

# **Town of Cape Elizabeth Fort Williams Advisory Commission**

Meeting Minutes  
November 17th, 2011

**Present:**

Frank Butterworth, Bill Brownell, Dan Chase, Erin Grady, Maureen McCarthy, Bill Nickerson (Chair).

**Absent:**

Lise Pratt .

**Also present:**

Steve Bates and Mary Hodgkins of FWCF, John Mitchell and Bob Metcalf of Mitchell & Associates, Mike McGovern (Town Manager), Frank Marston (Park food vendor), Gordon Smith (Park food vendor).

**Staff:**

Bob Malley was away on vacation.

**Call to order:**

Bill N called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

**Approval of minutes of the 10/20/2011 regular meeting:**

Erin motioned approval and Bill B seconded; all approved.

**Public comment for non-agenda items:**

None.

**FWCF Report:**

Steve Bates gave us the following update:

- The Battery Blair Study was fully funded as of the 11/1/2011 target date with a \$5,000 challenge gift which is contingent on the study being completed no later than the end of 2012.
- Cosmic Stone of Topsham Maine has started building the walls at the Cliffside site. Two walls will be built.
- Skip Murray of LP Murray and Sons has started doing the knotweed grubbing as well as the excavation for the stairwell at the Cliffside site. In the process of doing this he unearthed the entrance to a munitions magazine thought to be circa 1878. A decision needs to be made as to whether or not this should be opened up or covered over again. Steve said he feels the FWAC should decide what to do with it.
- Arboretum fund raising is moving along, with another \$25,000 donation being received last month. Of the \$160,000 needed to secure the \$40,000 challenge grant there is currently \$80,000 in cash and a substantial amount in outstanding pledges.
- Using the new Donor Perfect software and merged Arboretum and FWCF mailing lists the annual appeals campaign is underway with the first 1300 to 1400 solicitation letters scheduled to be sent out on 11/30/2011. There will be different categories of donor support depending on gift size.
- Last year's mailing resulted in \$32,000 to \$33,000. of donations. Prior years have been in the

\$20,000 plus range.

### **Park Update:**

In Bob's absence Mike McGovern updated us as follows:

- The stone walls around the tennis courts are currently being repaired as is the fencing around the lighthouse.
- The Town has applied for a Permit By Rule to remove the remaining invasive plants in the area from the lighthouse to the beach at Ship Cove.

### **Group Use Request-GM Bus Owners Motor Coach Group:**

In an unscheduled visit the GM Bus Owners Group spokesman, Mark Willette, and several other members made a formal group use request to use a portion of the Park from July 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> for a motor coach gathering.

Mark advised us that their group was a sub-chapter of Family Motor Coach, a 400,000 member nationwide group, that actually started in Maine.

He asked our advice as to what would be the best place for them to locate within the Park, and said they would work with us on the number of units to be allowed in the Park. Willette was advised that the Commission would limit the number of vehicles to less than 35, which was agreeable. (Units are basically buses that have been converted to motor coaches, roughly 10ft by 40ft in size.)

There would be an average of 2 people per unit, and would have small tent/canopy shelters set up adjacent to each unit.

The units would stay on their site once they arrived and not be moved until they departed on 7/15/2012.

The youngest member of their group is 55 years of age.

Previous gatherings have been held in Lewiston and Sebago Lake State Park.

Bill N pointed out that alcohol is not allowed in the Park and that the Park is closed at sundown.

They said that a first week of January 2012 notification of our decision to allow them would be adequate timing.

### **Town Council Meeting Summary:**

Mike updated us on the following Council items:

- The Council would like to have criteria established against which requests for alcohol use within the Park can be measured. This will most likely be a part of the Master Plan Update.
- The Council voted 5 to 2 in support of bus fees. They agreed that the details of collection of the fees should be an administrative function handled by Mike, Bob, and Jean Gross. Following the Council meeting most emails received about the fee issue were positive. The fee assessment will begin in the 2012 season.
- This year the Council has supported the Beach to Beacon fee, the bus fees, the vendor permits, and the building rental.
- Mike feels that next year the Council's Park focus will be on the Master Plan Update

### **Master Plan Priorities Discussion:**

John Mitchell handed out an excerpt from the draft Master Plan which listed the Commission's top 10 recommendations for the Park.

These prioritized recommendations included the following:

- 1.4) Expand the Ship Cove parking area to include a turn around at the end.
- 1.6) Upgrade the picnic area slab, with the potential of installing a seasonal canopy.
- 7.13) Review the feasibility of a reception area in the overflow parking area above the Parade Grounds.

- 4.2) Evaluate Cliff Walk safety along the top slope, and identify improvements and modifications to the path.
- 7.14) Improve vehicular and pedestrian accessibility at the intersection of Wheatley and Ocean Road.
- 1.1) Review and repair the Central Power Station to avoid structural and water damage. Remove vegetation from the lower roof and evaluate use of sealant.
- 10.11) Reconfigure circulation and parking in the vicinity of the maintenance buildings to improve circulation, provide usable parking and maintain access to the maintenance facilities.
- 10.14) Investigate the potential for a second picnic shelter to be located west of Merriam Road in close proximity to the multi-purpose field and central parking area.
- 1.3) Review the feasibility of improving the intersection of Powers Road and Ship Cove parking area.
- 10.6) Create a loop trail within the Southwest Preserve connecting Harrison Road and Blake Road.

Bill N pointed out that the list John had prepared was slightly out of order with the list that he had prepared based on the Commission's input. John said he would realign his list with ours, in the following order of descending priority: 1.4, 1.6, 7.13, 4.2, 7.14, 1.1, 1.3, 10.11, 10.14, 8.6, and 10.6 which included redefinition of the Picnic Shelter parking lot to maximize parking (8.6). This came to 11 in total.

Other discussion points included:

- Would we include all recommendations in the Master Plan Update or just the top priorities?
- Should we not list the priorities. (Mike McGovern said he felt it was very important that we list our priorities and tie them to our 6 overall goals in the Master Plan Update.)

Bob Metcalf reviewed the preliminary costs they had prepared for these recommendations. As a result of our input John and Bob said they would revise their cost estimates to incorporate our suggestions.

Further discussion points on these priorities included:

- Should we first look to our business plan to be sure that a second picnic shelter will be financially feasible?
- How would the business plan coordinate with our priorities?
- Should the business plan go beyond our recommendations in looking for opportunities for revenue in the Park?
- Mike said that the Council will be goal setting in their 12/5/2011 meeting and that the Master Plan Update will go to a Council workshop.
- John said he would have the draft plan ready for our 12/15/2011 FWAC meeting.
- Mike added that the current money available for capital projects is \$150,000.

#### **Discussion/Feedback re: Vendor Pilot Program:**

The following feedback was discussed:

Park Staff had no problems at all.

Only concern was the location of a vendor by the flag pole.

Business seemed to significantly drop off after 9/1/2011.

One vendor skipped several days, and one left early for the season.

All vendors were very friendly and good ambassadors to the public.

There was no defined ice cream stand. This should be a vendor unto itself.

Frank Marston (Hotdog vendor) and Gordon Smith (lobster rolls vendor) shared their observations: There were times when the Gift Shop volunteers blocked access to the adjacent site with their parked cars and the vendors made a request to leave an access space open.

The fall permit may not be worth the expense, as the business is not as lucrative as anticipated. This is possibly because children, who are great customers, are back in school and not part of the tour groups. Maybe the Park should offer one permit for the whole season.

During the Beach to Beacon race vendors should be given a different location so that they are not hampered by the event and set up activities.

Mike, Bob, Erin, and Bill B will give a vendor report to the Commission at the 12/15/2011 meeting.

**Other Business:**

Dan suggested that we possibly look at Coastal Enterprises as a consultant for our business plan.

Bill B said it should be noted that John Mitchell and his associates have done a superb job in helping us formulate the Master Plan Update. All readily agreed.

**Final Public Comment:**

None.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59.

Dan motioned Bill B seconded.

All agreed.

**Next meeting:**

12/15/2011.

6:30 at the Public Works Building.