

WALKERSVILLE PARKS COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

March 1, 2023

In Attendance: Jay Lochner (Commission Chair), Mary Ann Brodie-Ennis (Commissioner Liaison), David Toohey, Patricia Rowley, Anna Newman and Kevin Conley. Also present were Sean Williams, Town Manager, and Kelly Woods, Park Maintenance.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Jay. The February meeting minutes were motioned to be approved by Patricia, David seconded, and all approved.

PARKS USAGE REQUESTS

- Alex Young, representing the Summer Solstice 8k Race on June 17th. Asks to close Heritage at 6PM, 250-300 runners, race starts at 7:30 PM and runners should be out of the park around 8:30. The race benefits Blessings in a Backpack. Michelle raised a concern about the Harry O. Baseball Tournament that weekend. Steve Gessner said they are usually out by about 6PM so it should work. Patricia made a motion to accept the Summer Solstice request, Kevin seconded the motion, and all approved.

PARK PLANNER UPDATE

We have sent the request for a proposal by Human & Rohde and are awaiting their response.

POS DISCUSSION

- Application needs to be filed by May 5th. Some projects that were mentioned were foot golf, bocce, dog park, and skate park.
- Mary Ann suggested expanding the foot golf project to nine holes; Kevin would like to prioritize a larger project, specifically a dog park.
- Dog Park: One issue is where the dog park would be located and what the scale of the project would be. Locations at Heritage and Community Park were discussed. Sean said that utilities would be easier to access at Community Park, and close to the parking area might be preferable; but mentioned we might use an entirely different location for a dog park instead of putting one into an existing town park. This could require requesting funds for park acquisition. The prospective property near the bowling alley is one idea, but we still need to determine what can be done in flood plain. The Walker Farm is already ours but is on a yearly lease so a project could not be completed there this year (however, it could have potential in the next few years).
- Skate Park: the issue is location as well.
- Jay suggested adding poured-in-place surface to other playgrounds, though POS money cannot be added to previous POS projects (but the large playground at Community would be eligible).
- Mary Ann brought up safety concerns with some of the older equipment at Community Park, so we could apply for funds to address those. We could replace the swings and add a playset for younger children, a merry-go-round and diggers, with poured-in-place surface. We need to get a quote to prepare for POS application.

- Kevin circled back to the dog park and said that this was the top request on the town survey so he feels we should prioritize this. Middletown's dog park cost \$30,000.
- Sean added that the money will likely be tighter this year since LPPI funds are not available.
- Patricia would like to request money for both the dog park and the Community playground update.
- Kelly brought up other issues in the parks: [KELLY'S REPORT]
 - Fish climbing area at Trout Park—\$3882 quote
 - Small pavilion play area (23 years old) at Heritage has a lot of issues and parts are no longer available. It may need to be totally replaced in the next year.
 - Large pavilion play area is starting to wear out as well.
- Patricia made a motion to replace the fish piece at Trout Park; David seconded and all approved.
- *Wrap-up on POS application discussion:* we would like to request funding for a new playground at Heritage (by the small pavilion); a dog park; and replace equipment with safety concerns at Community Park (with poured-in-place surface). Patricia is going to do some research on play equipment designs. Kevin is going to get numbers for .5-1 acre dog parks. We will finalize our recommendations at the next meeting.

TREES AT TROUT PARK

We are hoping to plant trees next fall so we will need volunteers to help plant. Troop 1011 has already committed to volunteer.

GVAA REPORT—Michelle Fyock

- Basketball hit a snag with gym space at Glade Elementary but they worked through it.
- Wrestling has end-of-season tournament next weekend.
- Elections coming up this month (March 15, 7:45 PM).
- Lacrosse appreciated being able to practice this week before the change in park hours; first game is March 18.
- Spring sports will all start soon; baseball opening day is Friday, March 31, 5:30-8:00; softball's opening day will be Saturday, April 1.
- Access to the Whitmore Zimmerman Building—Sean said there is no keycard access yet, as internet issues are still ongoing.
- Steve Gessner asked what product should be used to spray baseball fields for weeds and was directed to communicate with Public Works. This is the procedure to be followed whenever a substance is used on the fields at Heritage.
- GVAA will bring its financial statement to the April meeting.

HERITAGE FARM PARK MANOR HOUSE REPORT—Ron Layman

They have reached the second stage in one part of the basement project and first stage on another part. Several windows have been replaced on the first floor. He appreciates the extended parking by the Manor House.

COMMISSIONER CONCERNS

- No concerns were presented.

Patricia made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Kevin seconded the motion, and all approved; the meeting was adjourned at 8:30.

The next meeting will be held on April 5, 2023.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna Newman