

Yarmouth Parks and Lands
Meeting minutes
Sept. 7, 2022

Committee members:

Karyn MacNeill, YCS Director
Heather Abbott, Council Liaison
Erik Donohoe, Parks Specialist - absent

Mary Thorp (2022)
Ron Dupuis (2024), chair
Vance Brown (2023)
vacant (2023)
Lisa Small (2022)
Joe Noel (2024)
Josh Royte (2024)- absent

Call to order by Ron at 6:01 pm.

Review and approval of July minutes (there was no August meeting). Vance motions to accept, Lisa seconds. Unanimous.

Karyn updates:

Major project has been the CIP, which encompasses both parks and playgrounds. There is a yearly estimate over a 5-year budget.

Important bullets:

Royal River improvements have been pushed back to 2024.

Park signage is delayed- meet next week on the branding effort

Tennis courts are in tough shape.

Soci steps to waterfront are having the supports replaced. Erik is getting quotes.

Sligo/Sweetser canoe access- \$15,000 permitting. Invasives need remediation.

Accessibility- adult access needed off North Road

Equipment fund transfer- we contribute to large purchase fund for public works vehicles that we all use.

(at this point, Mary's computer froze and had to be rebooted @8 minute gap)

Joe asks about invasives. Karyn and Erik are trying to use staff wherever possible. Vance questions about contingency funds in light of recent weather catastrophes. Karyn replies that they are within the special budget, but not in the CIP. States that numbers change every year.

Council updates:

Heather, our new liaison, informs us that there are two great candidates for the open position on Parks and Lands and that it will be finally decided at a vote on September 15th.

Erik updates:

Though unable to be at the meeting, Erik sent over updates.

At Pratt's brook, there is an offer to donate a granite bench similar to the Annie Simpson bench at Frank Knight forest. It would be off the Berryfield side on the Bear trail before the first bridge.

Karyn states that Erik and Eli have posted trail closures as the work on a particular bridge gets underway with help of Public Works. Need safety check so machinery can cross.

Ron gives kudos to Erik and Eli for quickly clearing a huge tree that came down in Spear Farm.

Tree updates:

Lisa announces that we have a new tree warden, Scott Couture, who has accepted the part-time job (up to 20 hrs. per week).

States that the green funnel traps that were placed did indeed show Emerald Ash Borer.

Let us know that tree committee members met with the landscape developers for RR Square and discussed adding recommended species and looking at the actual space allowed for roots and canopy.

Hancock will also consult the committee.

The Bates Street project predated the formation of the tree committee.

A major issue during this particularly dry summer has been water supply. The tree warden applied a "bandaid" solution, but better supply is needed.

Committee continues to emphasize natives and diversity on tree street locations and hopes to develop tree protection plans.

Ron asks for clarification. Ex. area to drip line is roped off and many species are extremely sensitive to root disturbance. Currently looking at how other towns handle this.

There will also be a new member of the tree committee after the 15th.

Mary asks about winter moths and if are they a problem yet. Karyn responds that it is on the radar and Maine Forestry is exploring bio-controls.

Updates:

Mary asks about Matthew Gilbert's project and when it might be released. She will send the link out that she has to the committee.

Also asks about the recent murmurs about passenger rail service getting restored from Lewiston and if that will impact the possible rail trail through Yarmouth.

Karyn replies that currently the thought is "trail until rail" or "trail with rail".

Karyn asks about attendees to the planning board meeting on Sept. 28th. It will be hybrid, but she encourages in-person if possible. Ron will be remote. Lisa and Mary will try to be in person as will Joe. Mary will try to get a few of us together on her porch to decide what topics we would like to discuss.

Vance motions to adjourn at 7:12 pm.(?) (Time may be incorrect) Lisa seconds. Unanimous.

