



TOWN OF HUDSON

Benson Park Committee



Judy Brouillette, Vice Chair

Kara Roy, Selectmen Liaison

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Committee Minutes

Date:02/20/2025- 7:00pm

Location: HCTV Meeting Room, 19 Kimball Hill Road, Hudson, NH 03051

- **Call to Order:** at 7:02 pm by Vice-Chair Judy Brouillette
- **Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by Jakob Beauchemin
- **Attendance:** Judith Brouillette, Sarah Petkiewicz, Sue Clement, Jack Madden, Jakob Beauchemin
- **Unexcused:**
Excused: Gary Williams, Kara Roy, and Nate Muir
- **Public Input:**
- **Approval of minutes:**
December 19, 2024 – Ms. Clement made a motion to approve, Mr. Madden seconded motion. Motion passed by 4/0/1 - Ms. Petkiewicz had to abstain as she wasn't present for the December meeting.
January 20th meeting minutes could not be approved because there were not enough people to reach a quorum.

Old Business:

- A. Balance and Expenditures – hold until next meeting
- B. Dog Park/Drainage update – no update until spring
- C. Lead Paint/Mold & Moisture Inspection – Mr. Madden has identified 8 contractors and will start working on this. He will email all of them the inspection report and then give them a deadline to respond to provide a quote.
- D. Report from Natalie Newell from the FoB – Natalie was not present, but she sent an email where she shared that there are 3 dog park benches available for \$1100 each

which also includes the memorial plaque. We cannot put any more benches in the main park. There are also picnic tables available for purchase that will be placed under the A Frame in the park. The 6-foot tables cost \$1,895 and the 4-foot tables cost \$950. We are also considering reaching out to the high school to see if they can make benches. There will be a Volunteer Meet and Greet on April 26th in the elephant Barn that will also include Adopt A Spot Volunteers.

- E. Bridge Signage Request – We have not received any response so this will be removed from the agenda for now.
- F. Memorial Tree – tabled until spring
- G. Camera – this should be purchased from Friends of Benson donations – it is easier than accepting donations to the park committee. Ms. Brouillette to talk to Natalie.
- H. Dog Park Damage to ramp – the ramp is currently buried in snow. The Eagle Scout has plans to fix it once it is accessible.
- I. Damaged Fences – Ms. Brouillette shared that she sent an email to the DPW and hopefully they will fix this in spring before the snow thaws.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Donation from Dave Selvis Jr - David Selvis Jr. from Nashua presented to the Committee. Mr. Selvis' father was the first animal trainer at Benson Park. David Selvis Sr. was born in Hudson, NH and started in high school by training dogs and cakes. He would ride his bike to Benson Park. His first job was giving pony rides. Then he worked with chimpanzees and trained them to do tricks. After that he moved on to train elephants and give rides. He left Benson for a period of time to work at Bedford Zoo where he continued to train animals. He returned to Benson and had jobs like walking around the park with a python around his neck. He then moved on to train the lions and tigers. He tried to train a puma, but it attacked him, and he got 12 stitches on the back of his neck. He retired from Benson to become a machinist. Then in 1986 he stepped back in to fill in for a trainer and performed some acts. His love of animals continued, and he purchased a large property in Merrimack and named it Dave's Grove. There was a gift shop and a petting zoo. He had a bear, pig, goats, and dogs. Mr. Selvis Jr. brought with him an elephant hook and whip, a meat hook used to give large animals a treat, and an elephant hide. The elephant hide is from an elephant named Betsy that is buried in Benson Park. Unfortunately, she swung her trunk and killed the trainer, so they had to dispatch of her. Mr. Selvis Jr. wishes for these items to be donated to go into the museum at Benson Park. Natalie Newall of Friends of Benson (who was not present for this meeting) had shared via email that they would love to accept these items and add them to their collection. Ms. Selvis Sr. passed away on April 3rd in 1996.
2. Cardboard Sled Race – the weather didn't cooperate last Saturday, so it has been moved to Saturday March 8th, weather depending. You can register for the event at the Red Barn. There will be \$1 hot cocoa available. There will be 3 different awards for sleds. The Little Old Lady in the Shoe will be open and she will be there to meet people. Scout Troop 773 will also be giving away goodie bags to the first hundred people. Money will go towards the Friends of Benson so that they can try to open the museum.

The cost of entry is \$10 per sled. Everyone who wishes to sled will need to sign a waiver.

Calendar

- Next Committee Meeting – Thursday, March 20, 2025
- Volunteer Clean-Up Day – Ended until spring – please contact the committee if you are interested in doing a project in the off-season – we still have projects to complete.
- Cardboard Sled Race – March 8, 2025 at 1pm

Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members:

- Ms. Clement – I will be submitted a receipt for \$398.81 for the cost of paint for the shoe.
 - Ms. Petkiewicz – None
 - Mr. Madden – I will be giving back some gently used t-shirts that say Friends of Benson for anyone who wants them. The Volunteer parking permits will expire at the end of the month. Ms. Clement offered to laminate them at home. Please remember to vote in the town election on Tuesday March 12th. There will be a warrant article to add \$10k to the Capital Reserve Fund – please vote yes in favor.
 - Ms. Brouillette – Remember that things are icy out there – please be careful and stay safe. Also please never go on the ice on the pond in the park – it is not safe.
 - Mr. Beauchemin- None
- **Motion to Adjourn by:** Ms. Clement **Second by:** Mr. Madden seconded the motion. Passes unanimously and meeting adjourned at 7:46 pm.