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**Minutes of the Newburyport Parks Commission**

**January 22, 2024**

Senior Community Center – Second Floor Board Room

Call to order: 6:00 PM A quorum was present.

Commissioners in attendance: Chair Ted Boretti, Nicole Whelan, Charles Griffin, Matthew Ellsworth, Anita Greenwood.

Also in attendance: Manager of Special Projects Kim Turner, Diane Wise, Parks Admin., Michael Hennessey, Parks Manager, Ben Iacono, Andrea Eigerman, Bob Young, Geordie Vining, Michael Updike,

1. **REVIEW OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

The minutes for December 18, 2023 were reviewed.

*Motion to approve the minutes of December 18, 2023. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.*

*Motion by Commissioner Whelan to take the Agenda out of order, seconded by Commissioner Boretti. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.*

1. **NEW BUSINESS**

A) **PARKS SIGANGE POLICY - TED BORETTI**

A signage policy is being drafted by the Parks Commission to help guide decision making when signs are requested for city parks. It is suggested that when a sign is requested, a series of questions will be asked, for example: is the signage educational, necessary, directional, warning, bi-lingual? What size, lettering and logo is appropriate/ allowed? How will the sign be installed and for how long?

A sign data base will be established to keep track of how long each sign has been up and its condition. General discussion ensued and commissioners will receive a draft policy from Chair Boretti to review at a future meeting. Any work of art will be considered by the newly form Art Commission. Signs at Bradley Fuller Park might be better managed by the Parks Commission. Signage policy must consider city ordinances which are in place.

*Discussion, no action taken.*

* 1. **A PROPOSAL TO ADD A PLAQUE ON THE RECENTLY INSTALLED COVID MEMORIAL ALONG THE CLIPPER CITY RAIL TRAIL – GEORDIE VINING, NBPT PLANNING DEPARTMENT**

Artist Michael Updike designed the COVID memorial, it was installed a couple months back. People seem to like it, but are intrigued by the crack on the piece, asking whether it is broken. The crack is deliberate and draws on Japanese Kasugai art which represents healing by binding together i.e. “repair, accept and transform.” Geordie Vining requested the installation of a small plaque behind the COVID memorial with an explanation of the symbolism. This is an example of when a future signage policy should be used. Mr. Vining presented the wording for the plaque and some changes were suggested by the commissioners, which he and the artist accepted.

*Motion by Commissioner Greenwood to approve the plaque with suggested amendments. Seconded by Commissioner Whelan. Vote was 3 in favor and 1 against 1 abstain, Motion passed.*

* 1. **SIGNS AT ATKINSON COURTS AND FULLER TRACK – KYLE HODSDON**

Moved to February Parks Commission Agenda.

* 1. **NOMINATE A MEMBER FO THE PARKS COMMISSION TO THE PUBLIC ART COMMITTEE, TO BE APPROVED THROUGH THE CITY COUNCIL.**

For the new Public Art Committee there will be a total of 7 members: 2 members of Cultural Council, 1 Parks Commissioner, 1 staff member, 1 local artist, and 2 local residents. Similar to CPC, meetings will take place every 2-4 weeks, once the committee is formed the schedule will be set. Nicole Whelan was nominated as the representative of the Parks Commission.

*Motion by Commissioner Greenwood to nominate Nicole Whelan to represent the Parks Commission on the Public Art Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Griffin. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.*

* 1. **EARTH MONTH PROPOSAL FOR CASHMAN PARK – SARAH TAPPAN**

During Earth Month 2024, the “Rising Tide” project will educate the public about the effect of rising tides in our city. Proposed (i) tide markers with QR codes that can be scanned for additional information (ii) chalk lines that indicate the tides from 2030-2050. The chalk lines will wash away after a couple rain days. These actions will help to educate people about the need to flood-proof Cashman Park and start the work on additional plans to protect the park. The soccer field will not be marked up. The Harbor Master, Paul Hogg, must be notified. Mike Hennessey read a letter from Paul Hogg regarding events that are held at Cashman, and the necessity of notifying him of events that impact parking, the boat ramp and docks.

*Motion by Commissioner Griffin to accept the “Rising Tide” proposal contingent upon Harbor Master approval. Seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.*

* 1. **ATKINSON COMMON ROCK TOWER NOMINATION INTO THE NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES - KIM TURNER**

Local West Newbury resident is willing to take on the task, pro bono, of completing the application for including the Rock Tower at Atkinson Common in the National Register of Historic Places. General discussion focused on the need to work with CPC, and for Commissioner Ellsworth to attend a meeting to discuss this proposal. The Rock Tower is already mentioned in district history. The opportunities as well as any pitfalls of being included in the register must be understood.

*Discussion, no action taken.*

* 1. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF PARKS COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN, OSRP (OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION PLAN), AND CITY MASTER PLAN. – TED BORETTI**

Once a year a review takes place to assess where the Parks Commission is on their vision. The commissioners reviewed each bullet in the strategic plan to see if an action is being taking to achieve the Parks Commission’s vision. The majority of the bullets were on point, some were not conducive to the vision any longer and some will be more appropriately handled by the public art committee. Commissioners agreed that some issues should be included in the February Agenda, e-bikes on the Rail Trail and having a fenced portion of Moseley Woods for off lease dog park.

Commissioner Greenwood will revise the document based on the discussion, for review by commissioners to ensure that it reflects our current thinking and reflects the progress that has been made.

*No action taken.*

* 1. **PERKINS PARK, REPAINTING LINES ON THE COURTS – ANITA GREENWOOD.**

The pickleball lines at Perkins Park were added in 2017 and have faded considerably. A request was made to allow repainting of the pickleball lines on both the basketball and tennis courts as they are now.

The Newburyport Pickleball players have offered to pay to have the lines repainted and Mike

Hennessey offered to pressure wash before the painting is done. Paint will have to dry for 24 hours.

*Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to allow the Newburyport Pickleball to repaint the Pickleball lines on the basketball and tennis multisport courts. Seconded by Commissioner Griffin. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.*

**3) OLD BUSINESS:**

A) **DALE ROGERS HARE SCULPTURE FOR MARCH HILL – TED BORETTI**

Alternatives to March Hill are being considered. This discussion and decision should go before the newly formed Public Art Committee.

*Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to refer Dale Rogers Hare Sculpture to the newly formed Public Art Committee. Seconded by Commissioner Griffin. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.*

*Motion by Commissioner Griffin to adjourn Parks Commission meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth. So voted on a unanimous voice vote.*

**ADJOURNED 8:02 p.m.**

**List of documents viewed at Parks Commission Meeting**

* Minutes from December 18, 2023 Parks Commission Meeting
* Picture of plaque with the wording that explains the COVID Memorial.
* PowerPoint from Sarah Tappan regarding the Rising Tide, Earth Month Proposal for Cashman Park.