

Crystal Pond Park Commission

Minutes from February 3, 2021 Special Meeting

Location: Eastford Town Office Building, 6 pm

Submitted by David Barlow, Chairman

Members present: David Barlow, Beach Baywood (via phone) Bill Bradley (via phone), Chuck Lee, Chris Mayhew, Paul Oleszewski, Rick Torgeson, Jim Trowbridge

Members absent: Brian Griffin

1. **Called to order:** Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.
2. **Citizen participation:** The CPPC welcomed Woodstock resident John Cimoichowski to observe the meeting.
3. **Minutes from December 2, 2020 meeting:** Mayhew made a motion to accept the minutes as written, with the correction that we received \$615.90 in disc golf donations, not \$615.80 as written. Seconded by Lee. Passed unanimously, with Baywood abstaining.
4. **Financial report:** Torgeson reported that the CPPC fund balance was \$17,107.36 as of Dec 31, 2020. The balance as of Jan 28, 2021 was \$17,717.36. This includes a small amount of money for rental security deposits that will be returned to renters following the completion of their events. The CPPC thanks Robert & Deborah Kirk for their very generous cash donation to the Park. Trowbridge made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report. Lee seconded it. It passed unanimously.
5. **Rental update:** With Griffin's absence, there was no update on our current rental status. Torgeson and Trowbridge asked the Commission to clarify the definition of a "4 Hour Event" in our 2021 Rental Rate Chart. The Commission confirmed that a renter may have access to the facility for more than 4 hours for an event such as a dinner where the renter requires extra time for decorating, cooking and/or cleanup.
6. **Maintenance and Management:**
 - a. **Restoration of Power to the Upper Park:** Woodstock Valley Electric provided price quotes for two options: Option 1) Maintenance of the existing overhead wire to bring power from the Pump House to the Caretaker's Cabin. However all side-branching wires to other (unused) buildings will be disconnected. Quote = \$500. Option 2) Upgrade the electrical system in the Pump House. Pull new wires through the existing underground conduits, install flush pull boxes at the junctions, and install a weather-proof electrical panel on a concrete pedestal at the midpoint of the run for future expansion. Connect the new underground wires to the Pump House and Caretaker's Cabin. (CPPC to dig trenches). Quote = \$10,900. Following discussion, Mayhew made a motion to accept Option 1). Seconded by Trowbridge. Passed unanimously. Barlow will inform Woodstock Valley Electric its bid was accepted.
 - b. **Website Update:** Barlow reported that the CPP website has now been moved to a server maintained by Savage Systems, the IT company contracted by the Town of Woodstock. There will be no extra charge to the town for this move. A button was added to the home webpage to download trail maps. Barlow is working with Savage Systems to establish the following email addresses for use by the Commission: parkcommission@crystalpondpark.com, reservations@crystalpondpark.com and treasurer@crystalpondpark.com. This will avoid the use of personal email addresses when communicating with the public.
 - c. **Google Ad:** Barlow reported that several changes were made to the Park's website and to the Google Maps description of the Park in order to attract more wedding business to the Park. The

category of the Park's "business" was changed to "Wedding Venue", the description of the Park was expanded to emphasize its availability for wedding rentals, and new wedding-related photos were added. In addition a Google Ad was placed to bring the CPP close to the top of Google search results for local wedding venues. Barlow presented Google Analytics data showing the increased effectiveness of these changes in drawing more viewers to our rental webpage. Whether these changes will actually lead to increased rentals will be monitored.

- d. **Insurance Update:** There has been much communication between the CPPC and CIRMA – the insurance broker that insures the Towns of Woodstock & Eastford. CIRMA asked the CPPC to fill out an RV Park & Campground Insurance Application to allow them to source bids for insuring CPP rental activities. Apparently this was not an appropriate classification and CIRMA then asked the CPPC to fill out a Land Conservancy Insurance Application. However despite working on this issue for several months, no decisions regarding umbrella coverage have been made. CIRMA did add the CPP to its TULIP (Tenant User Liability Insurance Program) website which will enable future renters to easily purchase co-insurance for their particular event. The cost of single event insurance coverage will range from \$103 to \$134, depending on the length and type of event and the number of guests. This price range seems reasonable for events like weddings, but excessive for events like bridal parties, birthday parties, meetings and dinners. There still has been no final decision regarding our ability to rent the Lakeside Cabin and ball field.
- e. **Building Demolition:** The Commission discussed demolishing and removing several unsightly and unused structures in the Park. These include: the outdoor shower stalls, Trading Post, Cook's Cabin, two outdoor latrines, and the last remaining Adirondack Shelter. These structures have never been used since the property was purchased back in 2003. Mayhew made a motion that the CPPC take the necessary steps to demolish these structures. Lee seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. Barlow will contact the Woodstock and Eastford BOS and obtain their permission to proceed with the demolition, and will then obtain a Demolition Permit. Barlow will also ask the Selectmen if the Public Works Dept can assist us in this project.
- f. **Updating the Exterior of the Caretaker's Cabin:** The Commission discussed a proposal to work on the exterior of the Caretaker's Cabin by: replacing the porch pillars, adding a code-compliant porch railing, removing the dark window screens, removing an unused exterior door, and painting the building in the Park's new color scheme. Trowbridge made a motion to allocate up to \$3,000 to work on these renovations plus get an estimate to remove the tree that leans over the building. Lee seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Barlow will contact a tree service to get a quote on cutting down the tree.

7. **Chairman's Comments:**

- a. **Maintenance Building Cleanout:** Mayhew organized a workday on Dec 31st to remove the accumulating junk and to organize the remaining items in the Maintenance Building. Expired paint and bulky waste were brought to the Transfer Station. Metal items were brought to a recycler. The Commission thanks the five Commissioners who participated in the clean up.
- b. **Eastford LoCIP Meeting:** The Eastford BOS requested input from the CPPC for the Town's Ten-Year Capital Plan. Mayhew made a motion that the CPPC remind the BOS that the major capital project at the Park is the need to address the deteriorating Trout Pond Dam, with an estimated expense (to each town) of \$20,000 for year 1, and \$60,000 for year 2. The motion required that a copy of this response also be sent to the Woodstock BOS for their LoCIP planning. Oleszewski seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Barlow will send the Commission's response to both BOS, and will join the Eastford LoCIP meeting on February 6, 2021.

- 8. **Opening Position for New Commissioner from Woodstock:** John Cimochofski, who was present at the meeting, confirmed that he has already submitted an application with the Town of Woodstock to join

the CPPC. Mr. Cimochoowski confirmed he continues to have an interest in joining the Commission. Following discussion, Mayhew made a motion that the CPPC notify the Woodstock BOS that the Commission recommends Mr. Cimochoowski be appointed to the Commission. Torgeson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Barlow will contact the Woodstock BOS with this recommendation.

9. **Motion to Adjourn:** Oleszewski made a motion to adjourn. Bradley seconded. The motion passed unanimously at 8:35 pm.