

Yarmouth Parks and Lands
Meeting minutes
Nov. 3, 2021

Committee members:

Lisa Small (2022)
Mary Thorp (2022)
Ron Dupuis (2021)
Vance Brown (2023)
Ebrahim Fazeli (2021)-abs.
Karen Massey (2021)
Matt Cannon (2023)-abs.

Karyn MacNeill, YCS Director
Tim Shannon, Council Liaison- abs.
Erik Donohoe, Parks Specialist

Guest: Rebecca Rundquist

Karen Massey calls the meeting to order at 6:04pm.
Acceptance of Oct. minutes. (done at end of meeting for quorum) Vance motions, Karen seconds.
Approved.

Updates:

Erik: continued grading carriage trail to river at Riverfront. Fire/rescue and equipment will be able to pass over all three bridges. By next week, trail should be UA up to first crossing. More gravel coming in.
Westside trail: Garmin has 2 volunteer groups to spread gravel. Rotary grant has funded 2 boardwalks. Will try to jumpstart fundraising for Hillside to West Elm (vernal pool)
Clearing brush in Pratt's.

Karyn: Dog ordinance accepted with a couple of changes. From 3 to 5 dogs per person.
Land and Water Conservation Grant (for RR Park) has been accepted by the state. Would fund ½ of the cost. Now waiting on Feds.
New staff person, Lisa, has been leading walks in the parks and public lands.

Frank Knight Management Plan:

Started work on the writing (reviewed Riverfront plan). Josh Royte will have a walk on Nov. 30th at 7am. Scott Hanson is a volunteer.

Invasives and Forest Management Plan:

Erik: talks of mapping to see the extent and then prioritize ex. habitat, scenic vistas, open space value, etc.
Lisa asks about the rate and extent of growth.
Karen mentions Mike Hughes' project on Bayview St.- "eradication area". Would need to be mowed down for 5 to 6 years.
Buckthorn seems to be a biggest problem in parks along with knotweed (need to cut 3 times per year) and bittersweet.

Committee feels this is an important issue. Mary will reach out to John Jensenius (Cumberland PLC member).

Sign project updates:

Karyn: showed sign prices over 3 years. Costs submitted to CIP budget.

Lisa suggests smaller signs for smaller parks. Scale back for smaller areas?

Mary agrees and mentions Gendall Memorial (v. small park on East Main St)

Vance asks what are the terms of the bids and stressed uniformity.

Karyn says bid package will be presented in the future. Could be broken down into signs and granite posts.

Lisa reiterates that scaling back for smaller parks would be cost effective. Karen concurs.

Ron stresses that proportion is important and asks what is the approval process.

Karyn responds that Nat takes the CIP to planning board; then goes back to council and then to a vote in June. She will keep us updated. Wants a discussion before March with committee. Lisa and Karyn will meet.

Policy and Public Grounds Ordinance:

Vance has researched this and says foraging policies are all over the place. There are differences depending on whether the foraging is personal or commercial. State Parks are a definite NO. Other areas much less regulated. Vance reached out to surrounding towns and gave an example of mushroom harvesting.

Mary asks if other towns have had an issue with harvesting. Karen and Ron feel that we should leave well enough alone unless it becomes a problem. Vance asks about commercial harvesting. Karen thinks we should look at the whole policy. Mary asks where is the policy. It is on website- Chapter 501- Public Grounds Ordinance.

Tree Committee:

Lisa says that they just met earlier today. They are focusing on 2 issues:

1. lack of tree warden
2. looming threat of Emerald Ash Borer

Need to raise community awareness since 30% of town trees are thought to be ash. Also, in Nov., the Audubon Society in Falmouth discovered ash borer already in a tree they had girdled for study. We need a treatment plan now. Committee wants a tree warden hired to get ahead of the problem. Asks how to best interact with council. States that Frank Knight Foundation may be able to seed a ½ time commitment for a warden. Need more people to care.

Karen asks how long the inoculation lasts and how often it would need to be repeated. For a few cycles- 3 yrs.?

Karyn says the Pesticide Committee will be presenting a report this month. On Dec. 2nd or 16th, it will be presented to council.

Lisa has communicated with Tony (on Pesticides) and states there is a wide range of agents with varying toxicities.

Karen suggests a PLC resolution to address the Emerald Ash Borer threat. Karyn feels there should be a separate committee. A resolution from us could support that. Vance stresses that this is an important issue.

Rebecca Rundquist (guest) feels that the Frank Knight Foundation could be a model for Yarmouth and other communities. Says it could provide \$4000 toward a part-time tree warden, but wants a commitment from the town.

Other Business:

Still no signed contract with abutter to Camp Soci.

Need new Parks and Lands members. Town Council needs to appoint. Ron agrees to remain on committee. Question- is Josh Royte still interested?

Need work plan refresher for 2022.

Mary motions to adjourn @7:30 pm (?) Ron seconds. Unanimous.