

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
February 16th, 2012

Present:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Dan Chase, Erin Grady, Don Head, Bill Nickerson (Chair), Lise Pratt.

Absent: None

Also present:

Steve Bates (FWCF).

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

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

Approval of minutes of the January 19, 2012 regular meeting:

Don H motioned approval and Erin seconded; all approved.

Public comment for items not on the agenda: None.

Election of Vice Chair for 2012

Erin nominated Bill Brownell to continue serving as Vice Chair. All agreed. Motion made by Erin to elect Bill Brownell as Vice Chair, Dan seconded. All were in favor.

Appointment of Liaison to FWCF

Dan agreed to serve as FWAC liaison to the Fort Williams Charitable Foundation. They meet on the 4th Thursday of the month.

FWCF Report:

Steve Bates gave us the following update:

- FWCF has adopted a new investment and spending policy.
- FWCF plans to contract with an independent grant-writer for both organizational development and project support, including the Arboretum. He has a successful track record with the Boothbay Botanical Gardens.
- Now 10 years old, FWAC is exploring ways to improve their strategic positioning going forward and to grow to the next level.
- The Arboretum: They have received a \$5K grant from Bank of America for the Cliffside site. A fundraising cocktail party is taking place in Delano Park this evening. Lynn Shaffer is representing the Arboretum project at the upcoming panel discussion hosted by Maine Historical Society and Greater Portland Landmarks. The CE/SP Rotary Club has reaffirmed its pledge of \$17.5K for the Children's Garden design. The Rhododendron Society has reconsidered and withdrawn its plan to develop the park entrance garden site. Arboretum

volunteers will have a booth at the Portland Flower Show (Mar 8-11) at Portland Yacht Services. The Garden Tour will be on July 14, rain or shine; it will include 8 gardens this year (vs. 15 last year). Five students in the USM Capstone Project will create a video, to be completed in mid-April, on *Why We Need an Arboretum*. Bids resulting from the Cliffside plant installation RFP are being accepted through February; a sub-committee will select the contractor on March 6; the budget is \$100-130K. The Arboretum wishes to install a donation box at Cliffside and will be seeking FWAC approval to do this.

In response to the Arboretum donation box at Cliffside, Bob reported that Kathryn Bacastow will be making the request to FWAC at next month's meeting. Brief discussion ensued regarding the potential negative impact on the yield from the other donation boxes in the park, proceeds of which flow to the capital fund, as well as the precedent this request might set.

Park Update:

Bob provided the following updates:

- The Public Works crew has continued to clear brush on the north side of the Meadows, between Chapel Road and the beach area. They have saved immature hickory trees. There is still more work to be done clearing invasives between the Ship's Cove parking lot and Goddard Mansion.
- There are plans to clear invasives on Battery Knoll, if weather cooperates and ground remains frozen.
- Sperry Topsider will be in the park for a film shoot on Monday (Feb 20). Anticipated fee: \$1,250.
- The "Today Show" in the park recently, reporting on the Maine Republican primary.

Bill N added that there is extensive Black Swallow-wort (related to milkweed) on the sumac along the Cliff Walk. These are stubborn invasives that confuse monarch butterflies.

Master Plan Update Status:

Bob distributed updated pages to insert in the Master Plan document. These were the executive summary (with typos corrected) and the top ten priorities, with updated project estimates from Mitchell and Associates. Printed copies of the plan are in the hands of Council members, Planning Board members and available at the Library, Town Hall, and Public Works building. It is also posted on the town website. We are now working with Mitchell & Associates on an hourly basis.

Bob Metcalf of Mitchell & Associates made the presentation at the Town Council public hearing on Feb 13. There was only one question about costs. Per the Zoning Ordinance, the plan now needs to go to the Planning Board. Bob, Jim Walsh and Bill N will attend the Planning Board Workshop on March 6. The plan will then be on the agenda of their regular meeting on March 20, at which time they may approve it, or they may request a site walk. After Planning Board approval (April?), the plan will come back to the Town Council for final approval, perhaps at their May regular meeting.

Review and Approve FY 2013 Budget Proposal:

Bob presented a revised proposed budget for the commission's consideration. Changes were based on last month's budget discussion, updated project cost estimates, and newly acquired vendor information.

- Estimated expenditure for FY12 miscellaneous projects was increased to \$6,000, reflecting anticipated fees to Mitchell & Associates for soft costs for Cliff Walk improvements and additional time attending Town Council and Planning Board meetings.

- The projected cost of the Cliff Walk project in FY13 was increased to \$16,000. The total estimated cost of this project is \$20,400, straddling over two fiscal years.
- Proposed FY13 expenditure for miscellaneous projects was increased to \$20,000 to allow for flexibility in accomplishing priority projects in a timely fashion.
- Based on bids received, projected FY13 revenue from concessions was increased to \$15,795.
- FY13 bus/trolley revenues are a conservative estimate, as it is in its first year.
- Total projected FY13 revenues are \$147,695 (up from \$97K FY12 estimate; \$55K FY11 actual)

Bob advised that the Cliff Walk project would not require Planning Board approval. He recommended that the Commission go to the Planning Board in July 2012 for the Ship Cove parking and picnic slab improvements as well as the Powers Road/Ship Cove improvements. Consolidating the process will save time and money. The bidding process could begin in February 2013, with construction in the spring of 2013 before the busy summer season opens.

Bob reported some park projects, totaling roughly \$80K, proposed in FY13 Public Works Operating Budget. These included: \$7,500 for tree maintenance, \$38,500 for stone walls and retaining walls; \$20,000 for fire station building improvements; \$21,000 for the lower tennis courts.

A motion was made by Frank to accept the FY13 budget as proposed. Bill B seconded. All approved.

Report from Concession Program Sub-Committee:

A subcommittee of Mike McGovern, Bob, Erin, and Bill Brownell met a few weeks ago to consider the four bids responding to the vendor RFP. All were qualified and accepted; one submitted a bid above the minimum. All vendors will be in place all season (May-Oct). The total revenue generated from the permit fees will be \$15,795 in FY13.

Three of the four vendors are returning from last year: Frank’s Franks, Atlantic Cookie Company, Bite into Maine. New this year is Gorgeous Gelato, who will be selling ice-cream at a new site by Ship Cove beach. The vendor site by the flagpole on Battery Knoll has been relocated across the street near Kitty’s Point. Erin suggested consideration might be given to moving up the bidding process to the fall, as vendors have to pay for permits by Jan 30.

Final Public Comment: None.

When asked about meeting attendance of Jim Walsh (Council member serving as FWAC liaison), Bob and Bill N each replied that they and Jim converse regularly. Bob added that, in addition to attending some of the commission meetings, Jim has provided support and guidance at both the Council and commission level. Erin asked about resuming the discussion on the park’s Group Use Policy and Fees. It was suggested it be included on the agenda for next month’s regular meeting.

Adjournment:

Motion was made to adjourn by Don, seconded by Erin.

Meeting adjourned at 7:55 PM.

Our next regular meeting will be Thursday, March 15th at 6:30 PM at the Public Works Building.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lise Pratt, Secretary