

Town of Groton

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Park Commissioners

Gineane Haberlin, Chair
Kenneth Bushnell
Robert Flynn
Jonathan Strauss

Meeting Minutes

Date: February 12, 2014
Time: 7 p.m.
Location: Legion Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 75 Hollis Street, Groton
Commission attendees: Gineane Haberlin, Jonathan Strauss, Kenneth Bushnell, Robert Flynn
Others: Connie Sartini, Penny Hommeyer, Lee Burton, Deborah Martin, Celia Silinonte, Lisa M. Murray, Barry Pease, T.J. Rivett (president of Groton Youth Baseball)
Handouts: Agenda, November 13, 2013 and January 9, 2014 draft minutes

Gineane Haberlin called meeting to order at 7:05 pm. Pending field use requests received for 2014 ball field use will be reviewed at the March 12th meeting.

Groton Garden Club

A collection of Groton Garden Club representatives (Lisa M. Murray, Connie Sartini, Connie, Deborah Martin, Lee Burton and Celia Silinonte) attended the meeting and engaged in a conversation with Commissioners regarding Groton Garden Club care of certain Park Commission properties. Last year was the 90th anniversary of the Groton Garden Club (founded 1923). The garden club attended this evening to look into forming a working relationship with Park Commission where the Groton Garden Club offers their expertise and advice. Gineane Haberlin and Jonathan Strauss explained that the Department of Public Works mows the commons and athletic fields, but that the Park Commission arranged for any other needed care of these properties such as mulching, fence repair, etc. The Park Commissioners invited the Groton Garden Club to offer its advice on which areas need mulch because not all areas require mulch annually. Particularly, the type of mulch and the application of the mulch is of specific importance to the Groton Garden Club members.

Penny Hommeyer agreed to look at the recommended budget amount for mulch and share that information with the Commissioners. For the areas that Groton Garden Club is presently caring for [Hollis St Triangle, Prescott Common, Blue Star Memorial at Sawyer Common, Hanson Memorial Garden] the cost of mulch for the four areas last year was \$320.

The following is description of the Park properties where the Groton Garden Club is presently volunteering its gardening services:

Prescott Common at Main Street and Old Ayer Road - Garden Club maintains: weeds, waters if necessary, edges, spreads mulch as needed, replaces plants as needed.

Blue Star Memorial at Sawyer Common - Garden Club maintains: weeds, waters if necessary, edges, spreads mulch as needed, replaces plants as needed. [Wreaths are placed at all the memorials on Sawyer common in December for the holidays.] Historically, the Garden Club spent \$1,000 on plaque and plantings.

Watering Troughs – in West Groton Center and at Fireman’s Common - Garden Club plants the troughs seasonally changing the planting 4-5 times a year.

Hollis Street Triangle – Hollis and Main Street - Garden Club maintains: weeds, waters as necessary, edges, spreads mulch as needed, replaces plants as needed.

Hanson Memorial Garden behind the Smith Pavilion: Garden Club members unofficially weed, water and maintain the garden. We would like to take on the maintenance of the area officially which means we would weed, water, edge, mulch.

Sgt. William Waitowicz Memorial off Forge Village Road: Robert Flynn identified the Sergeant Waitowicz stone memorial adjacent to Waitowicz Field and asked if the Garden Club would consider tending to this gardening. Ken Bushnell is the liaison for this field. Currently, Garden Club does not take care of this area but is open to looking at it and possibly adding the memorial to its list of maintained areas.

Carol Wheeler Memorial at Townsend Road in West Groton: Garden Club does not currently maintain this area. Garden Club would like to take a look at it this spring and see if this is an area it would like to add to its list of maintained areas.

Minuteman Common on Main Street: the Groton Garden Club has funded daffodil plantings at Minuteman Common and it may decide to refresh these plantings.

The Park Commissioners learned that The Friends of the Trees group often donates trees to be planted on various Town properties. There is overlap between Friends of the Trees membership and Groton Garden Club. The Park Commissioners expressed willingness to purchase the particular type of mulch that the Groton Garden Club would like to use on the Prescott Common. Gineane Haberlin and Fran Stanley will make a standard project request form for use by the Groton Garden Club each year.

Robert Flynn is preparing the scope of work for care of these properties. The Groton Garden Club will submit list of current projects and Robert Flynn will make sure that these items will be subtracted from the scope of work to go out. As with other volunteer groups, the Park Commissioners asked the Groton Garden Club to please share with them what you observe about the conditions of park properties so that the Commissioners can respond appropriately.

Connie Sartini asked who is responsible for pruning of the trees [answer: Park Commission] and suggested that perhaps The Friends of the Trees could consult with the Town on these items.

Baseball Infields

T.J. Rivett, who serves as the president of Groton Youth Baseball, addressed the meeting. In the past, baseball has privately funding the prepping of the baseball fields to ready them for play. Dirt conditioner, infield mix, edging, etc. are among the list of items needed to ready a baseball field for play. Last year, baseball recreational group could not afford to invest in the Cutler baseball field. In 2014, the Groton Youth Baseball would be looking to use fields at Town Field and Cow Pond.

Gineane Haberlin asked what their group spent last year. T.J. Rivett answered that the amounts was about \$9,800. Jonathan Strauss said that traditionally the Town has helped with the cost of infield mix at Town Field and Cow Pond. Typically, there have been multiple infield mixers. Park Commission budgeted for paying for some infield mix for FY15. Jonathan Strauss recommends paying for delivery rather than having timing difficulties trying to avoid that cost. Robert Flynn asked when T.J. Rivett would need to know by. Each baseball diamond is projected to take about 10 tons of infield mix. The Commissioners discussed the fact that it may need to contract with a chain link fence contractor to add to the existing fencing at the Cow Pond baseball fields.

Sargisson Beach Committee (SBC) presentation

The SBC reps did not attend. Funding for reopening the beach not there from Town but the CPC application still exists.

CPC Grant Application Update

Gineane Haberlin provided a report. There is no application in for the playground. Hazel Grove withdrew their nascent CPC application and the HGAA may choose to fundraise privately for it. Jonathan Strauss reported that the Ledge Rock CPC app for site engineering is proceeding a pace. Jonathan Strauss will ask the Town Manager if the Town can cope with the extremely slow reimbursements from the Commonwealth grantors, sometimes taking as much as 180 days to reimburse. Park Commissioners learned that the Town was very close to winning last year's PARC grant.

Matt Ferrara has pulled papers for a 3 year Park Commissioner term.

Sports Turf Fields – Estimates for Care

Ken Bushnell showed the four estimates that he collected for four applications of fertilizer for the sports turf fields:

Turf-Logic \$18,491 (estimate provided by Steve Bogus)
Turf Unlimited Inc. \$17,960 (estimate provided by Stephen Evans)
TruGreen Commercial \$14,730 (estimate provided by Gary Entwhistle)
JB Turf > \$20,000 (some services were optional but comparable set of 4 treatments used)

In discussion, it was observed that TruGreen was several thousand dollars less than the next closest competitor so it is reasonable to question whether the quality of materials used will be as good as the other estimating contractors. Commissioners set aside the high and low estimates which are JB Turf and TruGreen respectively. Of the remaining two estimates, Turf Unlimited is an established vendor with a track record of success. This business takes care of the Cow Pond football field and it looks good. The fields in question are:

Town Field – 4.2 acres
Cutler Field – somewhat larger than Woitowicz acreage
Cow Pond – 17 acres
Woitowicz – 4.6 acres

Kenneth Bushnell moved to award proposal to Turf Unlimited to fertilize sports turf fields. Gineane Haberlin seconded and motion carried 4:0.

Commissioners discussed that they will want to know the Ph levels, want coordinated aeration and discussed lime application.

Sports Turf Fields – Estimates for Irrigation

Kurt Dawson of Dawson Landscaping and Irrigation quote received for Cow Pond for start up and winterizing.

Turf Unlimited submitted irrigation quotation for start up and winterizing for Cutler and Stonebridge.

Two vendors for irrigation is a value for the Park Commission to keep vendor capacity on tap for Commission. Response time within 24 hours suggested by Rob Flynn.

Kenneth Bushnell moved that we accept the irrigation quotes as written subject to the conditions put forth have a 24 hour response time. Gineane Haberlin seconded and motion carried 4:0.

Gineane Haberlin and Fran Stanley will draft acceptance letter to businesses who submitted the winning estimates for irrigation and fertilization. The letter will mention two requirements that the Commissioners expect, i.e., (1) reports on any problematic field conditions that need Commissioners' response [sprinklers not working, grubs present, excessive turf damage, etc.] and (2) a response to Park Commission request within 24 hours. The rationale is that small issues can quickly grow to be more expensive fixes if appropriate interventions are not made in a timely manner.

Rob Flynn worked on a commons scope of work (largely edging and mulching) and collected a list of local vendors who might care to submit estimates for work. Rob heard that contractors quoted work last year and then noticed that the work was not done. The Park Commissioners recalled that some elements of the scope of work the Commissioners decided not to have that work done. Commission will want to make a decision next month. Jonathan Strauss recommends spring spruce up. Then, the Groton Garden Club may recommend a gardener versus landscaper that Park Commission could contract with to provide a couple of hours per week attention to the commons.

Fran Stanley was asked to calendar important properties that will be under scrutiny at certain Town holidays, remembrances. Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Labor Day (Fireman's Muster in West Groton).

Minutes

Commissioners reviewed minutes.

Gineane Haberlin moved to approve the November 13, 2013 and January 9, 2014 minutes as drafted. Jonathan Strauss seconded and motion carried 4:0.

Christine Hanson Memorial Playground Repairs

Commissioners approved purchase of playground repair parts estimated by O'Brien. The playground structure is proprietary and there is a sole supplier (O'Brien) who distributes replacement playground parts.

Playground parts will be installed by Northeast Builders and this contractor can advise whether to purchase replacement log roll or try to reinstall existing log roll with new attachment hardware. If a freight shipment, the parts will be shipped to DPW garage on Cow Pond Road. If a smaller (non-log roll) shipment is mailed, then Town Hall can probably take delivery in its 1st floor mail room.

Commissioners reviewed and signed off on pending invoices.

Portable Restroom Vendor / Future Service Needs

Fran Stanley cited previous memorandum to Park Commissioners regarding problems with current vendor United (frequent accounting errors that are difficult to resolve), future portable restroom needs (ADA compliant restrooms at playground and Cow Pond) and possibility of switching account to a vendor who has better accounting services. The Park Commissioners reviewed list of possible vendors:

- Sheldon Portable Toilets
- Arrow Septic & Drain
- NSC Restrooms
- R.M. Ratta Corporation
- Triangle Portable Services, Inc.

Commissioners narrowed the list to two (R.M. Ratta Corporation in Ayer and Triangle Portable Services, Inc. in Derry, NH). Both businesses were very responsive to estimate inquiries. R.M. Ratta has competitive rates and Town has had a positive past experience with Triangle. NSC was discussed but discarded from consideration as it has an extra seasonal charge for 'winter mix' whereas other contractors do not explicitly pass on that charge. Commissioners directed Fran Stanley to ask these two finalists for their best prices, bringing that information to the next Park Commission meeting.

To help orient use group representatives in March, Commissioners requested nameplates for use at next meeting.

For profit lacrosse clinic request discussed. Gineane Haberlin will send the email to ask them to interface with lacrosse.

The Park Commissioners decided that they are not interested in having the Lost Lake basketball court used for overflow parking during an upcoming movie shoot down at the lake.

The Commissioners would like the replacement flagpole installed by the end of April. It is to be 40 feet tall, fiberglass, and white in color.

The next regularly scheduled Park Commission meeting will be Wednesday, March 12, 2014.

Gineane Haberlin moved to adjourn meeting at 9:15 pm. Kenneth Bushnell seconded and motion carried 4:0.

Notes by Fran Stanley.