of the previous meeting minutes until the next month when Ms. Karen Tuomi would return and be present at the meeting. Mr. Billingsly seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Black then read the correspondence received since the last meeting. Among the correspondence was a resignation letter from Ms. Karen Tuomi who would continue to help the Commission until the end of the fiscal year on June 30th but was unable to continue her position with the commission

The Commissioners then discussed and approved pending field use requests for the next few months.

Hazelgrove Park Discussion of Site Walk and Review Sub-Committee

Mr. Black stated that after the site walk and viewing the area the Commissioners came to a concession and made a motion to place the discussion of the fields and their use to a moratorium for 1 year in order to form a committee to research and determine the use for the park in the future. Laurie Smigelski was present for the meeting and had brought a list of names of various people in town that have shown interest in being on the new committee and are knowledgeable in many different areas and types of recreational needs. The names Ms. Smigelski submitted that evening were as follows: George Moore, Steve Moulton, Don Billingsly, Stacy Chilcoat, John Ott, Jean Armstrong, Laura Mignard, Anna Eliot, and Merideth (?) along with herself. She gave a brief description as to why each person might be a good fit for this committee.

Mr. Billingsly recused himself from the discussion of the formulation of the committee as he would not be running for re-election to the Park Commission in May. Mr. Black asked the other Commissioners if any of them had any thoughts on the number of members to the new committee. Mr. Ohringer stated that he was concerned that with a list of 10 people the committee might be too large and complicate the process. Mr. Art Campbell asked Mr. Black if the Commissioners were going to be forming the committee that evening with the list of names submitted or if they were going to be soliciting more names of interested citizens. Mr. Black replied that the Commissioners would formulate the committee and keep the names of the interested parties but they would not actually be forming the committee at this time.

Mr. Mike Roberts stated that he believed that due to the historical aspect of the property and the work being done to get the property listed on the National Designation List of Historical Places, it may be useful to have a member of the Historical Commission on this committee. Mr. Black asked Mr. Roberts if there was a timeframe to completing this designation. Mr. Roberts replied that hopefully it should not be more than one month's time as they are already in the middle of their study. Mr. Roberts also stated that once the consultant's study goes to the state, the state will determine if it meets the criteria for the

national designation. If the state deems it appropriate the federal government just affirms the decision once received.

Mr. Howes stated that he believed that because the committee was not going to be in charge of any real decision making or voting it was not necessary to have quite so many people and representation from every group in town. Mr. Ohringer stated that if the committee had 9 to 11 people there would be too many ideas and difficulty gaining a direction. He believed there should be 4-5 people on the committee to come up with a direction and then those 4-5 people would need to reach out to gain input from all of the other groups and committees in town. Mr. Art Campbell asked if there would be a written statement of work that the committee would be charged with doing. Mr. Black replied that he did not believe they would go to that extent. Mr. Campbell then asked if someone from the riding club or pony club would be represented on the committee. Mr. Black replied that the intend of the Commission is to make sure that there is representation from that interest group on the new committee to determine the future use.

Mr. Howes stated that he would prefer to see written statements and signatures of people interested in being a part of this committee to make sure that they have heard the voices of all interested organizations. Ms. Smigelski stated that she would be open to gathering interest requests. Ms. Anna Eliot stated that the Selectmen's Office had committee interest forms that could be used. Mr. Howes stated that they should advertise the information in the paper to see who comes forward.

Mr. Pier Comtoise asked Mr. Black if the Commission was in support of getting the property listed on the National Registry. Mr. Black replied that they were in favor of it as this piece of property was one of the few designated fairgrounds left in the state. Mr. Comtoise then asked if this designation would limit the use of the property in the future. Mr. Black replied that it would not.

Mr. Black moved to advertise and promote the Groton Fairgrounds also known as Hazelgrove Park Committee to be appointed by the Park Commission to determine, promote and recommend an ongoing use for the property. Mr. Ohringer seconded. The motion passed 4 in favor and one abstained.

Parking plan at Stonebridge

Mr. Black stated that he had met with Tim for a site walk to determine a plan for the parking issues on Stonebridge. The plan that was come up with at the time was that overflow parking could be on the grass down behind the building which would hold approximately 30-35 cars. The other 4 Commissioners had multiple concerns with this plan. There were concerns that the parking for an additional 35 cars might not be enough to make a difference, that on days when the grass and ground are wet and soft it might pose a driving issue, and there was concern about the vehicles being that close to the field and then being in a position to end up with damage due to the balls from the field. After some discussion among the Commissioners, a consensus was reached to leave things alone at this time and revisit the issue at a later time if it became necessary.

Flagpoles at Sawyer Field