



TOWN OF GROTON
Park Commission
Town Hall
1st Floor Meeting Room

PARK COMMISSION
Mary Jennings, Chair
Anna Eliot, Vice-Chair
Mark Presti, Clerk
Rob Foley, CPC Representative
Jeffrey Ohringer, Member

Date: Monday June 2, 2025
Time: 4:30 PM
Location: 1st Floor Meeting Room
Members Present: Rob Foley, Anna Eliot, Jeffrey Ohringer, Mary Jennings, Mark Presti
Members Not Present:
Others Present: Laura Fisher, Brian Callahan, Megan Buczynski, David Putkin, Josh Pollock, Liam Colbert, Don Black, Sten Peeters

Call to Order: 4:30 p.m.

Mary Jennings acting chair, called the meeting. Members welcomed new commissioner Mark Presti.

Boy Scout Project –

A presentation was made by Don Black and Life Scout Liam Colbert regarding a project to paint and repair the fence rails at The Minuteman Common in order to earn an Eagle Scout Badge. This project would be at no cost to the Town. The timeline would be mid to late Summer or early Fall and complete by end of October.

Upon motion by Commissioner Ohringer, seconded by Commissioner Foley, that the Parks commission accept Liam Colbert's Project offer to paint and repair Minuteman Common. The motion was passed in a 5:0 roll call:

Ohringer	Aye
Eliot	Aye
Jennings	Aye
Foley	Aye
Presti	Aye

Annual Organization of Members –

Parks commissioners were elected and agreed upon as follows:

Mary Jennings – Chair

Anna Eliot – Vice-Chair

Mark Presti – Clerk

Rob Foley – CPC Representative

Jeff Ohringer – Member

Discussion of having one meeting a month once or twice a month. Commissioners agreed with in the short term continue meeting twice a month and as Parks projects slow down possibly meet once a month. If necessary, entertaining having workshops as opposed to having two meetings a month in the future. Commissioners agreed to have meetings on the first and third Mondays of

the month at 5pm. Chair Jennings discussed how she would like to start future meetings with old business if anything was left over from the previous meetings to finish where it was left off. Also, public comments will be allowed for a limited time set by the chair, but discussions and actions will not be taken on that. Chair Jennings stated the public may be allowed to participate, but wanted to be clear that the commission will not talk to the public except through the chair to maintain order.

Activitas Presentation –

Megan Buczynski gave a presentation discussed the next steps for a project at Cow Pond involving a complex site with various environmental considerations. Identifying the need to determine the exact location of a rare plant species on the site, as this information is crucial for planning. The Commission plans to work with natural heritage officials to identify and protect these areas, which may affect the design of the project. A discussion was had for the need to consider funding sources and an achievable plan for the project to be presented at the next Town Meeting. The commission agreed that accessibility, parking, and future growth were the main concerns especially for emergency vehicles to get to fields.

A working group was established by the commissioners of key members to help brainstorm and solidify a proposal for the Cow Pond Project.

Upon motion by Commissioner Foley, seconded by Commissioner Ohringer, that the working group have two Parks Commission members, a representative of the Town Manager's office, a representative from DPW, Charlotte Steeves from the Conservation Committee, and one representative each from the user groups from Baseball, Soccer and Lacrosse. The motion was unanimously passed in a 5:0 roll call:

Ohringer	Aye
Eliot	Aye
Jennings	Aye
Foley	Aye
Presti	Aye

A working group meeting was agreed upon for 3:30pm- 5pm on June 16, 2025. Anna Eliot and Mark Presti volunteer to be present at this working group.

Lost Lake Portable Restrooms –

A portable restroom was placed at the Lost Lake Basketball courts and funded by the Boat Fund from the town.

Vandalism to Cow Pond -

There were a series of vandalism acts done to Cow Pond property for user groups as well as to the dog pound. Police have been notified and the juveniles caught will be held accountable for damages.

DPW Report –

DPW has been keeping up with the mowing of fields and coordinating their schedule with the fertilization company.

CPC Report –

There is a meeting on June 30, 2025 involving all the project managers for all of the awarded projects and have the procurement log explained.

Self-Reporting –

Commissioner Foley: “I self-report that I violated open meeting law when I learned of the of the fact that the fields were not fertilized, and then to try to help solve the situation. I reached out to a couple of different people. Jeff and Mary, for different kinds of facts, facts about what was going on or

how to handle it. I reached out to Mary to say what can be done. And she said, Bring it to a meeting. And but that is what I did”.

Jeff Ohringer: “I guess I am the one that actually found out about the situation with the know. We no pre emerge being predicted for the entire year for any one of our pieces of grass. I went ahead, and I consulted with David, who was involved, and took it upon ourselves to decide to have the 3 soccer fields taken care of by the software organization.”

Mary Jennings: “The discussion among 3 people was the whole meaning of the violation that we participated in, Rob, Jeff, and I was a serial conversation. Serial conversations are when any member of a body discusses something that is really in front of the body in this contract. Otherwise, a part of our decision making. What could we have done differently? We could have reported the issue directly to the chair or the administrative assistant. In this case we could report it to DPW. Directly. We, in that last meeting; Where we were discussing the fertilizer problem, we came up with the idea that for the next 2 months we will try to have DPW coordinate all of our day-to-day operations. And this is a day-to-day operation.

Financials –

Administrative Assistant Fisher explained that after using the rest of the CPC funds for the Cutler field backstops there was a remaining balance of \$4,500 that was to be taken from the Parks Capital funds to cover the overage difference. To date there is \$2,600 left in Capital funds, but we still must consider any overage from the Expenses Fund. Fisher also presented projected estimates for end of year in the Expense Fund. Pre-emergent for soccer fields only was paid for by the soccer user groups. Admin Fisher is to inquire estimates for the remaining fields in the future.

Capital budget for next year is going to be less than this year projected to be around \$25,000. Admin Fisher requested a set itemized list for what is expected to be done for next years fertilization bids. DPW director Brian Callahan suggested having DPW take care of the fertilization bids going forward next year.

Upon motion by Chair Jennings, seconded by Commissioner Foley, that we approve the \$4,500 for the payment for the backstops. The motion was passed in a 5:0 roll call:

Ohringer	Aye
Eliot	Aye
Jennings	Aye
Foley	Aye
Presti	Aye

Old/New Business:

Upon motion by Commissioner Ohringer, seconded by Chair Jennings, that the Parks commission approve the April 14, 2025 minutes. The motion was passed in a 5:0 roll call:

Ohringer	Aye
Eliot	Aye
Jennings	Aye
Foley	Aye
Presti	Aye

Sign permits/ invoices-

Schedule Next Meeting and Adjourn- Monday, June 16, 2025 5:00pm

Mary Jennings moved to adjourn at 6:25 pm, Rob Foley seconded, and the motion carried unanimously

Minutes by Laura Fisher, Administrative Assistant.

APPROVED: July 23, 2025
