

**Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Park Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 20, 2025**

Present: Lauren Springer (LS) Chair, Curtis Kelly (CK), Jim Kerney (JK), Dennis Leiner (DL), Ken Pierce (KP) and Doreen Theriault (DT)

Absent: Terry Bagley and Andrea Southworth

Staff: Kathy Raftice, (KR), Community Services and Fort Williams Park Director, Dominic Walker (DW), Fort Williams Park Supervisor

Public: Lynn Bailets, Friends of Fort Williams

Call to order: LS called the meeting to order @ 6:00 pm

Public Comment Opportunity for Discussion of Items Not on the Agenda: None

Approval of October 16, 2025 Draft Minutes from Site Walk & Meeting

Motion by JK to approve the October 16, 2025 draft minutes, seconded by KP. Motion passed (6 – Yes, 0 – No).

Friends of Fort Williams Update

KR provided a summary of the FOFW Ecology report for Andrea. She also mentioned that FOFW is currently preparing its next budget and hopes to align its project fundraising efforts with our Fort Williams Park projects.

KR introduced Lynn Bailets, who in turn explained the proposed project on restoring the cannon that sits down by Captain Strout Circle. The goal is to have this mounted with a plaque to describe its historical significance. KP asked where it is and where it is from. Lynn described it and where it is located. Committee discussion around the need to make sure of its significance. Perhaps reach out to Peter Benoit before starting. Lynn will do some background work.

FWP Update

KR began by explaining the requests for a portable sauna. She received two separate inquiries: one from the Maine Spa Club and another from a Cape Elizabeth resident. The Maine Spa Club has requested to offer a free sauna at Ship Cove the day after Thanksgiving, while the Cape Elizabeth resident is interested in occasionally providing a sauna at the park.

During the committee discussion, there were questions. Should we allow businesses to market their services in the park? How do we determine which businesses would be acceptable? Following the discussion, the committee decided to vote on the requests. Motion by JK that we not allow business ventures such as a sauna vendor to market their product in Fort Williams Park, seconded by LS. Motion passes (6 – Yes, 0 – No). KR will communicate the results.

KR provided an update on the Pond Pavilion, explaining that we are currently waiting for the delivery of the structure. JK clarified that the vendor initially anticipated delivery at the beginning of the New Year. The building permit has been approved, and we are ready to proceed.

KR then discussed the Goddard Mansion, sharing a picture that displayed the scaffolding and the progress made by Gnome Landscaping. She also mentioned that Davey Tree has removed the trees. As part of the tree removal process, we needed to provide a list of all removed trees and a replanting plan to Ben MacDougall, due to Shoreline Zoning regulations. This was accomplished through the collaboration between Andrea Southworth and Dana DiRenzo at Davey Tree. A big thank you to them. The stairway preconstruction meeting is scheduled for November 24.

The playground RFP is near completion. KR explained there would be an RFP for the Site Work and an RFP for the Equipment. KR and Sashie Misner, Landscape Architect have been working on the specifics to ensure we receive strong bids. CK asked who was writing the RFP. KR explained that she is writing with the needed scope specifics provided by the vendor we hired to assist.

The committee began discussion on the FY 27 budget. KR shared that the budget is due to the Town Manager by January 26. This is a little later, so we will have our December and January meeting to finalize. DW provided a financial update on Bus/Trolley revenue, Rentals and Ceremonies. A good year overall, with the expectation to come in on budget for bus and trolley and a little over in the rentals and ceremonies. JK asked about percentages of resident vs. nonresident usage. Dom shared. There was a committee discussion regarding increasing non-resident fees, but since we just increased them last season, we will wait. KR shared that we are still looking to have Battery Blair repaired; however, the RFP does need a technical review. KP asked that I send the RFP to him, as he will see the engineer who assisted in the initial work. In FY27, we do not anticipate any large projects. KR did mention the need to review the parking area near the Public Works buildings. Once the new playground is complete, we will remove the old one and then decide how we move forward in that area. DT mentioned the benches and plaques from previous donors. They will be relocated to the new playground. There is a possibility of one plaque recognizing all former donors to eliminate the chance of possibly forgetting someone. JK shared some ideas he had for needed work in the park; some of which can be combined under a shared topic header. More discussion to take place at the December meeting. LS asked about the granite bench that has been broken for quite a while. KR has ordered the bench and will follow-up with Maine Memorial.

KP brought to committee's attention that Bill Brownell had passed. He was a prior member of the Fort Williams Park Committee and former chair. LS will send a condolence card from the committee.

Public Comment Opportunity for Discussion of Items on the Agenda – None

Motion to adjourn by CK, seconded by KP. Motion passed (6 – Yes, 0 – No). Meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Next meeting: Due to scheduling conflicts, there was discussion and agreement that next meeting will be Wednesday, December 17 @ 6:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted

Kathy Raftice