

MINUTES OF PARKS & CEMETERIES COMMISSION MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 10, 2019

PRESENT: STEVE MSCISZ-CHAIRMAN, GRETCHEN REHAK-COMMISSIONER, MARSHALL HOOK- COMMISSIONER, STEVE SHEPARD SUPT. PARKS & CEMETERIES DEPT.

CALLED TO ORDER: 7:34 P.M.

OLD BUSINESS

OLD VS NEW BUILDING UPDATE: ALL OF THE LENGTH AND ARCH PANELS ARE UP PER STEVE S. TWO END PANELS ALSO JUST ARRIVED. WE NEED FITTINGS FOR END WALLS. STEVE S. HOPES THAT WORK WILL BE COMPLETE BY LATE FALL, WITH A CEMENT FLOOR TO BE POURED AT THAT TIME.

CONCERNING THE HEARSE HOUSE, OUR CONTRACTORS HAVE GUTTED THE BUILDING. DOORS ARE ALMOST DONE, WITH A MID WINTER DATE HOPEFULLY SET FOR CONCLUSION. WE NEED TO SECURE LIGHTING FOR THIS DARK BUILDING. STEVE S. THEN SHOWED EVERYONE PHOTOS OF DOORS FROM YANKEE PINE. THESE DOORS WILL COMPLEMENT THE BUILDING. M. HOOK AND G. REHAK DID NOT LIKE THE LOOK OF THE DOORS. THEY PREFER DOORS WITH MORE HISTORICAL CHARACTER. S.MSCISZ SUGGESTED A FULL PANEL WITH BEVELED GLASS. STEVE AND MARSHALL CHOSE A THREE GLASS PANEL WITH BEVELED GLASS. DISCUSSION CONTINUED BUT NOT EVERYONE COULD AGREE ON THE FINAL DOOR DESIGN.

SMITH MONUMENT CONSTRUCTION PROJECT: PLEASE SEE ATTACHED A LIST OF CONCERNS REGARDING THIS PROJECT. ROBIN CROSBIE OUR TOWN ADMINISTRATOR HAD ASKED THAT THIS LIST BE GENERATED. ROBIN WILL BE LOOKING INTO DRAFTING A LEGAL CONTRACT BETWEEN THE TOWN OF TOPSFIELD AND KIMBALL MEMORIALS ,THE GENERAL CONTRACTOR. SHE WILL BE INVOLVING TOWN COUNSEL. CURRENTLY THERE IS A CONTRACT BETWEEN KIMBALL AND THE MORMON CHURCH, BUT THIS CONTRACT DOES NOT CONTAIN ANY LANGUAGE TO PROTECT THE TOWN. S.MSCISZ RECOMMENDED THAT TOWN COUNSEL SHOULD DRAW UP THIS CONTRACT WHICH SHOULD INCLUDE A FULL DESCRIPTION OF THE SCOPE OF THE JOB, LANGUAGE BETWEEN KIMBALL, THE TOWN AND ALL CONTRACTORS WORKING ON THE JOB, AS WELL AS ALL CERTIFICATES OF INSURANCE. G. REHAK RAISED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE STONE WALL. WE NEED TO MAKE SURE THAT IF IT IS TAKEN DOWN, IT MUST BE PUT BACK TOGETHER IN ITS ORIGINAL STATE. S. SHEPARD REMARKED THAT THE WALL MAY NOT NEED TO COME DOWN AFTER ALL. IRON TREE IS LOOKING INTO OTHER OPTIONS WHICH DO NOT REQUIRE TREE REMOVAL. S. MSCISZ DISCUSSED SOME VERY INNOVATIVE MACHINERY WHICH MAY BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH THIS TASK, SPECIFICALLY A CENTER BOGAN. HE MENTIONED THAT THIS EQUIPMENT IS ALSO CONSIDERED MUCH SAFER. NOTE: CONSERVATION AGENT HEIDI GAFFNEY ALSO DID A SITE WALK AND CONFIRMED THAT TREES CAN BE REMOVED IF NECESSARY IN T HIS AREA AS THEY ARE OVER 100FT FROM THE SCHOOL BROOK. STEVE M. IS HOPEFUL THAT WE WILL NOT LOSE MOMENTUM ON THIS PROJECT, WHICH CAN HAPPEN. THE COMMISSIONERS ALSO INITIALED A FINAL PLAN FOR THE SCOPE OF THIS PROJECT WHICH WAS PROVIDED BY KIMBALL TO MR.WILSON, THE FUNDING REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE MORMON CHURCH. THE SUPT. ALSO PRESENTED A LIST OF CONCERNS REGARDING THE JOB SITE WHICH WAS APPROVED BY ALL, AND WHICH WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR.

NEW BUSINESS

VOTE #09-1-19: M. HOOK MOTIONED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING AS WRITTEN. G.REHAK SECONDED THE MOTION. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR OF SAME.

EEE: THE PARKS IN TOPSFIELD HAVE BEEN CLOSED DUE TO THE STATE RAISING THE THREAT LEVEL TO "HIGH" IN THE TOWN OF TOPSFIELD. OUR DEPT. AND COMMISSION. HAVE BEEN WORKING CLOSELY WITH WENDY HANSBURY THE TOWN BOARD OF HEALTH AGENT TO MANAGE THIS THREAT. NOTE: FINAL DECISION MAKING RELATIVE TO PARK CLOSURES REMAINS WITH THE PARKS & CEMETERIES COMMISSION. WHEN BOXFORD HAD A EEE HIT AS AN ABUTTING TOWN WE CLOSED OUR PARKS. S. SHEPARD ASKED THE COMMISSION ABOUT ESTABLISHING A POLICY WITH REGARDS TO EEE AND PARK CLOSURE GOING FORWARD. S.MSCISZ FELT THAT WE SHOULD HANDLE THIS ON A CASE BY CASE BASIS. M. HOOK FEELS THAT WE SHOULD TAKE EVERYTHING SERIOUSLY GIVEN THE HIGH NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN OUR PARKS. G. REHAK NOTED THAT WENDY EXPLAINED EVERYTHING TO HER VERY WELL. OVER THE LAST TWO WEEKS BOXFORD HAS TESTED NEGATIVE FOR EEE. THE PROBLEM ARISES WHEN TEST RESULTS COME IN LATE ON A FRIDAY AFTERNOON WHICH CAN RESULT IN THE NEED FOR POLICE INTERVENTION TO REMOVE PERSONS FROM OUR PARKS. M.HOOK FELT THAT AS LONG AS WE ARE RESPONSIVE AS A COMMISSION TO PUBLIC CONCERNS, WE DO NOT NEED TO ESTABLISH A SET POLICY. S. SHEPARD SAID THAT HE WOULD SPEAK WITH WENDY ABOUT TRYING TO GET EEE TEST RESULTS TO US BY THURSDAY INSTEAD OF FRIDAY. THEREFORE WE CAN MAKE DECISIONS QUICKER AND PUT UP NECESSARY SIGNAGE. THERE IS PRESENTLY ONE EEE CATCH FACILITY AT 25 WASHINGTON ST. AND ANOTHER AT PYEBROOK PARK. G. REHAK ALSO NOTED THAT INFORMATION HAS BEEN OUT THERE ABOUT HOW PERSONS CAN TAKE NECESSARY PRECAUTIONS TO PROTECT AGAINST EEE. IF THE RISK IS HIGH WE WILL ACTIVATE OUR TELEPHONE CHAIN TO CONTACT EVERYONE AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.

HOT TOPPING OF ROADS IN THE CEMETERY: WE WILL DO 200-600 FT. STRETCHES OF HOT TOPPING OF OUR CEMETERY ROADS AT ONE TIME. WE WILL AIM FOR 3 SECTIONS OF PAVING ON AN ANNUAL BASIS. PER S. SHEPARD THERE ARE ALSO WATER LINES UNDER SOME OF THE ROADS. WE WILL NOT PAVE ROADS WITH UNDERGROUND WATER LINES UNTIL WE FIRST REPLACE THE WATER LINES, WHICH HAVE BEEN MARKED FOR REPLACEMENT UNDER ANOTHER PROJECT. WE HAVE ALREADY RETAINED A CONTRACTOR TO DO THE PAVING WORK WHICH IS SET TO BEGIN IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS.

S. SHEPARD ESTIMATES THAT IT WILL COST US \$20,000.00 PER YEAR FOR A TOTAL COST OF \$100,000.00 OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD TO REPLACE OLD ROADS IN THE CEMETERY. S. SHEPARD ALSO DISCUSSED CATCH BASINS. S. MSCISZ SUGGESTED ADDING A CULVERT ON THE SIDE OF THE ROAD TO DIVERT WATER AWAY FROM THE ROADWAY WHICH COULD ELIMINATE DETERIORATION CAUSED BY WATER FLOW OVER THE ROADWAY. OUR WATER LINES ARE METAL AND EVERY WEEK WE HAVE ONGOING LEAKS. OUR GOAL IS TO REPLACE THE ENTIRE WATER SYSTEM IN THE CEMETERY. WATER LINE REPLACEMENT SHOULD COST APPROXIMATELY \$10,000.00 PER S. SHEPARD OTHER CEMETERIES ARE CONVERTING TO WATERING STATIONS VS. SPICKETS. WE CURRENTLY HAVE 3 SPICKET STATIONS IN THE CEMETERY. S. MSCISZ SUGGESTED GETTING 4 STATIONS INSTEAD OF 3, WHICH WILL GIVE OUR RESIDENTS MORE OPTIONS.

POLICY FOR OUTSIDE CONTRACTUAL WORK ON P&C JURISDICTIONAL PROPERTY: S. MSCISZ HAS A PROBLEM LENDING OUR LABORERS, STAFF AND EQUIPMENT TO OTHER TOWN NON P&C JURISDICTIONAL PROPERTIES UNLESS THERE IS A BENEFIT TO OUR DEPT. FOR INSTANCE, ONE DAY EACH WEEK WE CLEAN UP SCHOOL PROPERTIES WITH NO COMPENSATION. TWENTY YEARS AGO WE WERE PROMISED COMPENSATION FROM THE SCHOOLS OF \$2,000.00/YEAR FOR OUR CLEAN UP WORK, BUT WE HAVE ONLY RECEIVED ONE PAYMENT OF THIS SUM OVER THE YEARS. WE HAVE ALSO WEEDED TOWN HALL 6-8 TIMES YEAR TO DATE FOR NO COMPENSATION. S. MSCISZ BELIEVES THAT OUR LABORERS SHOULD BE PAID BY THE SCHOOL DEPT. IF WE PERFORM WORK ON THEIR PROPERTY WHICH BENEFITS ONLY THE SCHOOL DEPT. WE ALSO DO MOWING AND TRIMMING AT THE TOT LOT, FOR NO COMPENSATION. G. REHAK SAID THAT THIS IS A MATTER FOR ROBIN CROSBIE TO LOOK INTO.

FUTURE OF OUR DEPARTMENT: OUR ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WAS DISCUSSED. OUR BUDGET IS LESS THAN \$300,000.00 WHICH INCLUDES SALARIES AND WAGES PER S. SHEPARD. S. MSCISZ SAYS THAT NOTHING BEATS OUR CURRENT ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE VS. MERGING WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS, OUTSOURCING ETC. S. MSCISZ DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT D. BOND OF THE HWY DEPT. HAS A BACKGROUND IN CEMETERY OPERATIONS. PER S. SHEPARD THERE IS AN UPCOMING MEETING ON 9/19 TO DISCUSS DPW AND EMERSON PARK. ALSO, B. MICHALOWSKI IS RETIRING IN NOVEMBER. NO CONCLUSIONS WERE MADE ABOUT HOW ANY OF THESE CHANGES WILL AFFECT OUR DEPT. IN THE FUTURE GIVEN S. SHEPARD'S IMPENDING RETIREMENT, A DATE FOR WHICH IS STILL UNCERTAIN.

VOTE #09- 2-19: G. REHAK MOTIONED TO APPROVE OF THE SALE OF TWO CEMETERY LOTS TO FORMER RESIDENTS ALAN AND MARY SUSAN KELIHER OF IPSWICH, MA. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY M. HOOK. ALL VOTED IN FAVOR OF SAME.

DOG PARK: M. HOOK DISCUSSED CREATING A DOG PARK IN TOPSFIELD. S. MSCISZ WAS NOT IN FAVOR OF SAME DUE TO POTENTIAL PROBLEMS AND LIABILITY FOR THE TOWN. FOR INSTANCE TWO DOGS COULD GET INTO A FIGHT AND DOGS AND/OR HUMANS COULD BECOME INJURED. ALSO PER S. SHEPARD THIS WOULD BE DIFFICULT OUR DEPT. TO MANAGE ESPECIALLY SINCE OUR ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICER IS SHARED BETWEEN THREE TOWNS. THE ISSUE OF DOG VACCINATIONS WAS ALSO RAISED. THERE WERE CONCERNS THAT SOME DOGS FREQUENTING THE DOG PARK MIGHT NOT BE PROPERLY VACCINATED. WE HAVE ALSO HAD UP TO 30 DOG COMPLAINTS ANNUALLY ABOUT DOGS NOT ON LEASHES IN THE PARKS, WHICH HAS ALREADY TAKEN UP A LOT OF OUR DEPARTMENT'S TIME TO INVESTIGATE, ETC.

HOLIDAY ON THE GREEN: G. REHAK DISCUSSED THIS EVENT. SHE SAID THAT ROLES ARE WELL DEFINED FROM PAST EVENTS AS TO WHO WILL BE DOING WHAT, ETC. HOWEVER SHE IS SEEKING NEW VOLUNTEERS TO WORK WITH DARCY FULTON WHO HAS DONE A LOT OF WORK WITH THIS EVENT IN THE PAST. THE NEXT MEETING REGARDING THIS EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE ON 9/23/19 AT THE HOME OF DARCY FULTON. G. REHAK WILL HAVE MORE INFORMATION AT OUR NEXT P&C MEETING. G. REHAK ALSO NOTED THAT WENDY HANSBURY OUR NEW BOARD OF HEALTH AGENT WILL BE HOLDING A FLU CLINIC AT THE HOLIDAY ON THE GREEN EVENT. RESTROOMS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE, AND THE REFURBISHED HALL IN OUR TOWN HALL WILL BE THE VENUE FOR A DANCE FOR THE EVENT. G. REHAK ALSO NOTED THAT COMPLAINTS WERE RECEIVED LAST YEAR ABOUT OVERFLOWING TRASH FROM BARRELS NEAR THE LIBRARY. SHE HOPES TO SOLVE THIS PROBLEM BY HAVING LARGER BARRELS IN PLACE THIS YEAR.

BONFIRE COMPLAINTS CONCERNING THE PROCTOR SCHOOL DIAMOND: S. SHEPARD REPORTED THAT THERE IS A GROUP OF LOCAL ATTORNEYS IN TOPSFIELD WHO WANT MORE DONE TO PROTECT THE PROCTOR SCHOOL DIAMOND. THIS GROUP HAS COMPLAINED TO STEVE S. ABOUT THE POOR CONDITION OF THE FIELD DUE TO VARIOUS THINGS SUCH AS THE ANNUAL BONFIRE WHICH IS HELD ON THIS PROPERTY. S. SHEPARD RECOMMENDS THAT INSTEAD OF HAVING A BONFIRE, THE TOWN SHOULD CONSIDER ARRANGING A LIGHT SHOW ON THE PROPERTY WHICH WOULD NOT DAMAGE PROCTOR FIELD. HOWEVER AS S. SHEPARD POINTS OUT THIS PROPERTY IS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE SCHOOL DEPT., WE JUST MOW THE GRASS AND MAINTAIN THE FIELD. GYM CLASSES FROM PROCTOR SCHOOL ALSO PLAY ON THE FIELD DURING SCHOOL DAYS. THE FIELD GETS A LOT OF USE. M. HOOK BELIEVES THAT WE SHOULD FIND A WAY TO CONTINUE THE BONFIRE WHILE MINIMIZING ANY DAMAGE CAUSED BY SAME. S. SHEPARD SAID THAT HE WOULD LIKE TO FIND ANOTHER LOCATION FOR THE BONFIRE SUCH AS THE FAIRGROUNDS. S. MSCISZ SAID THAT ONE YEAR THERE WAS A PROBLEM LOCATING PALLETS FOR THE BONFIRE. S. SHEPARD NOTED THAT EVERYTHING IS KILLED WITHIN A 150 FEET RADIUS OF THE BONFIRE.

BILLS AND DEEDS WERE SIGNED.

THE NEXT PARKS & CEMETERIES COMMISSION MEETING IS SET TO OCCUR ON TUESDAY OCTOBER 8, 2019.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:50 P.M.

