

## **Fort William Advisory Commission – Minutes of February meeting**

**Date:** Feb. 28, 2008

**Location:** Public Works

**Present:** Chair Chuck Wilson, Dan Chase, Bill Nickerson, Greg Altnauer, Frank Butterworth, Tina Harnden, Public Works Director Bob Malley

**Absent:** Maureen McCarthy

**Meeting opened at 7:15 p.m.** Minutes unanimously approved from both the January meeting and the January workshop with Surf Road neighbors.

**Park Update** from Bob Malley: Bob reported that Lucas tree will soon begin trimming along the Surf Road fence line, in an effort to begin to remove dead and/or overhanging branches that concern residents whose properties abut the park.

Bob also noted that Subaru car company was recently granted permission to shoot a commercial in the park, and paid a fee of \$2500.

**Budget:** The Commission reviewed and unanimously passed the Special Funds Budget for FY2009. The Special Funds Budget totals \$31,668, a decrease of 9.1 percent from FY 2008. Included are an additional \$12,000 in anticipated expenses for the study of how best to repair/replace the decaying bleachers, and an additional \$10,000 for the study to recommend repair/uses/alternatives for the Goddard Mansion ruins. Town Council review of the Special Funds budget will take place the evening of March 26.

**Old Business:** Bob reported that electricians have been working on lighting the park's two flagpoles; work should be completed by April.

Stairs from the lighthouse area up to Battery Knoll are being rebuilt by the Public Works staff and will be put in place this spring.

Two new collection boxes (also built by PW staff) are finished and will be installed as weather permits. The boxes, which will be used to encourage donations, mimic those used by White Mountain National Park in New Hampshire, and will be placed between the beach parking lot and the Goddard Mansion, and at Battery Blair. The collection box near Portland Headlight will remain in place.

Work continues on the redesign of the main entrance to the park. Bob and Dan Chase are researching options for a new gate and entry posts and fencing to improve the appearance and functionality of the entryway.

Renner/Woodworth consultants have been asked to begin work on the new interpretive display that will replace the old one atop Battery Knoll.

Bill Nickerson reported he met recently with the group exploring the establishment of an arboretum in the park (Kathy Bacastow, John Mitchell, a landscape architect, and Cheryl Rich from Southern Maine Community College). The plan is to have students from SMCC participate in the design and maintenance of the plantings as part of their course work. Bill noted that in order to receive grant funds, it appears the park may need

to be designated as an arboretum; the group is currently exploring the ramifications of such a designation. Bill is also looking toward broadening the effort to include more residents and the Fort Williams Charitable Foundation.

**New Business:** Chuck reported that he, Bob, Dan and Tina had met recently with Renner/Woodworth and associates, the consultants recently hired to work with the town on upcoming projects in the park. Renner/Woodworth exuded a good deal of enthusiasm and creativity in undertaking the projects, and are currently working up a detailed timeline and scope of work proposal, including projected costs.

One more park use was approved for the 2008 season; Field Day for Pond Cove Elementary School: June 9-12, 9 – 11:15 a.m., on the multipurpose field.

Security issues in the park were discussed only briefly, due to the lateness of the hour. There has been ongoing concern about vandalism in the park, and the fact that the front gate is frequently not closed at sunset. Bob and Chuck have met with the police chief to encourage a bigger police presence in the park, and conversations will continue as we begin to better define our needs. It is hoped that the proposed new electronic front gate to be installed as part of the entryway renovations should make it easier for officers to more quickly enter the park after hours.

**Meeting adjourned** at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tina Harnden