



**TOWN OF HUDSON
PARK COMMISSION**
Division of Recreation
Town Hall
78 Main Street
Hudson, MA 01749
978-568-9642

**PARK COMMISSION MEETING – MINUTES
May 5, 2021
Via REMOTE ZOOM at 8:15pm**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Hudson Park Commission meeting will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found below. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Town of Hudson website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

***The Hudson Park Commission meeting will be held via a Zoom Meeting (Internet)
Public Participation via calling in or using your computer is encouraged***

*Topic: Park Commission Meeting
Time: May 5, 2021 08:15 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)*

Join Zoom Meeting
<https://zoom.us/j/97704507640?pwd=TXNvb05VdTA4RnJRd1lBdVBZVG1ZQT09>

*Meeting ID: 977 0450 7640
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One tap mobile
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1. Call Meeting to Order

Mr. Roan called the meeting to order at 8:18pm. Members present were Mr. Roan, Mr. Bowen and Mr. Chaves. Also present: Mr. Santos, Mr. Hannon, Mr. Aponte.

Mr. Roan dispensed with the reading of the statement regarding Zoom virtual meetings and Governor Baker's statement on the Covid-19 virus & Open Meeting Law, as all those present were familiar with the statement, the meeting procedures and no one other than those listed above were present.

2. Minutes to Approve:

A. Public Session – April 14, 2021

Mr. Bowen motioned to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Mr. Chaves and carried...

Vote: 3 – 0, in favor

3. Citizens Issues / Special Interest Groups:

A. None

4. Personnel:

A. Park Commission to consider Summer 2021 Part-Time Seasonal Employees

Mr. Santos informed the Commission that the Recreation Department has received 63 applications for seasonal employment. This number is slightly below average. Mr. Santos presented the Commission with a list of 30 applicants who were previously employed as Seasonal Employees, along with their proposed Summer 2021 pay rates. During the presentation, Mr. Santos noted the lack of Lifeguards and Swim Instructors. He informed the Commission that the Recreation Department would be soliciting to fill these positions over the coming weeks and he would be running a Lifeguarding Course in an attempt to increase the pool of Lifeguards for Summer 2021.

Mr. Bowen made a motion to approve the list of 30 previously employed applicants, seconded by Mr. Chaves and carried...

Vote 3-0, in favor

5. Director's Report:

A. Beach Project Update

Mr. Santos informed the Commission that everything was "coming together nicely" at the beach. The expectation is to have electricity available on site by the end of the week and that the inspectional process is on-going. Projects scheduled for next week include paving, irrigation, and sod.

6. New Business:

A. Park Commission to meet with Brian Bowen (on behalf of HYBS) to discuss potential future installation of wells on Park Commission properties for the purpose of supplying field irrigation

Mr. Brian Bowen, on behalf of HYBS, spoke to the Commission regarding the proposal to have wells installed at the Boutwell fields and potentially the O'Donnell fields, as well. Mr. Bowen stated, while there is no shortage of water during the spring and fall, during the summer, especially with the Town's water ban in effect most years, keeping the fields watered is a challenge. Given the assumed high-water table at the Boutwell complex, Mr. Bowen has looked into the possibility of installing a well at the Boutwell complex and presented the Commission with a quote of approximately \$4300.00 to do so. Mr. Bowen stressed that HYBS is not looking for Town funds to accomplish this work and that he has had initial conversations with both the Recreation and DPW Director briefly about this proposal.

Mr. Robert Bowen, expressed support for the proposal with the caveat that DPW support this project.

A concern Mr. Brian Bowen expressed was the perception that the Town would be allowed water fields during periods of a town issued water restrictions.

Mr. Chaves also supported the proposal, while acknowledging possible concerns and questions raised

by residents who may question the use of water by the Town during periods of outdoor water use restrictions. Mr. Chaves asked whether or not it was known if installing a well would affect the Town's water supply. Mr. Brian Bowen, responded that while he was not 100% sure, he anticipated the wells at these two locations may tap into direct water resources such as nearby streams and the Assabet River. Mr. Chaves also asked whether or not Select Board approval is needed to perform this work.

Mr. Roan raised the question of whether installing a well would increase DPW's workload, as grass would more than likely need to be mowed more often.

Mr. Santos asked Mr. Brian Bowen what exactly he was trying to achieve. Mr. Bowen responded that his goal was to prevent fields from drying out and to have the Boutwell fields look similar to fields such as Riverside and Morgan Bowl during the dry summer months. Mr. Santos stated he believed this was a step in the right direction, but cautioned that additional watering will not resolve all of HYBS' concerns regarding the condition of the heat stressed grass. Mr. Santos noted that the other fields mentioned do not receive any more or less water during periods of outdoor water restrictions compared to Boutwell, via the currently installed irrigation systems. Mr. Santos stated that the other fields however, may receive occasional additional turf grass treatments that Boutwell does not. Mr. Santos mentioned that the Select Board would need to accept the well as a gift to the Town, but may not necessarily have to approve the work. Concluding his remarks, Mr. Santos stated he does not believe the Town should incur any short- or long-term costs due to the installation of wells and that HYBS should consider how irrigation adjustments might be added as part of this project to aid in moisture management of infield materials as well as the turf grass.

Mr. Roan reiterated that this conversation was a great start, but questions still need to be answered.

Mr. Rob Bowen stated signage, indicating the use of well water, is key to informing the public.

Mr. Santos concluded the conversation by recommending the next step should be a conversation between him, Brian Bowen (HYBS), and Eric Ryder (DPW) to seek Mr. Ryder's input and the support of DPW.

7. Old Business:

A. Park Commission to continue to discuss Centennial Beach Summer 2021 parking access

Mr. Santos informed the Commission that since their last meeting, he, Mr. Bowen, Mr. Hannon, and Mr. Aponte had met with the Police Chief and Police Captain to discuss how beach lot parking policy changes may impact on-street parking within the beach neighborhood. Mr. Santos stated that all those present at this initial meeting felt that if the Park Commission were to vote to restrict parking in the lot at the beach during the summer of 2021 to Hudson residents only; that they should also consider supporting the expansion of the restricted parking zone on Fort Meadow, the expansion of the restricted parking period of time in order to encompass the Memorial Day holiday, and the suggestion of increasing the fine for parking violations in said area from \$10.00 to \$50.00. Mr. Santos stated that a second meeting took place with Mr. Santos, Mr. Bowen, the Police Chief, the Police Captain, and Kristina Johnson of the Planning/Community Development Department to discuss the matter further. Ms. Johnson informed the group that the Internal Traffic Commission (ITC), of which she helps manage, has the authority to increase the parking violation fine and make the changes previously discussed to the parking restrictions which are currently in place. She concluded stating that there is a process to move through and the any changes would be brought before the Board of Selectmen as well.

Mr. Santos informed the Commission that the opening date for the 2021 beach season had not been set yet, but a decision on parking in the beach lot should be made as soon as possible. Mr. Santos stated that while he supports resident parking only in the lot to start the season, it may need to be re-evaluated as the season progresses. Mr. Santos stated further that checking residency status of any walk-ins would be extremely challenging and he was not supportive of that strategy to help mitigate beach access and overall use the upcoming summer. In conclusion, Mr. Santos provided the Commission with examples of current policies on beach access for residents vs non-residents in some neighboring Cities/Town beaches. Cities/Towns mentioned were Westborough, Marlborough, Grafton and Hopkinton.

Mr. Roan requested that the Commissioners and staff share their opinions on the matter.

Mr. Bowen expressed his opinion that parking in the lot should be residents-only, that the restricted parking zone should be expanded, that the restricted parking dates should be changed, and the fine for parking in the restricted parking zone should be increased.

Mr. Chaves expressed his opinion that parking in the lot should be for residents-only, walk-ins should be allowed regardless of residency, and that it's important that any residents in the current or any new restricted parking zones still be allowed to park in front of their homes.

Mr. Roan expressed his opinion that parking in the lot should be residents-only, walk-ins should be allowed regardless of residency, and that the restricted parking zone should be extended.

Mr. Santos suggested that Hudson Recreation could incur the cost of any new signage needed for the road and volunteered the department to administer any newly created residential parking program specific to the beach neighborhood. Mr. Santos then raised a question about Lakeshore Drive, stating that any parking restrictions placed on Fort Meadow should also be considered for Lakeshore Drive, given the beach is accessible from that road as well. Mr. Roan responded and said restrictions should apply to all beach entrances.

Mr. Hannon spoke presenting scenarios and cases for the Commissioners to consider. Including the additional revenue non-residents bring in, both at the beach and elsewhere in Town as they travel to and from the beach; the fact that historically the parking lot is not always full; and if non-residents arrive and are turned away they may park on the neighboring road, when space may be available in the lot. He stated further that some families who have relatives visiting from out of Town, would be unable to bring them to the beach if the lot was restricted to residents only.

Mr. Aponte stated that he agreed with many of the points made by Mr. Hannon and that he too felt it would be extremely difficult to manage any restrictions on walk-ins as previously requested by some residents.

Mr. Roan, asked if there were any further comments, there were none.

Mr. Bowen motioned to restrict parking in the beach lot for the 2021 season to resident-only, seconded by Mr. Roan and carried...

Vote 3-0 in favor

Mr. Bowen motioned that the Recreation Director present to ITC the Park Commission's recommendation that the dates on the current Restricted Parking Signs at the Fort Meadow Drive beach entrance be adjusted from June 15th-September 15th to read May 15th-September 15th, seconded by Mr. Chaves and carried...

Vote 3-0 in favor

Mr. Bowen motioned that the Recreation Director present to ITC the Park Commission's recommendation that the fines for parking in the Restricted Parking Zone be increased from \$10.00 to \$50.00, or a fee higher than the current beach lot parking rate as deemed appropriate by the ITC, seconded by Mr. Roan and carried...

Vote 3-0 in favor

8. Communications and/or Correspondence to be noted by Commissioners:

A. Mr. Santos informed the Commission that SMILE Mass contacted the Recreation Office and would be donating a Handicap Beach Wheelchair and an Adult Changing Table to the Town to be used at Centennial Beach.

9. Announcements/Adjournment

Mr. Bowen motioned to adjourn at 9:50pm, seconded by Mr. Chaves and carried...

Vote: 3 - 0, in favor

Motion to Approve: Mr. Bowen
Second: Mr. Chaves
Vote: 2 – 0, in favor
Date: June 1, 2021