

## Town of Groton

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## Park Commissioners

Gineane Haberlin, Chair  
Kenneth Bushnell  
Robert Flynn  
Matthew Frary  
Jonathan Strauss

### Meeting Minutes

Date: July 9, 2014  
Time: 7 p.m.  
Location: Legion Hall, First Floor Meeting Room, 75 Hollis Street, Groton  
Commission attendees: Gineane Haberlin, Jonathan Strauss, Mathew Frary, Robert Flynn  
Other Attendees: Rob Pyatt (Littleton L-DS), Cindy Boaen (SOTV Lutherans), Richard Hewitt, Betsy Reeves (president of Groton Firefighters Association), Michael Roberts  
Handouts: Agenda, June 25, 2014 draft minutes

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Gineane Haberlin called meeting to order at 7 pm. Pending field use permits were considered first:

1. Commissioners discussed Littleton L-DS permit request for use of Woitowicz for a church barbeque with Rob Pyatt. There will be about 50 cars and trash removal by use group is expected by the Commissioners. The relative advantages of Cutler Field (contains playground) were discussed. A certificate of insurance has been received.

*Jonathan Strauss moved to approve the Littleton Church of Latter Day Saints request to hold a church barbeque on August 2, 2014 from 4:30 pm to 8:30 pm at either Woitowicz or Cutler at the applicant's discretion. Matthew Frary seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Kenneth Bushnell absent).*

2. Commissioners discussed Shepherd of the Valley (SOTV) Lutheran representative Cindy Boaen's request to use Cutler Field for a church picnic on August 24, 2014. There may be about 40 cars.

*Robert Flynn moved to approve the SOTV Lutheran requested use pending submission of a certificate of insurance. Matthew Frary seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Kenneth Bushnell absent).*

3. Commissioners discussed the July 23, 2014 anti-pipeline event proposed to be held on Minuteman Common with group representative Richard Hewitt. Richard Hewitt's group is recently formed and informal in nature. Park Commissioners heard description of the event that will start at Petapawag Boat Launch on Nod Road, proceed up Main Street and end up with a planned gathering on Minuteman Common. Refreshments will be served and music will be played. Citing the recent Town Meeting vote regarding the proposed pipeline, the Park Commissioners agreed to co-sponsor the event.

*Jonathan Strauss moved to approve the presented field use permit request for the use of Minuteman Common on July 23, 2014 with the Park Commission joining as a co-sponsor of the end of the Groton portion of the anti-pipeline event. Gineane Haberlin seconded and motion carried 3:0 (Robert Flynn abstained and Kenneth Bushnell absent).*

Betsy Reeves spoke up and voiced her concerns regarding the 2014 Town fireworks event held on Town Field to celebrate the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. She is the president of the Groton Firefighters Association and she has run the fireworks celebration food booth on behalf of the nonprofit firefighters association for the past four years.

Gineane Haberlin explained that the Park Commission pays for the event's portable toilets and approves the field use permit request that was submitted by Don Black. Gineane Haberlin noted that Don Black organized the celebration as a private individual on behalf of the Town although it is well known that he has been a long serving chair of the Park Commission who concluded his last elected term in the Spring of 2013. Betsy Reeves asked if the

Park Commission was aware of the financial details regarding the money collected and the money spent. Apart from common knowledge that the Commissioners of Trust Funds grants money to purchase the fireworks, the Park Commission has not overseen the fireworks celebration accounting.

Betsy Reeves requested a financial accounting for the fireworks celebration. She said that the history of the celebration is that Don Black has allowed the firefighter's association to be the exclusive food vendor. As the exclusive food vendor, other food vendor contracted with the firefighters association to participate typically promising to give the firefighters association 15% of its receipts. The firefighters association is careful to select vendors who are not competing with the food items being offered by the firefighters association. Betsy Reeves recounted several interactions that concerned her from her firefighter association perspective, including that the association

- (1) was promised exclusivity in 2014 and but unapproved, competing vendors were on-site,
- (2) was asked by Don Black to pay \$1 per burger/dog sold in 2013 which it did not agree to do, and
- (3) agreed to pay flat fee of \$125 to participate as a vendor in 2013 but never paid that amount (nor was the association invoiced for the fee).

Jonathan Strauss said that there appear to have been gaps in communication. To date, the Park Commission has had superficial responsibility despite the fact that the event is held on Park Commission property. Jonathan Strauss continued, stating that to Don Black's credit, the fireworks have been going on at minimal cost to the Town because he is making it go on. That said, Jonathan Strauss is in favor of transparency and he does not want there to be an opportunity for people to wonder and thus allow an opportunity for suspicion to arise. Robert Flynn observed that the Park Commission is responsible for what goes on for this site. A couple of Park Commissioners have spoken with Town Clerk Michael Bouchard regarding an unrelated fireworks inquiry. Park Commissioners will defer action until it can confer with Town Manager Mark Haddad regarding a policy change.

Gineane Haberlin clarified rules for event vendors. If such vendors hold a state license, then they have criminal records checks runs (CORIs). Otherwise, the vendor can be in the parking lot but not out in the field.

Michael Roberts spoke to the Commissioners regarding using Park Commission signage to help interpret the history of Groton to the people of Groton. Michael Roberts recounted the experiment of posting signs with industrial history facts around the Petapawag boat launch and that this effort was well received by River Festival attendees. Michael Roberts is also contacting the Conservation Commission regarding its properties. Michael Roberts is thinking of signage with historic content on the commons, Hazel Grove and perhaps other venues such as Cow Pond. Michael Roberts does not have a priority list. The next CPC round is in October and multiple bin projects (open space, historic) are well received and there are available funds in the historic bin.

Jonathan Strauss said that he is working with Bruce Easom and Paul Funch to put useful signage at trailheads particularly Fitch's Bridge and Hazel Grove. Jonathan Strauss anticipated that he could work together with Michael Roberts on some of these efforts. If kiosks are built, the structures could become Eagle Scout projects.

The Park Commission is starting to consider a new project to provide additional lights to Cow Pond playing fields. There are limited lights there now. If the Park Commission paid for the installation of telephone poles, would the use groups want to volunteer to install high efficiency new lighting on those poles? Robert Flynn has had initial conversations with GELD and use groups. The Commissioners agreed that it would be helpful to have Matthew Fray working on this project which he agreed to do.

*Jonathan Strauss moved to have the Park Commission entertain and explore the cost of poles and lights and coordination with the soccer use group. Gineane Haberlin seconded and motion carried 4:0 (Kenneth Bushnell absent).*

Pending invoices were reviewed, including the \$1,000 that the Park Commission will pay toward the larger invoice for rewiring the red barn at Hazel Grove. The HGAA is paying for the largest share and the DPW will also contribute \$1,000 to the project cost. Another invoice was submitted for lag bolt hardware for the wood fencing going up at Hazel Grove. Robert Flynn has asked P.C. Myette to re-examine its Cow Pond mulching and clean up invoice. A response has not yet been received from P.C. Myette.

July 9, 2014

Page 3 of 3

Fran Stanley asked if Commissioners could meet on a Monday or Tuesday which would fit her work schedule better. Several potential days and times were discussed. Mondays are not good since two Park Commissioners are attending Monday Community Preservation Committee meetings.

Commissioners reviewed minutes.

*Gineane Haberlin moved to approve the June 25, 2014 minutes as drafted. Jonathan Strauss seconded and motion carried 3:0 (Robert Flynn and Matthew Fray absent).*

Notes by Fran Stanley.