

Town of Groton

173 Main Street
Groton, MA 01450
Tel: 978-732-1893
Fax: 978-448-1115

fstanley@townofgroton.org



Park Commissioners

Gineane Haberlin, Chair
Laurie Smigelski, Vice-Chair
Kenneth Bushnell
Robert Flynn
Jonathan Strauss

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 13, 2013
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Legion Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 75 Hollis Street, Groton
Commission attendees: Jonathan Strauss, Kenneth Bushnell, Robert Flynn, Laurie Smigelski
Guests: Melinda Graham

Laurie Smigelski called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm.

Topic: Discuss solutions to or mitigation of Town field littering by early dismissal school children.

Group discussed longstanding problem with littering by middle school children who frequent the gazebo area after school half days. The younger school children have adult supervision and the high school children do not hang out there. Some of the middle school children drop trash on gazebo grounds after purchasing takeout food from Dunkin Donuts and local pizza parlors. It is not a police matter and commissioners agreed that a police response would not necessarily change the littering behavior. Robert Flynn will reach out to the middle school principal Mr. Silverman to see if there can be public address announcements made to children right before dismissal on half days.

Topic: Discuss mosquito control options for Cow Pond, Cutler, Woitowicz and Town Field.

Robert Flynn discussed attention to ball fields at Cow Pond, Cutler, Woitowicz and Town Field by the Mosquito Control project. Clearing ditches and other preventative steps will be taken before insecticide spraying is done. Robert Flynn will work with the Board of Health and the Mosquito Control Project contractor to try to get the four ball fields on the Town's 'to do' list.

Topic: Discuss proposal to purchase playground inspection by professional playground inspector & explore application to MIIA to fund projects that reduce Town's liability exposure.

Annual playground inspections are a best practice for public playgrounds. Gineane Haberlin has been following up with the professional inspector who may charge about \$400 to fully inspect the field. In addition to putting a wrench on every fastener, the inspector will provide recommendations for repair and improvements. Park Commissioners are open to paying for the inspector now and then using MIIA grant to train DPW director Tom Delaney or his designee to become the in-house inspector for future inspections. Moving and repurposing the Prescott School playground equipment to a Park location. The Prescott playground equipment was gifted to the regional school district, but is presently owned by the school district.

Robert Flynn moved to proceed with professional playground inspection of the Christine Hanson Memorial playground. Laurie Smigelski seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Gineane Haberlin absent).

Topic: Update on Cutler Field level 1 site plan review.

The Planning Board approved the site plan and the Planning Board was able to refer to Tom Delaney's redrawn sketch of proposed work. The Mead written quote addresses a substantial amount of work for \$4,600 at Cutler Field. Stumping and leveling of the parking lot are two other tasks that can be performed by non-tree contractors in

a different phase of construction. The stumps will need to be pulled as opposed to ground as the parking area should not have any dead buried roots that decompose, leaving voids that allow settling. There is a chance that the Town's DPW can perform the stump removal task itself.

Jonathan Strauss moved to award tree work to Mead as described on written estimate for \$4,600 at Cutler Field subject to Town Procurement Officer's approval of the process used. Laurie Smigelski seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Gineane Haberlin absent).

The group discussed the proposed tree work at Hazel Grove. Based on Mead's bid of \$5,000 for tree work at the harness track and parking field adjacent to the harness track, the Park Commission will need to offer a chance to bid to three tree contractors. The DPW sometimes contracts with Nichol Woodworks. Other possible contractors mentioned were George Brackett who has done other tree work at Hazel Grove in the past, Flagg and also maybe Turilli & Sons Tree Service which has done work for Groton Electric Light Department in the past. Laurie Smigelski is available to walk the site to point out trees that need to be cut and other scope of work matters.

Topic: CPC

1. HGAA plus Trails Committee submitted to CPC for funding for a trailhead to be put in at Hazel Grove. What is the Park Commission role here? Coordinate with Park Commission going forward on this.
2. A Park Commission Ledge Rock application went in for \$41,000.
3. Park Commission put in a multi project application for \$64,000 for repair and resurfacing of the basketball courts. Stump and leveling of Cutler parking lot. Two solar powered trash receptacles. Removed resurfacing of the Hansom playground because the price point was so high (circa \$81k for \$10 a square foot for the almost 10,000 square feet).
4. Monday, November 18th 7 pm meeting with CPC at Legion Hall to discuss applicants' 2 page submissions.
5. Robert Flynn asked the group to act to make all the parking lots have handicapped accessible parking spaces. Cow Pond and Waitowicz are not up to ADA standards. The Town has an obligation to comply and Robert Flynn met with Michelle Collette on this matter. Robert Flynn expressed a desire to bring Park properties into compliance before there are complaints.

Topic: Minutes

Kenneth Bushnell moved to approve the October 16, 2013 minutes as submitted. Robert Flynn seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Gineane Haberlin absent).

Topic: Liaison reports.

Fencing at Minuteman Common

Kenneth Bushnell asked the group to focus on the last step for the replacement of fence rails on Minuteman Common. The 30 wood rails have been purchased and are in storage at the DPW garage. Now, the Park Commission needs to arrange to have the rails painted and installed. Kenneth Bushnell knows a contractor who has the painting and carpentry skills to complete this task. He charges \$40 per hour.

Kenneth Bushnell moved to pay Jimmy Cronin to do the rail work not to exceed \$1,000 in labor with Kenneth Bushnell to be the liaison on the project with scope of work to be removing rails, painting new rails and installing new rails. Robert Flynn seconded and motion carried 4:0.

Materials of paint to be sourced at Moore's for \$50 per can and hardware to be sourced as needed by Kenneth Bushnell. Jimmy Cronin works for a \$40 hourly rate. Hopefully, any needed hardware can be found ready-made rather than having to fabricate it.

Evan Holofcener Memorial Ice Rink

Robert Flynn invited Melinda Graham to participate in the group's discussion about the installation of the skating rink at Legion Hall (Evan Holofcener Memorial Ice Rink). There was a missing board last year and this board was never replaced. The issue of trying to install before the ground freezes and yet not put it up so early that Town liability issues for a nonfunctional rink do not arise. Coordination with Tom Orcutt to turn on the water is needed. Robert Flynn referenced the gift fund (current balance \$1,250) and wanted the Town to use the money that has been set aside for needed repairs. There is a sign stored with the rink at the DPW storage shed adjacent to the Town Field. Replacement of the liner may need to be done each year. Chris Graham and Chris Clinton have helped to keep the rink open by volunteering to shovel and snow blow the frozen rink in the past.

Robert Flynn moved to set up ice rink at Legion Field. Kenneth Bushnell seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Gineane Haberlin absent).

Fran Stanley will ask Peter Benedict to recall the dimensions of the rink so that Robert Flynn will know the liner size that needs to be purchased.

Overhead lights left on all season at Cow Pond field.

Police alerted Robert Flynn to the fact that some field lights are staying on overnight at Cow Pond. Robert Flynn met with Kevin Kelley of GELD and explained that the lights in question are hardwired such that they are turned on at the beginning of the season and turned off at the end of the season. The group discussed a plan to change the always-on hardwired lights over to a boxed in switch that works on a timer. The help of a master electrician is needed for this electrical work. An electrician might charge about \$75/hour to do this work. Robert Flynn is in contact with an electrician and is asking the electrician to consult with Kevin Kelly on the scope of work.

Commissioners welcomed the news that Kevin Kelly will arrange for a unified bill for GELD instead of 14 individual one-page bills.

Hazel Grove fence repairs

Laurie Smigelski explained the \$4,000 fence repair charges. She saw it as a line item in the budget and some portion of the total had been allocated to purchase wood rails in June before other expenditures resulted in a deferral of this purchase to a future fiscal year. Jonathan Strauss commented that the fencing has to be done because it is a safety issue in that it separates cars from the horses. He also noted that a budgeted line item is not typically spent without another review by the Commission. In this case, it would have been an opportunity to bring the new commissioners up to speed on past decision making and planning.

Could there be a discussion of the choice of bidder? Laurie Smigelski explained that that contractor choice was considered months back when an estimate for \$10,000 was gathered. Wood is a commodity and the prices fluctuate. Prices were high in June and stayed high in to the fall. This lesser charge was obtained by looking for low prices and avoiding delivery charges.

Ledge Rock Field PARC Grant Application

Jonathan Strauss asked commissioners to re-familiarize themselves with the PARC grant proposal to see the scope of work and dollars. If the Town wins the grant, then the Park Commission will plan to go before spring town meeting. PARC grant decision to come in anytime.

Football and Lacrosse at Cow Pond

Kenneth Bushnell asked to discuss a recent football e-mail about use of football field by lacrosse. Football has made substantial investments in the field and wants to ensure that other use groups operate in a way that is

preserving of that investment. Jonathan Strauss commented that allowing a sphere of influence by a user group is different from full jurisdiction of the site and jurisdiction must remain with Parks. Otherwise, use groups will clash when their varying use requests conflict.

Boy Scouts/Eagle Scouts

Robert Flynn is awaiting feedback on the Eagle Scout commendation letter before putting the letter in its final form. Park Commissioners may want to think of additional areas where volunteer efforts by Eagle Scouts would be helpful.

Topic: Update on Stonebridge/Woitowicz field repairs and suggestion to institute periodic use group maintenance reports to be submitted to Park Commission and Park Commissioner Liaisons. Vote may be taken.

Commissioners reviewed invoices for repair of irrigation and field recovery effort at Woitowicz field. There is a possibility that irrigation at this field may have been off line for much of the season. Individual field maintenance should not be a responsibility of an individual commissioner. Parent volunteers and other adults involved with use groups have varying skill sets and may not be capable of attending to field maintenance issues in the manner that the Commissioners would prefer and the situation requires. In future, finding a way to get fertilizer and irrigation vendors to take responsibility for ongoing attention and maintenance would be nice. Jonathan Strauss commented that the Commission should look to proposed changes to maintenance in the spring for irrigation and fertilization. Several tiers of frequency of visits and levels of responsibility could be looked at. On a per field basis, what would it cost for vendors to verify weekly or every other week that sprinkler heads are functioning and water is going out all zones. There can be different packages for different levels of effort. Parks is trying to avoid a catastrophic loss of a field. A \$900 charge for slicing and seeding is a conversation point for the group. This year for this field, that charge represented the cost to recover the field after an unnoticed equipment failure.

Topic: Prepare Fiscal Year 2015 budget proposal.

This item was deferred to future meeting as LS and GH are working on initial budget numbers.

End of the ball sports season has arrived. At this point, the portable restroom vendor can be contacted and asked to pick up portable restrooms while leaving the toilets in place at Hazel Grove and the Hanson Memorial Playground stay. Fran Stanley will call the vendor.

Jonathan Strauss moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:52 pm. Laurie Smigelski seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Gineane Haberlin absent).

Next meeting scheduled for December 11, 2013.

Notes by Fran Stanley.