

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
September, 16 2010

Present:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Dan Chase, Maureen McCarthy (Chair), Bill Nickerson, and Chuck Wilson.

Also present:

Lois Carlson (FWCF), Carol Fritz (FWCF), Alice Rand (FWCF), Mary Hitchcock (FWCF), Jean Haron, Michael McGovern (Town Manager), Jim Walsh (Town Council and FWC Liaison), Carolyn Smith (Resident)

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

Maureen called the meeting to order at 7:02.

Approval of minutes of the 8-19-10 regular meeting:

Bill Brownell motioned approval and Frank seconded.

Park Update:

Bob advised us:

- The cruise ship bus traffic has increased in keeping with the season.
- There were over 6 commercial "photo shoot" requests in the last 2 weeks
- The History Channel never showed up for its documentary photo session.
- More clearing of vegetation was done on the Cliff Walk and it looks very nice.
- The storage shed roof repairs and door replacements have been completed.
- The chimney on the cement block storage building was repaired.
- The interpretive panels are beginning to rust minimally on the underside. This will be discussed with the manufacturer.
- The Foliage bus tours will begin to pick up soon.

Group use policy review:

The fee structure was discussed in comparison to some other parks in the area (Winslow Park in Freeport)

Chuck's memo to Maureen regarding fee structure was used as our template for discussion:

Small event, partial day, one location, small numbers0-50: would remain as current policy
50-100: permit fee of \$100, plus \$1.00 per person/attendee/ticket, plus town costs, minimum of \$150

Mid size event, one day, one location

100-500: permit fee of \$250, plus \$1.00 per person/attendee/ticket, plus town costs, minimum of \$350

500-1000: permit fee \$500, plus \$1.00 per person/attendee/ticket, plus town costs, minimum of \$1000

Large event, one day, one or more locations, large numbers

1000-2500: permit fee \$1000, plus \$2.00 per person/attendee/ticket, plus town costs, minimum of \$3000

Large event, multi day, multi locations very large numbers

2500- max of 7,500: permit fee \$5,000, plus \$5.00 per person/attendee/ticket, plus town costs, minimum of \$17,500

NOTES:

I arbitrarily picked the 7,500 maximum number. May need to be 10,000.

Town costs are defined as expenses for Public Works, Public Safety, etc, due to the event.

Criteria for approval will remain the same as currently listed

There will need to be some exceptions for such as CE Little League games, town entities (Family Fun Days, Fire Dept Art Show, CE School events).

If we are going to encourage weddings with set-ups (chairs, tables, tents, etc), we will need to increase the wedding fees. Believe the current level is for no dedicated space, very limited chairs, no tables or tents, and under 50 people.

Discussion items included:

-The number of categories for fee establishment appears to be appropriate and fair.

-Town fees for service and additional personnel costs can be predetermined.

-Will large events be interested in coming to the Park with some of our current restrictions?

-It would be difficult to assess a group charge per head when no tickets to the event are sold.

-Current fee revenue is around \$45,000, but we need to raise an additional \$70,000 to meet budget expectations.

-Bill Brownell suggested some wording changes to the 12/08 Group Use Policy. (See attachment)

-It was suggested that Chuck's memo (above) be incorporated into the updated group use policy and let the Council vote on it.

-The no alcohol policy seems to be one of the biggest deterrents to large group use of the park.

-We need to get the group use policy to the Council by November so that they can vote on it and have it approved by December for the upcoming Park usage season.

-We need a draft to vote on at our October meeting.

Chuck and Dan suggested that we may want to consider allowing alcohol in a designated wedding venue within the Park. Area could be cordoned off with a police or security detail present.

Mike McGovern – Review of Park Needs Memo:

-Mike recapped FWAC capital needs suggestions and the Council's goals.

-People value the Park and while some want no change others recognize the need for upkeep and improvement.

-He recapped repairs that have been made but stressed there is much more that has to be done, particularly to address the hazards to visitors.

-The current Master Plan is more of a maintenance outline document and doesn't address a plan for the future improvement and needs of the Park.

-Should come up with some short term revenue sources within the Park until more appropriate long

term sources can be implemented.

-The Group use policy should the method set the Beach to Beacon fees.

-Maintenance needs: Revenues to the Park are still strong and he does not foresee having to raise taxes to address the proposed increased maintenance needs.

-He thinks we should plan our capital projects based on our revenues rather than try to have the revenues try to match the projects.

-Consideration should be given to loosening up restrictions on rental building occupants.

-Also, the Council should be removed from the repetitive use approval process to streamline the process and free up their time for bigger issues. We lose revenue because it takes too long to decide on a requested use under the present system.

-Believes that the FWAC should be the engine on decisions for improvements. To date FWAC tends to be caught in the middle in the decision process.-

-Suggested that the FWAC be the drivers behind the new master plan.

-The Park staff will be inventorying bus traffic to see where they originate.

-Bill Brownell had concerns about he ability to raise the necessary revenue to support the proposed budget.

-Chuck reminded that we have struggled for money just to make basic repairs. We have been very frugal but there seems to have no appreciation of that fact.

-Jim Walsh said the council understands that more revenue in needed to improve the Park, and they support Mike's report.

-Mike will propose that he new master plan expenses be funded from the undesignated surplus.

FWCF Update

Alice Rand updated us with the following information:

-Their attorney advised them that their function is "to raise money and give it away".

-Invitations had been sent out for the gathering in support of the Battery Blair study project.

-They are presently concentrating their funding activities toward The Arboretum and Battery Blair.

-Identified Chuck Redman as the Chair of their Finance Committee.

Public comment:

Comments included:

-Carol Fritz felt that the process of revising he master plan would stall the fund raising process. Was concerned that it would attempt to redo all previous project studies.

-Bill Nickerson pointed out that this was not correct and that it would be taking prior studies and incorporating them into the new plan with no redundancy.

-Alice Rand said she liked Mike McGovern's comment about "keeping the Park a Park".

-Mary Hitchcock flt the Master Plan would be a good analysis of what is possible and a good visual representation of what can be done for how much.

-Jim Walsh felt it also might help the FWAC accelerate projects through prioritizing.

-Mike finished by adding that the cost of the Arboretum project will be a combination of funds raised, FWCF support, individual and corporate sponsorships, and will be spread out over a number of years.

Reminder:

Maureen reminded that the Fort workshop with the Council was at 7:30 PM on 10/4/2010.

Adjourn:

The meeting adjourned at 9:02

Next scheduled meeting:

Thursday 10/21/2010 at 7PM at the Public Works Facility.