

PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

FINAL MINUTES

Tuesday, August 23, 2016 @ 7:00 PM

Open Meeting - Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Timothy Quillen	Chairman	Present
Cheryl Dowdell	Vice Chair	Present
Julia Beasley	Commissioner	Absent
Ryan Campbell	Commissioner	Absent
Sonita K. Cummings	Commissioner	Present
David Currier	Commissioner	Absent
Keith D. DeMerchant	Commissioner	Present
Donna M. Deyorio	Commissioner	Present
Jodi Frank	Commissioner	Present
Richard E. Horstmann	Commissioner	Absent
Thomas L. Nowell	Commissioner	Absent
Edward Vazquez	Commissioner	Absent
Holly Eaves	Commissioner	Present

Also present were Town Council Liaison Bonnie Van Slyke and Parks & Recreation Director Vicky Hilton.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Parks & Recreation Commission - Regular Meeting - Jul 26, 2016 7:00 PM

RESULT:	ACCEPTED AS AMENDED [6 TO 0]
MOVER:	Sonita K. Cummings, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Jodi Frank, Commissioner
AYES:	Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSTAIN:	Eaves
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

3. COMMENTS FROM PUBLIC

There were no comments from the public.

4. TOWN COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Town Council Liaison Bonnie Van Slyke read the letter from Steve Stolle as follows,

"Dear Vicky,

I want to thank you for your leadership of Parks and Recreation.

I have been particularly impressed by the lifeguards and parking staff at Blue Shutters Beach because that is the place I most frequent. Things are usually good there but this year has been exceptional. The lifeguards are outstandingly vigilant of people in the water. On several occasions I have seen them rush to assist older or infirm people knocked down by the waves, doing it in such a way that preserved their dignity and created an intergenerational bond. I have seen them speak to children with courtesy when it comes to getting them off the rocks or correcting unsafe behavior. So many times they have gone beyond what might be expected or asked. It says a lot about the kind of people they are and the kind of supervision and managerial support given them.

The parking lot staff is terrific as well. They provide order and direction that is as needed as it is sometimes under appreciated. It is not always easy or welcome for younger people to supply direction to those older and often in positions of influence in their working and social lives. Yet again, our staff has done it very well and undoubtedly

absorbed the undeserved slight or comment from time to time. They earn more praise than they will probably ever get, yet I must think that you and your team let them know their work is so important and appreciated. Regrettably I don't know most of their names but I have spoken with Jonah several times and he is a very impressive gentleman who takes doing a great job as a matter of honor and integrity. I think of him not only as representative of the rest of the staff but certainly as an example as well.

Please know how very grateful so many of us residents are of you, your great Department, and particularly the wonderful young women and men who make out summer at the beach so safe, orderly and pleasant.

Sincerely,
Steve Stolle”

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Flagpole Gardens Update - Cody Clarkin

Cody Clarkin reported that he had the contract for the exit gate at the Seafood Festival where he asked for donations. He reported that he had raised about three thousand dollars (\$3,000), bringing the total to a little over seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500). In total over the years about sixteen thousand dollars (\$16,000) had been raised.

Mr. Clarkin mentioned that he had met with TM Dyer to discuss welding of the flagpole so that it could be brought down and painted. He also mentioned that he might not have to buy any new plants and could split what was there. Also, that there are two (2) pine trees that may have to be removed.

Mr. Clarkin continued that he met with Lindsey Montari who is an artist with the Narragansett tribe to look at bringing in a Native American aspect to the project. He mentioned a preliminary plan of making four (4) stone walls with seating that would represent the four (4) directions.

He mentioned that he was working on a three-dimensional model and that he was looking for an architect to work with. He mentioned he might not have to use the whole seven thousand five hundred dollars (\$7,500) on the flagpole and was considering dropping the fence in the field and making it a kickball field so there are no hard balls hitting the pavilion which could dent it. Mr. Clarkin asked the Commission what they thought about it.

The Commission discussed the current use of the field.

Director Hilton noted in the Master Plan the backstop is gone.

Mr. Clarkin reported that at the next meeting he wanted to bring informal letters of intent from his supporters.

Commissioner Eaves asked if someone comes in to do work who checks the insurance of volunteers, as normally it would be done under the bid process.

Chairman Quillen reported that when he brought equipment into the park he was required to provide proof of insurance and licensing before he could go forward with any work.

Commissioner Eaves noted that they should be ready to provide that at some point.

RESULT: NO VOTE TAKEN

b. Review and Approve Ninigret Park Trails Subcommittee Request for Proposal

Commissioner Eaves noted that the Trail Subcommittee met and that the Town Administrator's first draft was edited and the map on the back should not be out with the RFP and asked if it was.

Director Hilton reported that it wasn't.

Commissioner Eaves noted that the 5K that was on the map was proposed at one point and that the Trails Subcommittee is at a different point. The Subcommittee wants the RFP to go out in a phased approach and a total estimated cost approach.

Commissioner Eaves noted that with what happened with the bike path the trails might be low on the totem pole and there are other things the funds need to be expended upon. Whether there is enough money for trails is a question. However, one of the thoughts was it would be really good to have because if the plans cannot be executed they would at least have them for planning or a grant in the future to at least so they can say to the Town Council they have an estimated cost. She mentioned the Trails Subcommittee needs to get together and do the phasing piece and that she wanted to get the 5K off the table and make it a Parks and Recreation discussion for later.

Commissioner Eaves mentioned she had met with the Town Administrator and he had a couple minor questions, and the RFP was going out if the Town Council had no issues with it, as it was sent to the Town Council.

Commissioner Eaves asked for feedback and noted that they did a lot of work.

Commissioner Dowdell noted that this was one of the high priorities back in the fall, that it warrants the respect of having an RFP so that in the event the grant money comes in it is ready to go as it is something the Commission wants to do and the Town Council wanted to do it back in the fall, and it is important to keep it on the front burner.

Commissioner Eaves noted that at least the Commission would have an estimate and future Parks and Recreation Commissions can work from it.

RESULT:	NO VOTE TAKEN
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- c. Purchase Approval of Repair Items for the Slidewinder and Trolley in Ninigret Park from the Ninigret Park Fund

Director Hilton noted the pieces were to replace equipment that had been in Ninigret Park for fifteen (15) years and that it should be done now but there is no money in the budget for it. The total is nine hundred seventy-five dollars and seventy cents (\$975.70).

Commissioner Dowdell displayed pictures of the playground.

Director Hilton noted it wasn't covered under warranty and that it needs to be fixed and that it is not something they can be injured on.

Commissioner Dowdell motioned to pass on to the Town Council to approve the expenditure out of the Ninigret Park Fund for the repair to the equipment.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Cheryl Dowdell, Vice Chair
SECONDER:	Holly Eaves, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

- d. Utilization of Pawaget Park

Commissioner Dowdell noted she has passed by the park four (4) times a day since May, five (5) days a week on average, about nineteen (19) times a week. In Approximately two hundred (200) passes she has anecdotally seen two (2) cars in the parking lot. She noted the money that was spent along with the state and federal government to put in the handicap accessible ramp and viewing platform that is able to handle wheelchairs and

walkers. She noted that at a Town Council meeting Ms. Rhodes indicated that she was frustrated that there weren't many places to go in Town where people could exercise after cardiac surgeries and people with disabilities that need appliances and apparatus and that a mile and a half to two miles away from Ninigret Park is a facility that is not being utilized. Commissioner Dowdell asked how people can be brought to Pawaget Park to utilize it.

Commissioner Dowdell noted that geocache is huge and if there was one in Pawaget Park it is a great way to bring people in.

Commissioner Frank noted letterboxing as an option as it is already in Town.

Commissioner Deyorio asked if anyone had gone to the hospitals that have cardiac rehab and placed a notification.

Chairman Quillen proposed a ferris wheel as it would have a great view for the summer. Chairman Quillen noted he was thinking outside the box and that people could see the sunset from it and could be rolled in and out each season.

Commissioner Dowdell noted it was very noisy and there were ticks there due to the tall grass.

Deborah Carney noted her concern with the field was a tick problem and that she had never seen anyone on the path. She asked if it could be mowed down.

Commissioner Cummings mentioned she thought the field was an attractant to migrating birds.

Commissioner Dowdell noted the path was walkable. She noted money that was spent on the park was predominately used on the walkway to the cove. She asked if there were some events they could bring there. She asked that research be done on what can be done there.

Commissioner Cummings did a study in Charlestown on all the different open spaces and very few are handicapped accessible. She asked that a flyer be made and put out to let people know it is handicapped accessible.

Director Hilton noted that one hundred ninety three thousand dollars (\$193,000) was awarded on the project.

Commissioner Dowdell motioned to ask the Parks and Recreation Department to research an event that can take place in the fall at Pawaget Park.

Chairman Quillen asked the Commission to think about it and bring their ideas to the next meeting.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Cheryl Dowdell, Vice Chair
SECONDER:	Jodi Frank, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Safety Around the Disc Golf Course

Commissioner Eaves noted the issue came up a couple times at the Commission meetings and at Town Council meetings. She noted they looked at maps and there were big open areas to put the trails, but that the disc golf course was in those areas.

Commissioner Eaves noted the map showing the directionality and the disc golf tees. She noted for safety it was important for Parks & Recreation to look at it and identify any potential areas where there is an issue and what can be done about them.

TM Dyer noted that hole ten (10) is going to coincidence with the bike path. He noted that at hole three (3) it might be hard to cross if there is a hedge. Mr. Dyer noted that at hole twelve (12) it is what is left of the old pheasant farm and might have metal.

Commissioner Frank identified three areas of conflict, hole twelve (12), hole three (3) and hole ten (10).

Commissioner Eaves asked to ignore the red 5K line.

Town Councilor Van Slyke asked if there were trails down near hole five (5).

Mr. Dyer reported that a lot of people walk down there, that there were no incidents to date and there is a lot of vegetation there and the holes were designed to force throws into the inside so there wouldn't be any conflict.

Mr. Dyer cited hole three (3), as it is all wide open, and to date there have been no issues and there is a good sight line and that it is a more casual path. Mr. Dyer reported that there should be some signage that says you are in the disc golf area, beware.

Director Hilton noted there definitely needed to be an awareness in the park and displayed some examples of signs.

Commissioner Dowdell motioned for the Parks and Recreation Department to work with the disc golf committee to identify places to put up signage now.

Commissioner Dowdell noted additional signage may be needed at a later date once the bike path built.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Cheryl Dowdell, Vice Chair
SECONDER:	Jodi Frank, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

Commissioner Eaves mentioned she thought there was more to the piece than just signage.

Chairman Quillen noted the motion would be fluid. He asked Commissioner Eaves what would be the next area of concern.

Commissioner Eaves noted hole ten (10), as it is crossing the path.

Mr. Dyer noted the tee was in the road and it shared the same space, and the tee and the bike path are in the same space. He noted if there was just paint in the road for a bike path it would be fine, but with landscaping it would be difficult.

Commissioner Eaves noted one of the questions they need to know is if the bike path is going to landscape the road.

Chairman Quillen noted the RFP was already out.

Commissioner Eaves asked if they could speak directly to Bradford and Associates.

Mr. Dyer noted that at hole twelve (12) the vegetation was bad.

Town Councilor Van Slyke asked if more vegetation could be added.

Mr. Dyer noted areas on the map where there was no vegetation.

Commissioner Eaves noted Bradford and Associates did take safety into consideration and that this may have been an inadvertent oversight. She asked if the second question could be. what is their plan for the vegetation as part of the landscaping?

The Commission clarified that it was hole twelve (12).

Commissioner Dowdell mentioned that the Parks and Recreation Department may need to have a meeting with Bradford and Associates before the start to identify the issues.

Commissioner Eaves noted that the plan is not so ridged that they cannot take the information as valid.

Town Councilor Van Slyke noted that the plans are already out to the contractor and would require a change order.

Commissioner Cummings mentioned that the Commission never saw the plans.

Commissioner Eaves noted that it needed to be addressed and it is part of their responsibility and that the questions cannot be answered until the questions were asked.

Commissioner Eaves noted hole five (5) and six (6).

Mr. Dyer responded that five (5) and six (6) could have signage.

Commissioner Eaves questioned if there was an issue with hole three (3).

Mr. Dyer noted signage could be used on hole three (3).

The Commission discussed the issue with the bike path sharing the same space as the tee.

Commissioner Eaves asked if anyone else saw any potential problems with the tees.

Mr. Dyer noted that the shorter holes mean the discs will not be thrown as hard. He noted the original intent of protecting people on the fitness trail was met and time has told that.

Commissioner Dowdell suggested the motion could be to make sure that a representative of the Parks and Recreation Department, the Commission and the Disc Golf Committee along with Bradford and Associates and the Ad Hoc Committee, and the Town Council sit down for a final time to go over these, to identify and make sure that vegetation and anything is taken into consideration.

Commissioner Dowdell mentioned that onsite might be best.

Chairman Quillen noted that the work would begin the second of September.

Chairman Quillen mentioned the best would be for an onsite meeting at the exact location of the tees with someone from Disc Golf, with someone from Parks and Recreation, with Director Hilton, Town Council and Faith Labossiere.

Commissioner Dowdell recommended that the decision makers be present and suggested maybe Cardis.

Commissioner Eaves asked for an output report from that group and clarified that Cardi's did not need to be present.

Commissioner Eaves motioned to make sure that a representative of the Parks and Recreation Department, the Commission and the Disc Golf Committee along with Bradford and Associates and the Ad Hoc Committee, and the Town Council to specifically look at hole twelve (12), ten (10), to address potential safety concerns and the Parks and Recreation Commission would like a report from that meeting.

Town Councilor Van Slyke recommended that Bradford should look at the safety issue of the whole thing.

Commissioner Cummings withdrew her second and the motion was withdrawn.

Commissioner Eaves motioned for those people, a representative of the Parks and Recreation Department, the Commission and the Disc Golf Committee along with Bradford and Associates and the Ad Hoc Committee, and the Town Council meet to look at the entire disc golf safety issues with specific attention to holes ten (10) and twelve (12) and to produce an output for the Town Council and Parks and Recreation Commission and document an action plan.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Holly Eaves, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Sonita K. Cummings, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

c. Little Nini Beach Sand Update

Chairman Quillen noted he had a sample of sand and took it to a couple labs and it didn't pass as beach sand. But it may have been because there was not enough beach sand put down and the water washed the fines off the top. He noted there was no sense in doing anything now and they would look into eight (8) to ten (10) inches of beach sand or mortar sand.

Commissioner Eaves noted the Town Administrator identified the amount of sand that was needed and based on that amount and cost that was what was approved. She continued that it is clear that two thousand dollars (\$2,000) worth of sand and eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000) worth of sand are two completely different things. She questioned how did it happen.

Commissioner DeMerchant mentioned it was discussed a lot at the last meeting.

Chairman Quillen noted the Town Administrator reported that just because eighteen thousand dollars (\$18,000) was approved didn't mean that was how much had to be spent.

Commissioner Dowdell noted that Marone delivered what they were asked, and that someone asked him to deliver sand. She asked who knew and when did they know it and that she was curious as to why that decision was made and that it doesn't have anything to do with Marone. Marone did what they asked them to do.

Commissioner Dowdell asked Director Hilton did she know they were only delivering one-sixth the amount of sand that was supposed to be ordered. She continued, and the Director of Public Works was the one that gave the original quote and proposal. She asked that moving forward, as it is not Narragansett Town Beach and that Little Nini pond is not generating five million dollars (\$5,000,000) worth of revenue, but that she would at least like to have what they thought they were paying for.

Chairman Quillen mentioned he got specifications from DEM when they order sand for state beaches, and even though it is not a DEM beach they can follow the same standard that is done at the state.

Commissioner Dowdell mentioned that it is people from Charlestown, the kids and grandchildren that use it, and they would like it nice.

Councilor Van Slyke mentioned it looked good for a while.

Deborah Carney suggested as a way to tie it all up, so that it doesn't happen to the Commission in the future, that there be a motion that if the Commission approves "x" amount of dollars at whatever quality it happens to be, if the decision is made at an upper management level, by the Town Administrator or someone else that the Commission be given the courtesy of an email or letter with the reason why.

Commissioner Dowdell mentioned that the Director would make sure that anything that was approved would be done.

RESULT: NO VOTE TAKEN

d. Recreation Bond Expenses

Chairman Quillen noted the attachment in the packets.

Town Councilor Van Slyke noted the oversight of the construction of the bike path was not on the report.

Chairman Quillen reported the Town Treasurer updated the report.

The Commission discussed how much was in the account.

Commissioner Eaves noted the last three, the crack sealing, the ice skating rink and the disc golf items had not been bid or expended.

Chairman Quillen mentioned he thought they were drawing on the monies from the bond as they are spent on the RFP and is a rough tally.

Commissioner Dowdell identified the one hundred forty thousand dollars (\$146,000) that was approved at the Town Council meeting then asked Town Councilor Van Slyke if that money had to be approved to go forward immediately or could it wait until the stuff that was already approved. She asked how they got on the consent agenda. She noted that those were not as high a priority as the park entrance and hiking trails that those are things that don't have to necessarily move on.

Town Councilor Van Slyke responded that she doesn't know if there will be money available for everything but that it could be brought to the Town Council and asked.

Commissioner Dowdell noted there were still two large RFP's out.

RESULT: NO VOTE TAKEN

7. COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED

a. WARM Center Application - Fee Waived

Director Hilton noted the WARM Center wanted to have their employee picnic at the park and that the WARM Center brought lunches to the camp program.

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Sonita K. Cummings, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Jodi Frank, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

8. PARKS AND RECREATION DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Parks and Recreation Director's Report - August

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jodi Frank, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Sonita K. Cummings, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

9. ASSISTANT DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Assistant Director's Report - August

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Jodi Frank, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Sonita K. Cummings, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez

10. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Ninigret Park Trail Subcommittee Report

Commissioner Eaves reported that they needed to meet.

b. Ninigret Park Entrance, Roads and Signage Subcommittee Report

Commissioner Dowdell reported the Town Council approved the RFP and the Town Administrator's Assistant was working on setting up a meeting with Bradford and Associates.

c. Friends of Ninigret Park Subcommittee Report

Chairman Quillen reported they did not have the last meeting and will reschedule.

d. Dog Park Subcommittee Report

Chairman Quillen reported that after Rhythm & Roots he is going to close off the big section of the dog park to try to grow some grass.

Commissioner Dowdell noted the article in the Westerly Sun about the Westerly dog park and how there was someone from Westerly that goes to the Charlestown Dog Park and they mentioned how great it is. She asked the Commission to take a look at it.

Chairman Quillen reported that Richmond had stalled and were still on a capped landfill.

e. Tree Steward's Report

Commissioner Frank reported they saved the trees from the Seafood Festival. She mentioned they had to buy stakes and caution tape and still some people parked their cars on the trees, but that no trees were lost. She mentioned someone with a trailer had parked his vehicle on a tree after moving a stake.

She said this summer has been tough on the trees.

11. LIAISON, COMMISSION, DIRECTOR, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Commissioner Frank noted that the camp and beach were great.

Commissioner Dowdell noted a former employee of the Town got engaged and another got engaged.

Chairman Quillen asked that Councilor Van Slyke check with the Town Administrator as to the progress on the Community Center lighting and that winter is coming and it is getting darker. The five thousand dollars was identified and he asked what they can do for the rest of the money so that people can make it out to their cars safely this winter.

12. AGENDA REQUESTS

Chairman Quillen asked that the motion about communication when funds are approved be added.

Commissioner Cummings requested that the Ninigret Park Fund balance be added to the Parks and Recreation Agenda monthly as there are not many events coming in.

13. NEXT MEETING DATE - TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2016 AT 7:00 PM IN THE TOWN HALL'S TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 4540 SOUTH COUNTY TRAIL

14. NEXT TOWN COUNCIL MEETING - MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2016

15. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn at 8:30 PM

RESULT:	APPROVED [UNANIMOUS]
MOVER:	Sonita K. Cummings, Commissioner
SECONDER:	Jodi Frank, Commissioner
AYES:	Eaves, Quillen, Dowdell, Cummings, DeMerchant, Deyorio, Frank
ABSENT:	Beasley, Campbell, Currier, Horstmann, Nowell, Vazquez