

Town of Groton

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Park Commissioners

Gineane Haberlin, Chair
Kenneth Bushnell
Robert Flynn
Jonathan Strauss

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 26, 2013
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Town Hall, First Floor Small Meeting Room, 173 Main Street, Groton
Commission attendees: Gineane Haberlin, Jonathan Strauss, Kenneth Bushnell, Robert Flynn, Laurie Smigelski
Handouts: Agenda, November 13, 2013 draft minutes, FY15 budget (draft)

Gineane Haberlin called meeting to order at 7 pm. Gineane requested the attendance of all of the Commissioners for the December 9, 2013 CPC meeting where projects benefiting Park Commission properties will be discussed.

Gineane Haberlin asked that commissioners and assistant to avoid interchanging the word bid for quote. A quote is up to \$25,000. Bids are a term of art used for procurement involving more steps, formality, public notice, etc.

Cutler Field tree work and Hazel Grove tree work agenda item.

Quote received from two contractors for the Cutler and the Hazel Grove work. George Brackett, head of Sierra Tree Service, was invited to submit and estimate for Cutler and Hazel Grove, but he declined to submit an estimate.

Contractor Name	Cutler Field Estimate	Hazel Grove Estimate
Nicol Woodworks Tree Service	\$3,000	\$7,000
Mead Tree and Landscape, LLC	\$4,600	\$5,000
Sierra Tree Service	No estimate provided	No estimate provided

Robert Flynn arrives to the meeting.

Gineane Haberlin explained that her concern with Hazel Grove is we do not have enough time to wait before there is a hazard. The hazard comes from ice and snow forming on the branches that hang over the harness track. Robert Flynn does not like the process and believes that it is an improper way to proceed. He recommends sealed bids with RFPs and public advertisement. How could there be that much discrepancy in the prices at Hazel Grove? Some Commissioners thought that there is room for a spread in price. Laurie Smigelski walked Mead through Hazel Grove. Gineane Haberlin walked Nichol through Hazel Grove.

The idea was offered to call Mead tomorrow and see if the business is comfortable with the scope for Cutler. Jonathan Strauss suggests sending the Cutler work to Nichol and sending the Hazel Grove work to Mead. Park Commissioners were comfortable awarding the work for Hazel Grove to a contractor because a third contractor, Sierra Tree Service, was invited to submit an estimate but did not put in an estimate. When could the Cutler work be done? The answer is when the ground is frozen and the ground is frozen now. Robert Flynn asked if Nicol or Lagasse who might have a use for the wood will be removing the wood? Unclear to Commissioners but it is clear that Park Commission needs the wood removed and both Tom Delaney and Nicol knew this.

Jonathan Strauss moved to award Cutler tree work to Nichol Woodworks Tree Service for \$3,000. Laurie Smigelski seconded. Motion carried 4:1 (Robert Flynn voted against the motion).

Laurie Smigelski moved to award Hazel Grove tree work for a total of \$5,000 to Mead Tree and Landscaping, LLC. Kenneth Bushnell seconded. Motion carried 4:0 (Robert Flynn abstained).

Laurie Smigelski resigned as a Park Commissioner for personal reasons. Commissioners thanked her for her contributions. She was willing and able to complete the Park Commission meeting this evening. There will now be an opening on the CPC for a Park Commission liaison. The time commitment is that there is a 90 minute meeting twice per month.

FY2015 Budget proposal agenda item.

For next fiscal year, Gineane Haberlin suggests putting out an RFP (request for proposals) to have one contractor take on the care of all of our fields. The goal would be to have our entire set of fields look as robust and healthy as does the football field at Cow Pond. This move would put more responsibility on the vendor, take some pressure off the volunteering use groups and avoid expense for repair of fields that may not need repairs if routine maintenance is kept up. This would allow Park Commission to focus on projects instead of routine operations. Commissioners agreed that the Fall experience with Woitowicz field where a contractor was fertilizing dirt and sun crisped grass without notice to Commissioners of the irrigation issue was concerning. Once Commissioners became aware of the issue, then money needed to be spent on field repairs. Robert Flynn agreed with the concept but noted that Woitowicz field had a good deal of crabgrass this fall. The crabgrass crowded out the preferred grasses and dies back sooner than regular field grass mixes leaving bare patches.

Gineane Haberlin explained that she based the proposed budget by looking first at a year of expenses from the Park Commission. With Laurie Smigelski's assistance, she took actual FY14 expenses from July to November and then pulling FY13's actual expenses for the remainder of the calendar year December to June. This year of expenses shows operating costs for one year at about \$45,000. The Commissioners discussed various budget aspects. The electric bill at the football field is a large number (\$911.63) and this may be attributed to the pumps that run the wells and distribute the water for irrigation. Gineane Haberlin reiterated that the Finance Committee has asked for budgets that show both operating costs and project costs. Gineane Haberlin's budget handout showed \$86,000 as the total number.

Kenneth Bushnell thinks we are underestimating the field maintenance because more fertilization and aeration for example is needed to appreciably improve the fields. Group agreed to aim for expanded field maintenance for \$25,000. For attention to the Hanson Memorial Playground, Kenneth Bushnell recommends poured in place rubber surfacing. A playground shade canopy was also mentioned. Additional fencing needed at Cow Pond baseball fields \$8,000. The present fencing gap is a safety issue.

New baskets needed for Cutler. Fortunately, two new baskets are stored in the shed on Town Field. Stadium bleacher at Town Field may need to be replaced. The Commissioner receives numerous catalogues and bleachers can be shopped for there to get a sense of prices and styles.

Project to repair Town Field basketball court could potentially cost \$50,000. If a free level spot is found, then for \$110,000 for three new basketball courts could be built.

Project to paint or power wash shed at Town Field estimated at \$1,000.

Minuteman Common project. Need to purchase another 30 rails with hardware and paint, including labor hours to paint and install. This work should complete that project.

Moving Prescott playground equipment (worth about \$40,000 and therefore worth repurposing) might cost \$12,000 to \$15,000. Another \$25,000 might be needed for site work. Engineered wood fibers meet the standard, but otherwise must use rubber chips or a rubber mat to meet accessibility requirements.

Jonathan Strauss suggested that we might invite Don Black to do the Christmas tree burning down at Hazel Grove. On further thought and discussion, there does not seem to be enough room to burn trees without damaging useful infield of the harness track.

Jonathan Strauss moved to approve the amended budget as discussed for a total of \$190,000. Laurie Smigelski seconded. Motion carried 5:0.

Future meetings

Next meeting with Commissioner attendance will be December 9, 2013 CPC meeting.

Next Park Commission Meeting will be December 11, 2013.

PARC grant awarded funding for 25 projects and Groton was 29th on the list. There were about 50 total applications. Gineane Haberlin and Jonathan Strauss are meeting with Town Manager Mark Haddad tomorrow.

Jonathan Strauss moved to adjourn meeting. Laurie Smigelski seconded. Motion carried 3:0 (Kenneth Bushnell and Robert Flynn abstained).

Notes by Fran Stanley.