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Minutes of the Newburyport Parks Commission

March 16, 2023

Mayor's Conference Room, Second Floor City Hall

Call to order: 6:00 p.m.

A quorum was present

In attendance: Chair Ted Boretti, Matt Ellsworth, Chuck Griffin

Also in attendance: Parks Manager Mike Hennessey, Manager of Special Projects Kim Turner, Kim Lively, Lisa Christie, India Gray, Esther Sayer, Kathy Fowler, Maureen Ryan, Laura Bentley, Craig Grogan, Deacon Chapin, Glen Low, Dan Tully, Peggy Tully, Lisa Wasson, Jack Wasson, Paul LaRosa, Erin LaRosa

MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL

Tabled approval of minutes from Jan 23 and Feb 27 due to lack of quorum for vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to take items out of order by Commissioner Griffin, seconded by Commissioner Ellsworth. So approved on a unanimous voice vote.

Vera Ristorante restaurant seating at Inn St and Market Sq—(*John Santaniello*) John Santaniello presented his request to use the same square footage at both parks again this year: 600 sf in Market Sq and 850 sf on Inn St. Last year he paid \$10,875 in two installments to the Parks Department. This year he asked if he could have the same rate as the parklets, \$5/sf for both spaces, because he takes care of the parks, sweeping and weeding them and keeping them clean, all season. Commissioner Griffin stated that park space is more valuable than parking spaces and thinks the \$7.50/sf rate should stand. He asked if this would also need to go before the City Council. Answer: no. John stated he would be willing to pay the \$7.50/sf price if the Parks Division would take care of pruning the trees out back before the season begins. Chair Boretti stated that he agrees with the \$7.50/sf number, and that parks are more valuable than parking spaces or sidewalks. Several members of the public spoke in support of the use of the spaces by Vera, and suggested he not pay for the space and/or pay a reduced rate. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to allow Vera Ristorante to approve the use of 600 sf on Market Sq and 850 sf on Inn St this season, via a 6-month license agreement, for outdoor dining, and to have the Parks Division prune the trees this spring. Second by Commissioner Griffin. So approved on a unanimous voice vote.**

Signage and benches at Bradley Fuller—FONTrack (Mike Hennessey, Paul and Erin LaRosa) Paul presented the item, stating that, when FONT was formed in 2015, they raised awareness of the project to renovate the track at Bradley Fuller. They would now like to recognize the sponsors who made the

project happen through signage and seating with plaques. One sign would stand at the entrance to the parking lot, with 5-6 sponsor names. 6 benches would be installed along the edge of the parking lot, near the handicap parking spaces, facing the track so those with mobility issues could enjoy watching events at the track without having to walk to the bleachers. Finally, one bench would be installed near the shot put. Parks Manager Hennessey stated he would like to see the benches sold for \$5K each, to comply with the new Memorial Bench Policy. The money would go to the City, earmarked for maintenance of the track. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve the plan as presented with oversight by Parks Manager Hennessey, so long as the signage complies with Zoning regulations. Second by Commissioner Griffin. So approved on a unanimous voice vote.**

SpringFest—Chamber of Commerce (Sarah Motzkin) The Chamber was unable to attend the meeting, so MSP Turner presented the application from the packet. The request is to use Inn Street and Market Square on June 3-4 from noon to 5 pm (the application states the incorrect time). Commissioner Ellsworth asked if this is a repeat event that occurs annually. Answer: yes. He said the map shows some tables along the Inn St throughway, which is not under the jurisdiction of the Parks Commission. MSP Turner said she would reach back out to the applicant to ask for clarity, and have the applicant request use of the Inn St throughway from City Council if they wanted to use that space. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve the application for SpringFest for areas under Parks Commission jurisdiction as presented. Second by Commissioner Griffin. So approved on a unanimous voice vote.**

Flag Day 5K—1st Lt Derek Hines Soldiers Fund (Stephen Hines) Stephen was not in attendance, so MSP Turner presented the application from the packet. The request is to use Cashman Park soccer fields on June 10 from 9 am to 9 pm. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve the application for the Flag Day 5K as presented. Second by Commissioner Griffin. So approved on a unanimous voice vote.**

Kids Day in the Park—Exchange Club of Greater Newburyport (Jim Noyes) Jim was not in attendance, so MSP Turner presented the application from the packet. The request is to use front portion of Upper Atkinson Common on August 2 from 8 am to 3 pm. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve the application for Kids Day in the Park as presented. Second by Commissioner Griffin. So approved on a unanimous voice vote.**

Temporary tent at Perkins Park—Newburyport Youth Services (Joe Pauline & Andi Egmont) NYS was not in attendance, so MSP Turner presented the application from the packet. The request is to erect a 20'x30' tent at the bottom of the slope opposite the basketball court for the summer, to provide shade for the youth summer camp program. Parks Manager Hennessey stated he thought the tent would fit beyond the outfield of the ballfield and could work with NYS to locate it. **Motion by Commissioner Ellsworth to approve the temporary tent contingent upon final location coordinated with Parks Manager Hennessey. Second by Commissioner Griffin. So approved on a unanimous voice vote.**

Granite posts at Moseley Woods—(Mike Hennessey) Parks Manager Hennessey presented the agenda item, that the wall was damaged by a vehicular accident and the City has received insurance money that needs to be spent by the end of June. He is recommending removing the entire length of stone wall and replacing it with granite posts and chains to mimic Joppa Park. The posts would not have a pyramid at the top, but rather be flat, they would stand 36-40" tall and be drilled with permanent hardware and a chain. MSP Turner asked if there was a grading issue at the existing Pine Tree. Answer: Parks Manager Hennessey said he would go take another look. Commissioner Griffin suggested the stone wall is historic and should be preserved. He would rather the wall be rebuilt, and suggested this money could go to

repair a short section, and that CPC funds could be requested next year to pay for the remaining portion of the wall. **The item was tabled until April.**

NEW BUSINESS

Review of Orphaned Properties—*(Kim Turner)* Kim presented the agenda item, which is a review of properties that are owned by the City but are not specifically managed by any department. The Commission had requested, during its 10-year Strategic Visioning Sessions, to review these properties annually. This year, due to the timing of the approval of the Strategic Plan, a multi-Department and multi-Commission conversation was not scheduled, but MSP Turner wanted the Commission to have the list of orphaned properties to review, and reach out with any suggestions or questions. **No action was taken.**

Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Ellsworth, seconded by Commissioner Whelan. Approved on a unanimous voice vote.

Adjourned 7:34 pm.