

Beacon Falls Parks and Recreation Commission
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403



BEACON FALLS PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION
Monthly Meeting
September 20, 2021
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Alliance

Chairman Bob Egan called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M.

Members Present: Bob Egan (BE), Laura DeGeorge (LD), Desiree Brooks (DB), Steve Moffat (SM), Mary Ellen Fernandes (MF)

Members Absent: Jake Fernandes (JF), Don Ferretti (DF)

Others Present: Michael Krenesky (MK)

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the regular monthly meeting held August 16, 2021, as submitted: **LD/SM, all ayes.**

3. Comments from the Public

None

4. New Business

2022 Meeting Schedule – **Motion to approve the 2022 meeting schedule, MF/LD, all ayes.**

5. Old Business

- a. **Matthies Park** – SM – preparations made for contractor to come out in the next couple weeks to make repairs to seal the house up. There is a lot of poison ivy and bees that we are going to spray for. We do have materials in the garage and once it gets colder, we will work to seal the house.
- b. **Pent Road Recreation Complex** – BE – fencing is partially up for the basketball courts. SM – we are hoping to have the majority if not all of it up this week. We returned parts that were damaged and waiting to get those back. DB – is there still a no use there? SM – we have had caution tape, but it does get taken down. Benches will need to be installed near the courts as well. DB – is each area going to be fenced in? SM – no, there is only a divider at the tennis courts. DB – the bathrooms were open when I was there early in the morning. MF – all the reconstruction that's been done and it is not open? SM – the biggest issue and delay was the fencing company. MF – but it is not open yet? BE – no. MF - that was supposed to only take a few weeks and now it's been months. If we have a contract, shouldn't there be dates on that contract? We have no recourse. DB – when you put a bid out there should be dates on the contracts. MF – how do we find out? BE – we would have to see the contract, we never have/ SM – I think Natasha has a copy. DB – when something like that is written up our commission should be able to look at it prior. We did not on the playscape and look at how that turned out, we could not tell how big it was. SM – we have a playscape in, during a short time so I think the town did well and we have the option to expand. In my opinion, compared to what we took down, we have a quality set up and options to add to it. BE – some of the things we took down you can't have

anymore. DB – I know that we approved additions do we know what is being put on it? BE – no, we do not have the funding and will be putting it in as a capital item next year, along with a storage shed for the rec camp. SM – we put this playscape in with the future expansion in mind. SM – also, the security cameras were installed and are working.

- c. **Riverbend Park** – DB – I had someone tell me when they were at the park, they removed a spool of fishing line. Her and her husband wrapped it up and removed it. BE – there is a container to dispose of it. SM – the containers are at the parks that have water. We did have a lot of debris wash up with the last storm. The river water came up over the benches and tables.
- d. **Toby's Pond** – DB – I was not here for the last meeting but wanted to visit the grant application. I spoke with Natasha and am willing to work with her on this. We had to take Matthies out of the grant because it is private. All the money would go towards Toby's. We should give it a shot; I am willing to do the work and meet with contractors. The grant will cover foot bridge on east side and the thin areas need to be reinforce. Rich Minnick would like to also come to the next meeting to explain things that need to move forward. I to not mind working with the right people to get this done. So long as the grant funds are used within 2 years then we are ok. SM – I am not against this, but we do not have the manpower on the maintenance end to take care of the parks we have now, let alone added features. Just the knotweed alone is a full-time job at times. LD – so your concern is that you cannot keep up with the updates. BE – it is a challenge with the limited resources we have. SM – we do have great volunteers that help but if we do not have them, it is hard to keep up with. DB – there will always be maintenance and we have more and more people using the parks. MF – if we can improve the parks we should. Haven't you been down manpower in public works for years now? SM – yes. MF – isn't there someone who has never been replaced? Maybe that is where we should concentrate. We do have more people in town and more people in the parks. DB – that adds more liability. If we had improvement to the path that limits the liability. In terms of the financial investment, it is not a lot compared to what we can get. SM – to my understanding there seems to be a larger issue with river overflow which to me sounds like a bigger priority. BE – what other strings are attached to it? MF – of the 20% that we need to contribute, DB – its almost like a split. It is not something that has to be done in 6 months. Things can change we have an election coming up and maybe we will get someone else on the payroll.

Motion made to rescind vote from last month's meeting regarding the DEEP State Trail Grant and to allow DB to work on the grant application/process with the Town Finance Department, MF/DB, SM, nay, all other ayes.

LD – just a statement – when I first joined this commission, I wanted to start something that would help this commission on a volunteer basis. In the future, I would like to have something for the kids in this town that need volunteer hours for communion, school, national jr. honor society, etc. Something that we can help with on a regular basis. DB – I agree, in Seymour they have boy scout troops assigned to parks. LD – I know there is liability on what we can and cannot do, but if Steve and I work together to coordinate a project for a group of kids to complete volunteer hours. We could use this in our town, we have many kids going through our school system that need these hours. Once some of the YMCA gets going, I can focus on this initiative. MF – I know a few years ago we discussed this, but the administration deemed it a liability issue. I think that is your biggest hurdle. They want volunteers but when they get them, they say no. LD – I understand that. SM – I think the Town is looking into future options with our manpower, there have been talks and I think we can make it all happen. Things are improving.

- e. **Sports League Reports** – LD – through Facebook, I received application requests. I directed them to the Town website. Fall ball is going on. Naugatuck Babe Ruth will be using field 5 and a softball league out of Stratford will be using fields 2 and 3. The college baseball league and the Stratford baseball league will be paying to use the fields.
 - f. **Park Activities / Miscellaneous** – BE - this weekend Pent Road is closed. There is a Household Hazardous Waste from 9a -2p on Saturday and then they will be setting up for the Drone show.
 - g. **Community Garden** – haven't heard anything.
 - h. **Park Ranger Report** – BE – everyone saw that Al is no longer the Park Ranger. I did speak with Al and thanked him for his service, he has done a lot over the last few years. He has opened and locked gates etc. As of right now, they are trying to work something out in order to come back. DB – do we need a back up for opening and closing parks? SM – I spoke with the police and Gerry and the police will be opening. DB – they have missed it a couple of times. BE – about a month ago, police were on a call in Naugatuck and opened the parks late. SM – I have not discussed it with the Police or Gerry but maybe we should go back to a lock box or combo for the leagues. MF – if we have two officers on duty and they get a mutual aid call do they both leave? BE – I am not sure. MF – Michael do you know? MK – I do not. I would like to assume that one stays in town, but the situation is probably what dictates.
 - i. **150th Celebration** – BE – drone show this Saturday. Parking is on Kolga or Lancaster. MK - The Drones will be anywhere between 300-600 ft in the air.
 - j. **YMCA Update** – BE – there are a couple of events coming up. LD – I met with Mark from the YMCA. The Senior Center has events going on. The YMCA has been helping with the Library and Friends of the Library, they are formulating the younger survey results to implement programs and are also working with the Region. We have the Beacon Bee coming in to explain and share their knowledge of beekeeping. We are also doing a health forum. Registration is online through the website, the YMCA and on Facebook.
6. **Correspondence**
None
7. **Budget**
None
8. **Applications**
BE – waiting on application from Laurel Ledge PTO regarding movie night.
9. **Grant Information**
None
10. **Executive Session (if needed)**
none
11. **Adjournment**
Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:53P.M. **DB/LD; no discussion; all ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry McAndrew
Clerk, Parks and Recreation Commission