

Open Space and Recreation Committee

Town of Tisbury
Department of Public Works
115 High Point Lane, Tisbury, MA

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 30, 2023

Meeting called to order: 3:48pm

Place: Zoom

Attendance: Committee members - James Burrows (JB), Cheryl Doble (CD), Gerard Hokanson (GH), Carolyn Wallis (CW)

Also Attending: Kirk Metell (DPW)

Others Attending: Tristan Israel, Caroline Little

1. Approval of Minutes

- November 2: CW moved, CD seconded. Approved 4-0.

2. Updates from Kirk

(a) Veteran's Park Field Conditions

- Kirk noted that the Beach Road Concert promoter had provided the Town with \$40,000. To date, work done on the fields at Veteran's Park has been funded from a line item in the DPW budget. DPW has deep aerated and slice seeded the fields. Additional work will be done on the fields in the spring, including repair of the main softball infield. A bid package for a year-round maintenance contract, based on the input from Ian Lacy, will go out the first week of January. Responding to an inquiry from JB, Kirk noted that \$25,000 of the above \$40,000 would be needed for Veteran's Park. Addressing a question from CD, Kirk agreed that the Field Fund and perhaps the soccer community might contribute to Veteran's Park field maintenance. CD will reach out to the Field Fund.

(b) Lake Street Pickleball Courts

- The courts were closed for the winter, but have been reopened in response to community request. Kirk remains concerned about damage to the nets and to the surface of the courts. It was suggested that pickleball players be asked to bring their own nets and DPW can take in the Town's nets.

(c) Owen Park Bandstand

- Kirk reported that the bid package for the bandstand will also go out in January. Preliminary input from contractors is that the money allocated should be sufficient.

(d) DPW Personnel (2024 Budget)

- Kirk has added a year-round Parks maintenance foreman position to the DPW's 2024 budget. Kirk will provide a job description (currently with HR) for the Committee's review.
- Within 1-2 weeks Kirk will also provide a breakdown of the DPW's planned park maintenance budget to the committee for its review.

(d) Church Street Tennis Courts

- Kirk noted that the gate lock parts have arrived, and the lock is being prepared for installation.
- CW inquired about access to the courts if WiFi goes down. There is no immediate answer. Caroline Little suggested a key lock and availability of a key to a player who would then lock up.
- CW noted that teak benches had been placed at the Church Street courts rather than the black metal ones that were to be purchased. It was speculated that the benches had been delivered to the wrong site.
- CD reminded JB that he had volunteered to draft a letter of appreciation for David McNamara.
- JB will also ask David if he has a template clay court maintenance plan that DPW could use to provide to the Town's court maintenance vendor or staff.

(e) Additional Comments for Kirk and the Committee

- Tristan Israel asked that the Committee remember the Dog Park with regard to updates and maintenance. He also mentioned the need to control weeds at the Tashmoo Overlook which can block the view. Kirk noted that the tractor used to mow the field below the overlook is being repaired, but will follow up.

3. Tree Farm

- CD reported that a suggestion from Tristan Israel for a tree farm to grow stock to replace dead or diseased trees in town was considered for a CPC grant, but was not eligible. The idea should still be considered, perhaps covered by a Town Meeting warrant.
- Tristan mentioned that the area around the former septic lagoon had been considered for a tree farm for many years. A recent review of this location, however, determined that this was probably not the best spot due to the distance from the roads and lack of availability of water. A replacement location has not yet been established.
- Tristan and CD consulted Tim Boland at Polly Hill. Two varieties of trees were suggested that would be suitable for this use and not be susceptible to changing climate conditions. Polly Hill would supply trees to be planted in 50-gallon containers, set in ground just below the surface at the tree farm. Drip irrigation was suggested to keep them watered. It was estimated that we would start with 25 trees (original idea was for 50), available from Polly Hill at \$35/tree.
- Overall, Tristan estimated the cost of the project to be about \$8,000, including the trees, a fence surrounding the trees (approximately 40 x 40 feet) to keep out wildlife, and the irrigation system. Polly Hill can provide the trees at a very reasonable price. CD, Tristan and Kirk will meet to determine a target cost for a Town Meeting warrant article.
- The Committee expressed concern that maintaining this tree farm would add work to the DPW which was not staffed to manage this extra responsibility. The idea of a volunteer group to manage this was brought up, but concerns about relying on volunteers were raised.

4. Parks Website

- GH reported that the domain name had been selected, and the web hosting fee for 12 months was paid by Dan Marino (to be reimbursed by CD, and hopefully later by the Town – process is still being discussed).
- GH was asked to work with Dan on the timing of a Committee review of Phase 1 of the development effort. Dan has mentioned to GH that he has taken photos of park sites; CD asked Committee members to check whether they had photos that might work as well.

5. Veteran's Park - Horsley-Witten Plans

- GH reported that HW will provide their “Task 4” deliverable (Veteran’s Park Master Plan) by Friday, December 8. GH reviewed a September 19 email to HW outlining the Town’s expectations for this deliverable. He recommended that, before scheduling a broader Open Space and Water Resources Committee review, he will assess the documentation received and ensure that the points made in the September 19 message were addressed. GH will remind HW of the September 19 email.

6. Lake Street Plans

- The application for Community Preservation Act funding of a picnic pavilion, picnic tables and a stone path from the parking area back to the woods was approved by the CPC.
- A plan for the playground area and other aspects of the Lake Street Park should be assembled. CD noted that Henry Stephenson had plans in hand. CW was asked to review this with the playground subcommittee.
- GH was asked to check with Scott Horsley and David Formato (Onsite Engineering) regarding the status of the state’s review of the Tashmoo Targeted Watershed Management Plan. Details of this plan includes a potential wastewater effluent discharge system in the area of the park where the children’s playground is proposed.

7. Blue Trail

- CW reported that this project was moving along. She met with Kristen Geagan (Sheriff’s Meadow) to review. They have identified multiple Town, Sheriff’s Meadow, Oak Bluffs and Land Bank locations for sites with varying functionality. CW estimates that there would be 12-14 possible sites in Lagoon Pond, and 7-8 in Lake Tashmoo. A meeting will be held with Kristen on Dec 13 (10-11:30) to review sites.
- Kristen has indicated that Sheriff’s Meadow will provide signs and a link to TrailsMV. CPC funds would support these tasks.
- CD has completed documentation required for Con Com review of the kayak landing at Tashmoo Spring Pond. Two walking paths are included: woodlands and along the shore of Spring Pond.

8. Next Meeting

- The Committee agreed to meet next on Thursday, December 14. The key agenda topic will be the 2024 DPW budget.

Adjourn Meeting

CW moved, HS seconded, approved 5-0. Meeting ended 5:19pm.

Submitted by Gerard Hokanson