



TOWN OF HUDSON

Benson Park Committee

Jim Barnes, Chairman

Patricia Nichols, Selectmen Liaison



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Meeting Minutes March 17, 2016

1. Call to Order: The regular meeting of the Benson Park Committee was called to order by Chair J. Barnes at 7:00 PM, March 17, 2016 in the HCTV Center, 19 Kimball Hill Road.
2. Pledge of Allegiance: Led by J. Barnes
3. Attendance: Members present include Chair J. Barnes, R. Alio, A. Desrosiers, D. Empey, R. Ingram, S. Jasper, J. Leone, M. McQueeney, Selectman Liaison P. Nichols, and H. Schibanoff.
J. Griffus was absent.
4. Public Input: Lissa Proulx, Hudson resident, spoke on the subject of benches in the park. Specifically, she is interested in having a new bench placed in the park in memory of her daughter, Angela, who passed away in 2015. This led to a more general discussion about the need for additional benches in the park for people with walking disabilities and limitations, the possible locations of additional benches, and the proper placement of benches (off pavement, placed on pavers, etc.). There was general support for placing more benches, and the possible locations for additional benches can be addressed at the annual park walk-through on April 21. The committee thanked Ms. Proulx for coming before the committee and for her presentation.
5. Approval of Minutes for February 18, 2016: Motion to accept made by J. Leone and seconded by H. Schibanoff. A. Desrosiers and S. Jasper abstained. Minutes of the February 18, 2016 meeting were accepted.
6. Old Business:
Signs: J. Barnes recommended having handicap parking signs nearest the gate and five spaces marked for volunteer parking. Discussion ensued regarding town ordinances, police enforcement, permit parking as an option, on-street parking that sometimes occurs during high-volume days and events at the park, and the need for no parking signs on the street. Motion by S. Jasper to request that the Board of Selectmen approve parking by permit for volunteers in designated spaces, seconded by J. Leone, passed unanimously.
7. New Business:
Annual Committee Walk-Through: The annual walk-through will be held on April 21, 2016, at 6:30 PM.
Volunteer Cleanup Days: Cleanup Days are normally held on the second Saturday of each month, weather permitting. The first cleanup day of the season is scheduled for April 9, 2016.
Spending Update: J. Barnes presented the latest budget figures, line items, and sources of funding available for park-related projects and needs.
Portable Toilets: R. Ingram brought up the ongoing issue of portable toilet maintenance and cleanliness, the responsiveness of the Recreation Department, and the responsiveness

of Dave's in addressing issues. R. Ingram noted that the portable toilets that had been near the A-frame structure all winter were in need of cleaning, but instead they suddenly disappeared after Dave's was notified of cleanliness issues. D. Empey reviewed the annual schedule of when portable toilets should be in place and when they should be removed. While there was no resolution by the committee on how to effectively address the issues, there was a general sense of long-term dissatisfaction and frustration with the service provided.

Trash: R. Ingram addressed the issue of non-Pinard trash removal, and how there needs to be a system in place to have that trash removed. D. Empey stated that two Pinard trash containers will replace the non-Pinard trash barrels and will be placed adjacent to the portable toilets near the A-frame and the Elephant Barn for park visitors to use. The Pinard containers will need to be moved the night before trash pickup (twice a week) to a location accessible by the Pinard trucks so they can empty the containers. The question remains who will assume that responsibility on an ongoing basis.

Parking Lot: R. Ingram addressed two issues surrounding the parking lot—overcrowding and night-time activities. Discussion ensued regarding optional parking, on-street parking, a trial phase of hiring part-time help on weekends to collect entrance fees (the broader issue of long-term funding to support the park was also discussed), some sort of electronic toll gate, possible fees for NH residents and out-of-state vehicles, and other options. No specific motions were made, but the consensus was that something needs to be done to address the growth and use of the park and the associated parking issues that everyone seems to be aware of.

Building Repairs: R. Ingram addressed the issue of building maintenance and repairs that need to be done on existing structures, specifically the A-frame roof, the overall condition of the gorilla cage, and the Old Woman and the Shoe. The buildings can be reviewed during the annual walk-through on April 21, and the committee and buildings subcommittee can then better address and plan for repairs that need to be done.

Grant Writing and Funding for the Park: R. Ingram stated that he is willing to seek funding for specific needs and projects to support the park and the Friends of Benson Park. He asked that any committee members who knew of specific contacts at corporations, small businesses, or any other potential funding source pass that information along to him for follow-up. He also asked that committee members forward to him suggested projects and specific needs for the park or the Friends. Committee members brought up the issue of seeking prior approval from the Board of Selectmen for any grant/funding submissions, so as to not commit the town to any unfunded projects not already approved by the Selectmen and/or the town. Any funding proposals will be submitted to the committee and/or the Friends for review and approval, and the Board of Selectmen will be involved as needed for approving funding proposals. S. Jasper suggested the NH Land and Community Heritage Investment Program (LCHIP) as a potential funding source, and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation was also suggested as a potential funding resource.

8. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members:

P. Nichols stated that there is a person who has a framed photo of Arthur Provencher that he would like to donate to Benson Park. J. Barnes asked that P. Nichols provide give him the contact information and he will follow up with the donor.

A. Derosiers reminded the committee of the upcoming Easter Egg Hunt scheduled for March 26. Other committee members noted that there were actually three scheduled Easter Egg Hunts, as posted online.

J. Leone updated the committee on the barn progress and the outstanding work being done by the volunteers, and the plans for a “grand opening” to be held probably sometime in May. More details to come.

H. Schibanoff thanked the voters for passing Warrant Article 18, and suggested that the committee consider asking for only one more round of funding to complete the proposed utilities project, instead of the planned three-part phase of completion of the project.

R. Ingram suggested that the committee consider designating Benson Park as a no-smoking park for the health and safety of all visitors, and as a safety concern for the park in general. Committee members brought up the issue of enforcement, undesirable signage that might be required, and an overall sense that designating the park as a no-smoking park was not practical or feasible.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Benson Park Committee will be on April 7, 2016 at 7:00 PM at the HCTV Center, 19 Kimball Hill Road.

9. Motion to Adjourn: Motion by S. Jasper, seconded by J. Leone, passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:49 PM.