

FRIENDS OF THE PARKS COMMISSION

**Monday, November 17, 2008
Public Services Training Room
55 Portland Street
5:00 p.m.**

ATTENDANCE:

Commission Members: Jon Dunitz, Kirk Goodhue, Steve Morgenstein, Mike Juneau, Jaime Parker, Halsey Frank

Friends of Eastern Promenade: Diane Davison

City Staff: Mike Bobinsky, Tom Civiello, Melissa Graffam

OLD BUSINESS

The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. The Commission finally had a quorum and was able to accept the meeting minutes from March, April, September and October 2008. There was one error to the October's minutes as to the date and location of that meeting. The change was accepted and has been changed.

The Commission will be adding a section to the Agenda called "Citizen Comment Period" which will allow a citizen to make comments/suggestions during a meeting for a selected amount of time at the discretion of the Chairperson.

The Commission also approved the Portland Rowing Association Proposal that was submitted at the September meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Meeting Time Review Discussion

Since the Commission has not had a quorum at the last four (4) meetings, Jon Dunitz and Mike Bobinsky wanted to ask everyone if there is a better time for everyone to meet. Suggested times were during the day around a lunch hour or earlier in the afternoon. The Commission came to the consensus that the second Monday of the month at 5pm does work for everyone. If that date happens to be a holiday, the meeting will move to the third Monday of the month.

ACTION PLAN

Need to check in with Mary Costigan from Corporation Counsel to see where we are with this. Mike Bobinsky mentioned that the Needs Assessment has been approved by both the Friends to the Park and City Council. Have used the assessment with Dougherty Field and

the Skate Park. Kirk Goodhue asked if this has been helpful. Mike responded that it has, but we will see this to be most useful in the spring/summer.

REPORTS, PROJECTS AND TIMELINES

Trail Grant- Fort Allen Trail

Tom Civiello let the Commission know that he is working on a \$25,000 grant for Fort Allen Trail to the Eastern Prom. This grant will help put in an official trail, as of right now; there is no trail, just a path. Mike Bobinsky noted that the City Council did accept the resolution for the grant.

Break Water School Playground

Tom brought to the attention of the Commission that the playground at Break Water School is actually on City property. This with the notion that while school was in session the school was to use it, and then it was open to the public after hours. At this time Break Water School would like to lease/buy space from the City. They are looking to formalize the property for the school.

A question came up about the liability of the playground. Tom stated that that is the question, and he has a meeting with planning next week regarding this. Tom asked the Commission how they would like to see this land used.

Jon Dunitz said that he would prefer to sell, because of the liability or lease with release of liability. Would like to see something formalized to protect the city.

Halsey Frank mentioned that maybe under the sale of the building (from the City to the Break Water School) it mentions something there. Tom said that at this time he has not been able to find the agreement when it was sold. He is still looking into this.

Kirk Goodhue asked if we knew how many children use this. He would also like to see it leased and if they can't agree on the liability, then sell.

Jaime Parker mentioned that there is a definite need to formalize the agreement; with the public having access.

Park Amenity Standards

Mike Bobinsky let the Commission know that the Park Amenity Standards came out of the Health and Recreation Committee. They had wanted to have standard items such as, benches, litter receptacles, picnic tables, shelters and gazebos. Commission members received a handout as to what these are with there agenda.

Kirk Goodhue asked if there items are in the City's gift catalogue. Tom Civiello responded that they will be, but at this time the website is under construction.

Jaime Parker asked if local companies and products made in the State of Maine can be used. Tom Civiello responded by saying that this gives the City a spec to work with, so that people know what it will look at. It is quite possible that we could get bids from local companies. Mike Bobinsky noted that we can check with the purchasing process to see if we can include something in the specs about Maine made products and companies.

Dougherty Field and Skate Board Update

Tom Civiello showed everyone what Dougherty Field will look like once the skate park is completed. The budget for the skate park is \$325, 000; we are half-way there in funding.

Jaime Parker asked if this has been approved as a Master Plan. Tom Civiello responded, no, there is a public hearing on November 20, 2008 at Deering High School.

Steve Morgenstein stated that he sees where the soccer field is, the school is currently in that location. Tom said that it could be moving to that location, and if is, it would be a second phase construction.

Winter Operations

Tom Civiello let everyone know that our Department will be starting their winter shifts on Sunday, November 30th. We will have 24-hour coverage for our operations.

The next meeting of Friends of the Parks is December 8th at Portland Public Services at 55 Portland Street in the Training Room at 5:00 p.m. Since the main office door closes at 4:30, members will need enter the building from our rear entrance.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Melissa Graffam
Executive Assistant