

**Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Park Committee**

Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2016

Present: Chair, Mark Russell (MR), Charles “Chuck” Wilson (CW), Joe Kozlowski (JK), Suzanne McGinn (SM), Don Clark (DC) Steve Lyons (SL) and Chris Straw (CS)

Absent: N/A

Staff: Robert Malley, Director of Public Works (RM)

Public: Terry Ann Scriven, resident of 18 Old Ocean House Road

Call to Order: Mark Russell called the meeting to order @ 7:02 PM.

Meeting Minutes

The August 18, 2016 meeting minutes were approved (6 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstention) and the Amphitheater Public Forum notes (7 Yes 0 No) were amended after a minor edit suggested by CW.

Citizen Opportunity for Public Comment Not On the Agenda

There was no public comment

Committee Member Updates & Correspondence

All members weighed in with feedback they had received on the amphitheater proposal and observations of Park use that they have observed in the past few weeks. There was a general discussion and concerns expressed about the amount of bus traffic, congestion and parking; both inside and at the former main entrance. SM inquired if the amount of buses allowed to enter the Park could be limited and DC would like a record of the number of buses entering the Park on a daily basis for the next meeting. SL expressed concerns about parking and the conditions of the Porto-johns over Labor Day weekend. He also suggested that the Master Plan should be updated.

FWPF Update: Lynn Shaffer

Lynn Shaffer was not in attendance. She had sent RM an email on September 8, 2016 saying the FWPF had been busy preparing for the opening of the Children’s Garden, which was held on Friday, September 9th.

Park Update:

RM reported that the materials for the Cliff Walk Railing project were shipped to the contractor last week. It is hoped that the installation will be completed by first part of October. RM attended the dedication ceremony for the Children’s Garden on Friday, September 9th. It was well attended by both children and adults alike. There was a general discussion about the “off leash area” and the amount of dogs running loose in areas that are out of the designated area. DC suggested relocating some existing signage and enlarging the “off leash” area, but RM advised that is officially delineated on a map. CS relayed that it is part of an ordinance and approved by the Town Council. RM advised that the South Portland Animal Control Officer recently attended a meeting of the Town Department Heads. At the meeting RM advised him of the increased amount of dog walkers in the Park and inquired about the amount of time allocated to patrolling the Park.

Amphitheater Proposal & Update on Meeting with Town Manager

MR reported on the meeting with RM and Mike McGovern. Mike noted the feedback received at the public forum and also suggested there may be political hurdles facing the amphitheater proposal given the scope and

amount of the proposed project. He suggested the Committee might want to put the project on hold for the time being. MR feels the Committee faces a challenge if they want to get the proposed project off the ground.

JK is in favor of the project, but agrees the projected cost is a concern. He expressed concern if the scope of the project is reduced and thinks the Committee may have regrets in the future if that happens. He also stated there are other projects in the Park that may need consideration, such as restrooms and parking.

CS has heard unanimous support for the proposed project in conversations with individuals and suggested that the Committee should request the Town Council put it to a referendum.

DC stated he is completely against putting the proposed project to a referendum. He thought the forum was well advertised and that the negative feedback received revealed the proposed project does not have a local constituency. Recommended tabling the project for now and consider other projects such as the proposed parking improvements near the Children's Playground. He also expressed concerns about the timing of the project; given the concern about increased usage of the Park.

SL stated the Park is becoming overused and that the proposed amphitheater project should be tabled. He feels oversight of the Park should be evaluated and again reiterated that the Master Plan should be updated.

CW stated that the proposed project should be tabled for now and that if the Committee wants to pursue the proposed project in the future; the need and costs needs to be better explained. He also stated he was opposed to putting it to a referendum.

SM likes the project, but wants to see the impact of the Children's Garden. Doesn't want to "shelve" the project, but keep it on the list for future consideration. Agrees that the Committee should consider safety improvement projects listed in the Master Plan.

MR stated the Committee needs to update the Town Council on the status of the project once the Committee has reached a consensus.

After some general discussion, DC moved and CW seconded that in light of the feedback received at the public forum, the increased use of the Park and opening of the Children's Garden, the Committee has decided not to develop and submit a proposed amphitheater project for consideration by the Town Council at this time. (6 Yes and 1 No).

CS moved and MR seconded to put the proposed amphitheater project on a ballot. After some general discussion a vote was taken on the motion. (1 Yes, 5 No, 1 Abstention).

There was a general discussion about traffic, the types of activities taking place in the Park and the usage of the Park. DC asked if traffic counts could be done to determine the number of vehicles entering the Park. RM stated that the Town does not own a traffic counter.

Discussion of Priorities for Next Budget Cycle (FY 2018)

RM stated the Committee needs to start thinking about the FY 2018 budget submittal which needs to be sent to the Town Manager by November. There was a general discussion about projects noted in the 3-Year Prioritization Plan sent to the Town Council in April 2016 and others listed in the Master Plan Update. The condition of the existing sidewalk on the northerly side of the former bleachers was discussed along with the need for handicapped accessibility from the Parade Field parking lot to the Children's Garden. The Committee asked RM to obtain an estimate for future consideration.

RM reported to the Committee that he obtained a quote from a local contractor to remove the existing sidewalk on the southerly side of Harrison Road (Officers Row). Once removed, the area would then be loamed and seeded. Pedestrians are using Harrison Road in lieu of the walk and it poses a safety hazard given the exposed height along some areas of the walk. It is also proposed to install hand railings on the existing concrete steps that led the former Officers Row buildings from Harrison Road. The cost is estimated to be approximately \$10,000, which could be funded out of the "Misc. Projects TBD by the FWPC" line item in the FY 2017 Capital Fund Budget (865).

Moved by DC and seconded by CW to remove the existing sidewalk and install railings on the concrete steps as recommended by RM. (7 Yes 0 No).

This was followed by a short discussion about various projects and the merits of some of them, such as repairing the Upper Tennis Court, the steps on the westerly side of the Children's Garden and adding plantings

along the northerly boundary of the Park where it abuts Surf Road, and continuing the black fencing from the main gate to the Surf Rd. corner of the Park.

Other Business Not on the Agenda:

Citizen Opportunity for Public Comment of Items on the Agenda:

There were no citizens present at the time this item was reached in the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:49 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
Robert C. Malley