

Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Advisory Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 20th, 2012

Present:

Bill Brownell, Frank Butterworth, Don Head, Bill Nickerson (Chair), Lise Pratt.

Absent: Dan Chase, Erin Grady.

Also present:

Steve Bates (FWCF), Duke Harrington (reporter, The Current).

Staff:

Bob Malley.

Call to order:

Bill N called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

Approval of minutes of the August 16, 2012 regular meeting:

Don motioned approval and Bill B seconded. All approved.

Public comment for items not on the agenda: None.

FWCF Update: Given by Steve Bates.

- Battery Blair study: Bob would comment later in agenda.
- Arboretum/Cliffside: The future maintenance of Cliffside is under discussion. Need is being assessed as volunteers are not sustainable for long-term; contracting maintenance services is being considered. There has been some assistance from PW team, which was not the original intent. As they move forward with future sites, maintenance will be built into budgets through an endowment component. Commissioners thought that practice was already in place, that it was part of the original agreement re: the project. The yoga classes at Cliffside were successful and were a financial break-even. Maria Gallace (chairing education) is overseeing the docent program and the plant/tree labels, both anticipated in spring.
- Arboretum/Children's Garden: Five landscape architects have submitted designs. The finalist has been selected, but will not be announced until the donor reception at the Gallace/Soley home on October 19th. Boards of design entries are still traveling to various locations, including several in surrounding towns. Input from the board displays will not influence voting of final selection; rather it will be considered in the refinements of the final design.
- Arboretum/Garden Tour: The event netted about \$30K, which duplicates last year's results with fewer gardens. It is labor-intensive; may consider offering every other year.
- The Foundation has vetted and will soon nominate two new board members. The board has selected a facilitator (Barbara Irish, Common Good Ventures) to assist in the next step in their internal assessment, which will include revisiting their mission, vision and values. The result will be action steps to achieve their goal of realignment, positioning the organization for a successful Arboretum campaign.

Follow-up to Battery Blair Feasibility Study Meeting (Given by Bob Malley)

The meeting on Friday (9/14) was a productive one. Rick Renner and his team were well-prepared. The conversation was refocused on the site and its topographical challenges. They are proposing unearthing the northerly portion only, 10-12' below level, plus a section toward the parking lot. They provided a preliminary cost estimate of \$860K if done now (suggested adding 3% per year thereafter). They will submit a preliminary draft report by early to mid-October for review and feedback from FWCF and FWAC members. Renner will submit the final report by November 1. FWCF and FWAC members will then determine whether they want to go forward with the project, and if so, how. The field trip to Battery Bowdoin on Cushing Island is re-scheduled for the morning of Wed., October 3rd.

Maine State Troopers' Event Report (Given by Bob Malley)

The National Troopers Coalition event was held as scheduled on Thursday, Sept 13th. They were in upper parking lot area, by the Fire Station. Tents went up the day before. This event was a pilot, testing out the proposed requirements for approved alcohol use. Bob met with Mike Edes and other Troopers the week before the event to go over logistics. Bob visited the area in the morning and in the afternoon. He thought the music was too loud for the passive enjoyment of the park by others and requested the volume be turned down; the Troopers immediately complied. He also witnessed one incident of alcohol outside the designated area; again this was immediately addressed. Bob reported that the fee collected for the event was well below what was expected (budgeted), based on Trooper attendance estimates. Instead of \$3,600 (based on 1,200 people @ \$3/ea), Bob received payment based on actual attendance of 621. This situation raised questions about whether we should request additional payment from the Troopers, and how this might be avoided in the future. Bob suggested Commissioners might assess the Troopers the \$500 area fee, according to current policy, to make up some of the difference. The question was asked how we verify attendance; do we rely on the reserving party for numbers? Bob requested guidance from the Commission regarding how to manage such situations going forward. Perhaps we should require a minimum payment, based on estimates at time of booking. It was suggested that the Commission address these sorts of issues, but that those internal management guidelines could be in a document separate from the Group Use Policy document.

Frank moved that the Troopers be assessed the \$500 established area fee for full day, plus \$3/head fee (established people-intensive fee) based on actual attendance of 621. Bill B seconded. All approved.

Group Use Policy & Fee Schedule

With the Troopers' pilot event now having taken place, Commissioners took another look at their proposed changes to the Group Use Policy & Fee Schedule, to go into effect December 1, 2012. The most significant proposed change is the use of alcohol when approved in conjunction with a group use request. Only a few adjustments were made to the proposed fee schedule: integrating Cliffside into the list of sites, renaming Ship Cove Platform and Firehouse Hill, and increasing the surcharge for events approved to serve alcohol to \$500. It was also agreed that the fee for wedding and partnership ceremonies would be assessed over and above any facility or area fee. There were many questions and requests for clarification, often about procedure, regarding the Group Use Policy. Don offered to revise the document so it might be better understood by the general public; Bill B and Lise offered to assist as editors. This revised document and a revised fee schedule will be available at FWAC's October meeting, at which time a final proposal will be approved. Commissioners were asked to consider designating Firehouse Hill as the only area available for events serving alcohol; limiting the number of large group events per year, perhaps allotted monthly; and limiting the number of large groups on weekends, particularly Memorial Day through Labor Day. These guidelines, along with the proposed minimum fee for large groups suggested earlier, could be drafted in a separate policy document, one that would not need to accompany the others for Town Council approval in November.

Park and Master Plan Projects Update: Given by Bob Malley.

- The Cliffwalk railing is installed. Preparation for the hardscape work has started.
- A \$500 donation from a South Portland resident was received through a donation box. Donations received total \$5,200 to date.
- Work on the tennis courts (by the pond) is complete.
- Bob and John Mitchell attended a Planning Board workshop for first read on our proposed projects. Once approved (perhaps as early as the PB's October meeting), it can be put out to bid, with work commencing perhaps in April.
- Greg Marles replaced the lintel on the Fire Station.
- There will be a film shoot this weekend (Appleseeds).
- The gate for the new fencing between the old entrance and Delano Park (where the Shore Road Pathway crosses Shore Road) is on order and will be installed soon.
- Shore Road Pathway dedication ceremony is scheduled for October 8 at 4PM near pond.

Other Business:

Bob would like Commission to revisit the bench program. He is fielding many requests.

Final Public Comment: None.

Adjournment:

Motion was made to adjourn by Frank, seconded by Don. All approved.
Meeting adjourned at 9:23 PM.

Our next regular meeting will be Thursday, October 18th at 6:30 PM at the Public Works Facility.

Respectfully submitted by:
Lise Pratt, Secretary