



**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
Minutes
March 9, 2021**

Commission Present: Barlow, Traverse, Johnson, Farrell, Todd, Lantieri, Hurley and Harte

Staff Present: Wight, Cahill and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:31p.m. by Traverse

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve the agenda by Todd, second by Johnson, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Traverse asked to waive the reading of the consent agenda and motions into the record for approval.

Approval of consent agenda by Barlow, second by Farrell, motion carried.

Volunteer and Coach of the Year Awards

Cotton introduced herself and stated how Graham was honored with coach of the year and then presented a video of appreciation from herself and some of the children he has coached on soccer and basketball.

Graham thanked all and appreciated the award.

Wight said Nancy Kirby is volunteer of the year and shared some testimonials with the commission, Kirby takes care of the cemetery from cleaning to knowing all of the knowledge as well as opening and closing the facility. Wight explained Kirby is a cemetery commissioner and has been opening and closing the gate at Greenmount every night, had to mow due to lack of help and has really stepped up more this year. Plaque will hang at Miller as well as one will be given to her.

Cemetery Commission Update

Millarhouse thanked all for having and introduced herself, joined commission in 2019, spends a lot of time in Lakeview, lives across the street. Joined commission as she wanted to be part of the changes and that it is as important to have the greenspace. Said great commission and lots of momentum, holding cemetery as a park and active cemetery. Taking advantage of not having big staff this year and using native plants, looking to re-envision, looking at what wildlife is present; bobcat, fox, bear, trying to maintain corridor as well, connected to NB and looking to designate as an arboretum, over 68 species in Lakeview alone and would make one of the first public gardens. Looking at green burials, currently not possible, working toward climate resiliency. Shifting perception of cemetery and how to engage people more in the community and curious as to how the cemetery fits into the parks commission and would love to have the commission join one of cemetery meetings as well.

Hurley said went to Lakeview walking very often during COVID and really enjoyed it and was pleased with all the amazing work that is being done and how beautiful it is.



Todd said she too had found a lot of refuge in the cemetery this past year during COVID and would like to see Elmwood opened back up again. Todd would like to attend one of the Cemetery commission meetings in the future.

Traverse stated had a meeting before commission meeting about how to better engage with community and asked if her commission has put in any thought to the issue and Millarhouse said yes, indirectly they are doing some storytelling and trying to find out what drives and interests all, trying to here from others, recording, archiving and understanding and how they fit in an what the needs are. Personally her focus has been shifting perception, has not done any formal presentation yet. Would love to learn more about and will take to the other members for input.

Wight shared a copy of the plans for section 8 that is currently in the planning design process for expansion.

Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00PM)

Public Forum was opened at 6:02pm

Nobody came forward to speak at the public forum.

Public forum was closed at 6:03pm

Climate Adaptation Addendum to the Open Space Protection Plan

Cahill opened up to Conservation Board member, Zoe Richards, who stated the Conservation Board was here to present on the progress to the Open Space Plan along with Rebecca Ronan and Steve Whitman. Ronan gave quick framing said asked to use Legacy fund last time, this time asking for more support and input, current plan is on need for energy reduction and sustainability, through addendum create a framework on some things already doing and continue to do into the future with more. Generally the need for connectedness.

Whitman spoke of work doing provided slide show, working with firm from Maine, developing framework, interconnected, forests and tree canopy/agriculture and community gardens/water and wetlands/grasslands and small open spaces/green infrastructure. Phase 1; webpage, currently in phase 2; meeting with Boards, Commissions and organizations, Phase 3; March 29th summit roll out nature based solutions profiles and survey. Reason presenting is to see if generates questions from commission. Gave website address for all to review and asked for any questions or comments.

Hurley asked to talk about some of the studies on how managing carbon suppression and was told adding, protecting, and in some cases protecting and creating wetlands. Some will likely be featured and some for the work ahead.

Johnson said very exciting and thanked for coming to discuss and appreciated the direct outreach to others. Richards added would like to make simple language and ease of understanding and zoning and ordinances that support the mission.

Cahill said all are nature based solutions and want to help community see themselves as part of this process.

Todd asked if a website is available to share for the meeting on the 29th or a way to broadcast. Ronan shared the link to the site that has all information as well as a link that Cahill provided.



Ronan also added making a strategic plan currently and working on the outreach process, incredibly important and excited to go forward with the plan. Todd also added a link to include Abnaki persons and inclusion.

Cahill asked all to use the signup link and encouraged to get others to join as well.

General Fund Budget

Wight explained originally hoped to bring more information but still working on putting together. Have operations and revenues and will be doing seasonal next. Operations are budgeted at FY21 levels, fairly reduced, dues and subs, trainings lower. Seasonals will be at FY20 level, which means will be better than the very low level last year and was a big impact. Revenue was made with some assumptions with about \$1 million short, will not have to find that cut within budget. Unsure of the early season for camping and boating, anticipating less, down 55% at marina. Still unsure of the Burlington Harbor Marina effect on boating community as they did not have a normal startup last year. Recreation is down 25%, overview of general budget still working on. City hopes to get funding from State. Currently do not have enough money to finish the bike path at Oakledge, hoping to get funding for that. Have cost recovery on Thursday and will come back for pricing for FY23 budget not the FY22 budget.

Todd wanted to discuss the new marina versus the Boathouse marina and have a broader discussion about the Perkins Pier expansion and all the differences. Wight said could always invite Burlington marina to a commission meeting, Todd said preferably in end of 21 or beginning of 22.

Update on Bike Share

Wight explained she had talked about in the past and approved locations and rates for pads in parks, update is may get started in mid-April, working through contract again and needs to go before council. Challenging point for bike shops in town is the company released the data and the predominant use is from College Street and removing waterfront location and signage. Signage would indicate not on the causeway and giving information on where bikes can be rented in town. DPW is leading the project.

Todd asked if there would not be a station at Waterfront and was told it would be farther down toward Penny Lane, not at the bottom of College Street, would put bike racks in place of the racks for the bike share. Wight clarified that the final decision was at the City Council and TOUK Committee.

Report from Commission on Volunteer Hours

Todd had 1 hour, Traverse had 1 hour, Farrell had 1 hour and Barlow had 1hour additional.

Director's Items

Wight asked if the commission found the report helpful. Asked if watched the ice resurfacing and showed the video of staff smoothing outdoor ice rinks, approved Central Facilities positions, parks taken on leadership for, the program is from DPW capital program, Chris Beaudry will be Parks Facilities, Deryk Roach also received grade increase overseeing 33 employees, Sangay now foreman, two grade increase to oversee 8 custodians.

Traverse said he liked the Director's reports and thanked. Asked if valuable process for Wight.



Todd asked for update on Chief Graylock and was told BCA is applying for a grant and desire is to have Abnaki as a partner and need confirmation that they want to be a part of the process and waiting to hear back. Moved Battery Park planning process master plan up two years, to try and support grant that BCA is working on and hopes to get support on. Todd said there are some people that would be great to connect with, and suggested to have less pressure and more inviting and aware of the timeline it will take to build the relationship. Said she would forward some information to commission if interested and Wight suggested sending to group. Wight said Oakledge playground grant is from National Park Service, currently they are having trouble getting information and people hired, updating act 250 permit and are continuing on and also with global corporation for mobile property, two parcels, Birchcliff and Blanchard Beach, has 7 deed restrictions, need to shift the line boundary. Chance it may be 2022 project due to it being a matching grant.

Johnson said he appreciated reading the Director's report each month.

Commissioner's Items

Farrell gave a brief update on Foundation, been focused on transition of new members, working on the Frame project. Brought up possibility of prior to big fund raise to take a chunk off to get walkways prior to the full project. Wight showed some pictures of what it could look like with the "Frame" additions including the walkway and other amenities.

Todd shared in the chat the Worthen Land Trust and events activities that she felt others would be interested in.

Hurley said that during transition is a very big thing and need to be patient, her daughter is doing a second session of skating lessons and loving it and congratulated Barlow on his win to the City Council.

Barlow said he has always had a passion for the Parks and will continue to be an advocate and thanked for sharing the Tuesdays and was asked when his last day as a commissioner would be and he stated it would be at the end of the week.

Todd also added that she had gotten many comments and appreciation for the sea caves and the use of the yak traks for using and felt it was a huge success.

Barlow added that it has been very popular site and location for all to use and has seen lots of cars and people at the site. Cahill added that he is very excited about the space and spent a lot of time at the site and how excited about seeing it come to life from a wildlife to active space. Stated have a survey to give a recap of the season with photos and feedback.

Wight explained that the Leddy Park master plan is up next year and one of the things they will look at is the road and pedestrian way, however it would require removing trees potentially. An option could be working with the Plaza to have another entrance that is safer. DPW looking at what part is park and what is controlled for speed limits.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:10 p.m. by Traverse.