

**Town of Cape Elizabeth
Fort Williams Park Committee
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 18, 2021**

Present: Jim Kerney (JimK), Jon Dienstag (JD), Suzanne McGinn (SM), Ken Pierce (KP), Mark Russell (MR), and Lauren Springer (LS)

Absent: Doreen Theriault

Staff: Chris Cutter (CC), Fort Williams Coordinator, and Kathy Raftice (KR), Community Services and Fort Williams Park Director

Guests: Greg Gordon, Chris Rackmyre

Call to Order: Chair, Jim Kerney called meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Approval of October 21, 2021 Draft Minutes

Motion by KP to approve the October 21, 2021 draft minutes, second by MR, motion passed (5 - Yes, 0 - No)(SM arrived after vote)

Public Comment Opportunity for Discussion of Items on the Agenda:

None

Master Plan Update – Jim Kerney

JK feels there should be a Master Plan agenda item for all meetings to bring team up to date, all agreed. KP shared he had been in Savannah and visited a site similar to Goddard Mansion. Renovations had been done and he shared pictures. JK explained he had met with Town Manager, Matt Sturgis and received some information on future budget requests on large dollar items. KR brought forth information from her discussion with Public Works Director, Jay Reynolds. Some of the items on our list of recommendations would involve Public Works and Jay would like to attend a future meeting. KR will invite him to the December meeting. Discussion on the larger projects; pond and restrooms. SM suggests reaching out to Richardson & Associates on alternatives. MR wanted to reemphasize that the Master Plan is this committee's plan. We sought input and made decisions. Just because some projects may be big dollar items doesn't mean we put them off. JK agreed and that is why discussions taking place now. JD also agreed and feels committee should focus on what can be achieved in the first 5 years. JK feels we need to research grant money and while doing so, fill in with the smaller projects. Committee discussion on who would like to lead some of the bigger item discussions and research. LS & KP will work on Goddard Mansion, SM the pond, and JD the restrooms. All can focus on the smaller projects and KR will work with other departments on Powers Road.

FOF Update

Committee discussed the FOF letter. Projects and recommendations will proceed with FOF included as needed. AS not in attendance however written update provided and discussed. JK complimented FOF on lots of great work taking place and happy to see continued use of Cape Courier for articles.

Commercial Fees Discussion – Jim Kerney

JK began by explaining Town Council approved facility rental and site use fees however did request for committee to continue fees discussion by addressing commercial fees. At this time JK asked committee if now would be a good time to have public/guests speak, all agreed.

Greg Gordon, 110 Two Lights Road, Cape Elizabeth – Cruise ship industry. He would like to know what the ultimate goal is. He has been here for 20 years, initially no fee for motor coaches, now a fee. What is the goal? The number? Buses are here for approximately 20 minutes. Acadia is at \$150.00 per visit, where are we trying to be?

Chris Rackmyre, Maine Tour Connection, South Portland – Feels the same as Mr. Gordon, where is the number going to go? How did we get to this number?

JK in response to public comment explained as a committee we were asked to look at fee's and put a schedule in place for any increases. Four years ago the committee sought input and put the initial fees in place with an understanding we would revisit. The goal was to align the fee with a per visit cost looking at the different business models (size, passenger count). The goal is to manage park revenues to pay for the maintenance and improvements needed to serve all visitors. We just worked on the facility rental and site use fees and are working to keep the fee structure increases similar throughout the park. We want the park to be self-sufficient however not drive visitors/motor coaches/trolleys away. We took into account the frequent visitor and have a reduced cost to those with 75 visits per season. We agreed we would work on the fee structure to allow time for vendors to work any increase into their business plans. Committee discussion on slides/worksheet supporting increases per year for years 2023, 2024 and 2025. CC shared that at 100 visits vendor reaches the return on investment in the top 3 categories. MR shared it is not financial for him, wants to know if the discount at 75 visits is leading to more visits. JK shared that is an unknown. KP shared he felt there is an inherent tension when determining the balance between maintaining the park through revenue without overpopulating. MR main concern is traffic. JK further explained the Proposed Vehicle Fee Worksheet. Involves a roughly 15% increase over the next 3 years. JD feels based on town feedback the single visit cost could be more aggressive. KP feels there are large numbers who even with a fee increase they will pay. MR asked for clarification on days in season when fees apply. LS asked for clarification on discount at 75 visits. SM suggested a daily cap or days when no visits by buses. CC shared that motor coach companies are excellent at communicating with him. Discussion on reservation process/payment processes – these are operational and can be worked out within department. JK

asked committee if ready to submit to Town Council. MR motion to accept and submit, SM second. Motion passed unanimously. (6 – Yes, 0 – No)

Pay & Display Fee Discussion – Jim Kerney

JK explained Pay & Display fee worksheet. SM asked for a clarification on per hour minimum. JK clarified; increase 2 hour increase from \$4.00 to \$5.00 and season pass to \$20.00. KP is in agreement with fee increase, feels still affordable for a family. SM asked if both increases are for next 3 years, answer yes. JD feels fair revenue source and motion to accept, SM second, Motion passed unanimously. (6 – Yes, 0 – No)

FW Update & Budget Discussion – Kathy Raftice

KR provided update on projects in motion; wooden steps behind Gorgeous Gelato completed, electricity to food vendor and greeter shed waiting on final measurements for wire feed in Central lot (Public Works to get back to me), meeting with Nick Tammara on November 23rd to discuss Berme, Lighthouse fencing damages by painting vendor, National Governors Association first meeting completed with Chief Paul Fenton, letters going out to renew food vendor contracts, KR and Chief Fenton met on Cadet Program, parking meters removed, greeters and rangers season completed. KR also shared Recycling Committee suggested location for water bottle fill stations. All agree not near roadway by Central lot. Possibly down by the lighthouse, on the other side of the greeter shed or by Children's Garden. Still waiting to hear on grant.

KR discussed request from Tony Wagner, SP/Cape Elizabeth Rotary Club to host the Winterfest fireworks at Fort Williams Park, Saturday January 29th. Request is to have park open at 4:45pm, fireworks go off at 5:30 pm, 15 minute show and park closed by 6:30 pm. Expected 500 + attendees, Rotary will supply people support to assist with parking and crowd control, fireworks to be shot off by the flag pole with folks watching from the parade ground. Rotary will cover expenses, trash etc. KR has discussed with Chief Fenton and Town Manager. Still needs to discuss with Fire Chief and Public Works Director. KP feels this is a great idea, works well with resident requests for multi-season use of park. MR motion to accept, SM second, motion passes unanimously. (5 – Yes, 0 – No).

KR introduced budget discussion. FW Playground Move - KR has been in discussion with Joel St. Pierre, O'Brien & Sons. He will provide estimate which will include: cost to disassemble, chip off old concrete, reinstall and replace if broken or repairs needed. He feels minimum 1 week of labor, ground prep (possibly by Public Works, LP Murray), fencing (move existing? Burns? Main Line). His company does not presently have installer on staff but Joel could assist with direction. (rough estimate \$20k). Stonework – contracted with Gnome Landscaping to complete repairs at Picnic Shelter (\$5200). Ship Cove Platform – looking into Shade Covering, 60' x 64' (3840 square feet), O'Brien & Sons is local vendor. Update concrete base? Battery Keyes – KR spoke with Richardson & Associates and obtained 4 structural or civil engineers to contact, Picnic Shelter – replace some wood, roof shingles, and paint. Picnic Shelter stairs – Rotary willing to match \$7500, Bandstand – step treads and paint, Signage – QR codes, wayfaring, replace old historic signs (CC will work on), Bike Racks – are we looking at permanent or moveable. All agree moveable (\$400 each), possible locations; beach, greeters

shed, lighthouse, Battery Knoll, Pond, Children's Garden? Invasive Control – AS has estimated \$20k. KR will obtain more fixed estimates to support budget numbers. Any other projects committee feels warranted bring to KR. Hope to finalize in December meeting.

Public Comment Opportunity for Discussion of Items Not on the Agenda:

None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, December 16, 2021 @ 6:00 pm

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Raftice