

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

Meeting Minutes
March 28, 2019

Present: Jim Walsh (JW), Joe Kozlowski (JK), Suzanne McGinn (SM), Mark Russell (MR), and Doreen Johnson Theriault (DT)

Absent: Jim Kerney, Ken Pierce

Staff: Kerry Kertes (KK), Fort Williams Coordinator, Kathy Raftice (KR), Community Services and Fort Williams Park Director, Andrea Southworth, Friends of Fort Williams Park

Public: Greg Gordon, Jerry Kneller, Roger Rioux

Call to Order: JW called meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The February 12, 2019 draft meeting minutes were approved. (4 - Yes, 0 - No)

Public Comment Opportunity for Discussion of Items Not On the Agenda

3 from public just introduced themselves to the committee.

FWPF Update

Andrea Southworth discussed the following:

Friends of Fort Williams Park Ecology Project Report, 03-20-19

Planning:

- On Friday, June 21st, a number of Rotary Club volunteers are going to clear invasives near the Firehouse in the woods. However, I'd like to have an additional site or two for volunteer projects. Is FWPC interested in having volunteers clear some of the large debris 'mulch' left from the invasives mowing at Battery Blair? Unfortunately, Toms of Maine (150 volunteers) has decided not to participate this year.

Maintenance:

- Cliffside and Cliff Walk Landscape: Dan O'Wril (Blue Ox Maine), an arborist, started work along Cliffside and the Cliff Walk. He will finish this week.

- Children's Garden: Nick Tammara is going to give me an estimate for work in the Children's Garden. Two possibilities that I would like to discuss with FWPC: 1. The hillside next to the slide needs to be considered. Kids scramble up the hill next to the slide and so the soil has eroded. The rounded stones that were supposed to serve as stepping stones aren't functional (and I'm afraid that someone will get hurt). There are short green metal posts along the sides of the slide that were put in place (I think) to try to prevent people from walking on the plants. Nick was going to give me an estimate to put in new granite stairs and handrail (similar to the other stairs/rails in the Children's Garden), but then I wondered about the existing cement stairs to the west of the slide (coming up from the pond). Would it be possible for FFWP and FWPC to work together to remove the old cement stairs and put in the new stairs (closer to the slide)? Also, near the old cement stairs is a big patch of honeysuckle, forsythia, bittersweet and other plants that I'd be happy to remove. 2. Someone wants to donate a decorative sculpture for the Children's Garden, but I suggested an alternative: a grove of shagbark hickories (or other nut trees) between the Children's Garden and the Tree Succession area--to the north of the CG. I have a (potential) separate donor for the plant material, and have asked Nick Tammara for an estimate to dig the holes,

site prep, etc. If this could work, I envision that the site wouldn't be mowed, but would look like an orchard with an understory of tall grasses/wildflowers. I noticed other groves of shagbark hickories at Gull Crest (near the football field). These trees are beautiful, have amazing fall color, are great for wildlife, etc. I just wanted input from FWPC at this very early stage of discussion. (The donor would provide for a maintenance budget).

During Andrea's presentation JW did explain the walk around from the spring and the conditions related to the slide. It was pointed out that the insurance company has requested the area at the bottom of the slide be checked and recorded on a regular basis. MR just questioned another stairway being input, wouldn't it be too crowded, should we use existing stairway area. JW explained FWPC would share in the funding. Andrea will check with the Pond Cove playground committee regarding wood chips for bottom of slide. Regarding the request by the family and the donation, MR explained there is a policy about adding sculptures but certainly sounds good, would want to see a plan. JW explained any plaque must conform to the others in the park. Andrea will get some additional information and bring back to the committee in April.

Group Use Approvals – Beach to Beacon – Thursday, August 1, 2019, Breast Cancer Walk ACS – Sunday, October 20, 2019, Wedding – Saturday, July 13, 2019, Portland Yacht Club – Saturday, August 10 – Monday, August 12, 2019:

Additional Request from Beach to Beacon

Thursday, August 1, 2019 – Welcome Gathering for Elite Athlete's and Families

5:00 – 7:00 pm (tent will already have been erected)

50-60 people, light food and alcohol

FWPC Approved (5-0)

Portland Yacht Club – Monhegan Island Race Finish

Saturday, August 10 – Monday August 12, 2019 (early morning)

(PYC will hire police for overnight)

FWPC Approved (5-0)

American Cancer Society – Breast Cancer Walk

Sunday, October 20, 2019

7:00 am – 12:00 pm

FWPC Approved (4-0) (1 recusal Russel)

Wedding – no vote, redirect after further information obtained and following of the Group Use policy.

Review of Ft Williams Dog Ordinance Update:

The committee discussed that rules are good but lack of enforcement and self-regulation are the main issues. Chief Fenton has been in discussion with the Animal Control Officer and Kerry has witnessed many not following the off leash rules in the early morning hours. The amount of dog poop that those working at the park are picking up is ridiculous. JW feels that stricter regulations needed, DT states that while working there she feels it has really worsened. SM feels it is more of a dog park than a people park. Roger Rioux did contribute that he feels the dogs are out of control and that the Athletic Field should be fenced in. JW discussed the request by Maureen O'Meara and the committee felt the park should go to a category #2 (on leash only). A vote was taken and approved (5-0). *****Amendment to this discussion. This was not properly noticed as a point to be discussed on agenda for this date and therefore will be posted on our next agenda as a discussion topic to ensure complete transparency. No changes at this time.**

Signage – Kerry Kertes:

Kerry explained the number of signs currently at the park and input he received from Jim Kerney, Joe Kozlowski and Ken Pierce. Feels the number can be reduced significantly and that signs need to be lowered to not block the view. Interpretive signs along central parking, 2 Wayfaring signs and 3 interpretive signs. MR noted the good work that has been done, has some concerns with the bus parking and the signs. Kerry explained that bus signs could be lowered. MR feels should be a sign directing public to port a johns. JW suggested sue of the website with photos and directions. JW stated signs must be in the color coding utilized throughout the rest of the park. Next step for Kerry is to find company to make signs and go from there.

Review and Discussion on Commercial Pass Vehicles in Ft Williams – 3 yr plan and Update of Pay & Display Workshop:

JW began discussion with talking to the point that the TC would like a 3 year plan on the Commercial Pass Vehicle Fees. JW acknowledged the work that Jim Kerney had done and recognized the trolley impact had not been fully researched. JW would like a subcommittee to look at the 3 year plan again. JW will be a member of the subcommittee as will Jim Kerney and MR volunteered as well. Greg Gordon did explain that consideration needed for Uber, Lyft etc. He further states he understands and supports the need for a long term plan but still unclear what is the ultimate goal. JW explained where Pay & Display stands now. Ordinance approvals to take place and will be on the 4/8/19 TC agenda with a public hearing in May. MR wanted to restate that the ultimate goal of both the Commercial Pass fees and the Pay & Display was to maintain/improve safety and control within the park. MR feels the committee has done what was asked now time for TC to go forward with the recommendations.

Public Comment Opportunity for Discussion of Items on the Agenda

Jerry Kneller asked to speak to a couple items. He appreciates all the committee is doing and wants to be a part of the solution. As for the Dog Ordinance, he feels there should be an article in the Cape Courier that the expectation is for dog owners to self-regulate and if not seen the option could be that no dogs be allowed in the park. On the Commercial Fees & Pay & Display, he is a voice of the taxpayer and feels more needs to be done to impact the overall impact to the taxpayer. He would like to see more participation and is surprised by the lack of it. Stakeholders need to voice their concerns.

Greg Gordon feels there should be the no idle signs wherever the buses are parked and these must be enforced. He likes the idea of the interpretive signs and will be attending all meetings going forward to ensure he receives the message and has a part in the outcome. He again stressed the issue on what is the ultimate goal. Is the sky the limit on what will be charged?

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM

The next meeting of the full committee will be April 18, 2019 @ 7:00 pm at the Cape Elizabeth Community Center.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kathy Raftice