

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



**BEACON FALLS PARKS and RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**Monthly Meeting**  
**August 17, 2020**  
**MINUTES**  
**(Subject to Revision)**

**1. Call to Order/Pledge of Alliance**

Chairman Bob Egan called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

**Present:** Bob Egan (BE), Steve Moffat (SM), Mary Ellen Fernandes (MF), Laura DeGeorge (LD), Don Ferretti (DF), Steve Ruhl (SR)

**Not Present:** Desiree Brooks (DB)

**Others Present:** Allan Banyacsky, Selectman Krenesky

**2. Approval of Minutes**

Motion to approve the minutes from the regular monthly meeting held on July 20, 2020 as submitted: **MF/SM**; one revision under item # 4e change "use to lose"; all ayes

**3. Comments from the Public**

none

**4. Old Business**

- a. Matthies Park** – SM – Matthies is still closed due to tree work that needs to be done. Eversource removed limbs from the wires but still no power. There is a contractor coming in tomorrow to remove dangerous tree hangers over the roadways. Once that is done, we should be able to open the park soon after. AI was going to work with the sign company to get "Trail Closed" signs until we can walk all the trails to verify, they are safe. MF – do you have an estimated time? SM – AI, did you call the sign company? AI – yes, they can have them tomorrow afternoon. SM – once we have the trail signs, we should be able to open the park by Wednesday/Thursday, other than the trails. AI – our plan now is to get cleared what we need too and then reopen the park with restrictions. BE – AI, when the trails reopen will you please let the horse riders know so they can enjoy the park again. AI – Yes. I did get a quote this afternoon for the trail closed signs, it will be \$120.00. **BE – entertain a motion to approve the \$120.00 for trail closed signage – MF/DF, all ayes.** SR – when there is damage on the Oxford side of the park who is responsible for clean up? BE – I believe that would be Beacon Falls because we own it. SR – what if someone falls in the park or is hurt in the park? BE – I believe it would still be Beacon Falls. AI – we own that property based on the historical map, even though it says Oxford. SR – I am just trying to protect us from lawsuits, etc. I just want to make sure ownership is documented. AI – What Bernard Matthies purchased is our responsibility and part of that is in Oxford. BE – we also pay taxes on that piece to the Town of Oxford. MF – Is there any way for us to close off the Oxford access point? AI – we would not be able to fence something off like that, it would be very difficult. You cannot stop people from going into parts of a trail etc. MF – can we put up signs saying, Private Property, Beacon Falls Residents Only? AI – basically we would have to place signage on all of the access points. BE – I can talk to Gerry and the Town Attorney to try to limit our liability. SR – if Oxford recognizes that it is part of their responsibility as well, or if we create a partnership, maybe they can take on some of the burden

in cleaning up the park & signage, etc. Would be nice to have two towns working on it instead of one. AI – the trails will be hard to disseminate. SM – we do not want to draw any more attention to out of town residents to our parks, so it is probably better to leave it alone. SR – it would be a way to get more revenue into the park. SM – signage and installation for Katharine Matthies grant is all set and put up. We will be coordinating a date/time with the First Selectman to reveal them. AI – I have two more message centers to populate. The one by the pavilion and by the pond. They should be finished by the end of the week. SR – there was more vandalism at the park. BE – we did discuss that last month. SM – it was going to be covered with driveway sealer but then we had the storm. It should be cleared up within the next two weeks. I know AI is looking into the security cameras etc.

- b. **Pent Road Recreation Complex** – SM – over the past month, we completed weed control and removed storm damage. Field 1 – approximately 60ft. section of the fence was taken down by trees. Atlas Fence will be scheduling a date with us to do the repair. The repair estimate is \$1,400. There is a cornhole tournament this Saturday and the wireless control for the scoreboard at Field 1 is now up and running. BE – I am still waiting on the insurance for the Corn Hole Tournament. Once I get that, they can have the tournament. Right now, it is not fully approved. SR – do we know what is going on with the swing set? SM – not sure, but AI and I discussed it with Gerry. We will have to schedule a date. SM – AI, do you have any additional information? AI – based on the CIRMA report and the manufacturer, it was decided to wait on any decision. When Gerry comes back from vacation, we can follow up. AI – clerk informed me that BOS meeting minutes posted on the website show discussion of playscape at their meeting and approved the removal of playscape. SM – I would also recommend that the upper pavilion swings/slide are dismantled at the same time. BE – AI wants to work with Kerry to post operating hours on the website. I think we need to clarify what they are, and MF asked if we could close the park because they are open to the public. We can close them, and it is possible to keep people out when they are closed. BE – Pent Rd. would be open mid-March (15<sup>th</sup>) – end of October - 8am – 9:30PM, other than that, all parks are open 8am – sunset and closed at the discretion of Public Works if parks are deemed unsafe. SR – I was at the upper pavilion and a guy said, “oh this is great, you can do whatever you want here” and he was referring to illegal activity. AI – I am working with the Resident State Trooper on items like that within our parks. I want to have a meeting with Bob, Gerry, and our Trooper about non-residents in our parks.
- c. **Riverbend Park** – SM – nothing new other than routine maintenance and working with AI on the new water rules signage. AI – tried to show the Board Member the new signage. Signs will be posted at Toby's, Matthies and Riverbend. Riverbend does include the trout stamp information and all signs state that a fishing license is required. All the signs include the saying, “No Lifeguard on Duty”.
- d. **Sports League Reports** – BE – found out from NVHD that the teams using facilities need to have COVID-19 safety procedures on file. I reached out to the teams and they all provided me copies over the weekend, so we are current with that.
- e. **Park Activities / Miscellaneous** – BE – MF inquired about using some of our funds to cover the town celebration. Not at this time, they feel it should be self-funding. MF – that is not a good answer. This is part of the town. Why do we need their permission? BE – we have the right to spend money what it has been appropriated for. MF – I heard that the powers to be did not think it was a good idea. BE – they will be using our facilities for some of the events so maybe there are other things we can do to help them along. MF – I am really disappointed, and I believe if someone else made that suggestion it would have been accepted. This is nonsense and we should follow up and try again. SR – maybe we can do something in coordination

with the 150<sup>th</sup>. MF – I do not know how much money we have to work with. SR – we have some idea because we are not having family day or fireworks. Selectman Krenesky noted that the BOS did not decide on anything regarding the 150<sup>th</sup> celebration. My suggestion back was that the funding should be used to fund the playscape. I had a brief conversation with SR about that suggestion and have not had time to bring it to the 150<sup>th</sup> committee yet. Since the schoolhouse is stagnant, we should find a different project to do for the 150<sup>th</sup> and the playscape would be a good place to spend our effort. MF – if we can not use our money to donate it towards the 150<sup>th</sup> then we should not be able to use it for the playscape or cameras because it is designated for other things. MF – Point of order, is this public comment going on right now? Selectman Krenesky, for the record, Mr. Chairman, I am acting First Selectman, therefore I am ex-officio in this meeting, so I have a right to speak. MF – bull. Selectman Krenesky – I will stop speaking being that it is not acceptable to others in this meeting.

- f. **Toby's Pond** – AI – I requested a quote for a message center like what we purchased for Matthies. We currently have no signage at Toby's that says what is or is not permitted. Estimate on the sign is about \$1,500 from Kirby sign. BE – I did request a copy of our budget from Finance but have not yet received it.

5. **New Business**

None

6. **Correspondence**

BE – received a thank you letter from the Library for the Character Walk last month. Kerri Vardon in the Library would like to plan something for Halloween and is asking for a donation to help fund activities. I was thinking about \$300.00. SR – we do not have any park activities so how about \$500.00. BE – I only hesitate because I do not have a copy of our budget yet. **SR – I make a motion that we set aside \$500.00 for Library Halloween program, seconded by DF, all ayes.**

7. **Applications**

BE – approved one for a family reunion on 8.30.2020 at Matthies Park. Application for Boost Club just awaiting insurance certificate for this weekend.

8. **Grant Information**

BE – received Katharine Matthies grant for tables, benches, and trash cans at Pent Road. Rob, Natasha, Steve, and I will get together to discuss purchases with that grant funding.

9. **Review and Payment of Bills**

None

10. **Budget**

None

11. **Executive Session (if needed)**

none

12. **Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:54 P.M. **DF/LD; no discussion; all ayes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry McAndrew  
Clerk, Parks and Recreation Commission