



# TOWN OF HUDSON

## Benson Park Committee

Harry Schibanoff, Chairman

Shawn Jasper, Selectmen Liaison



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### Meeting Minutes October 6, 2011

#### 1. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Benson Committee was called to order by Chair Harry Schibanoff at 7:06 p.m. on Oct. 6, 2011 in the Community Development Room at Town Hall with the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Ralph Alio.

#### 2. Attendance:

Vice Chair J. Barnes, A. Desrosiers, R. Empey, C. Gagnon, Selectman Liaison S. Jasper, John Leone, P. Nichols, Chair H. Schibanoff, N. Undercofler, Alternates R. Alio, and D. Briand.

#### 3. Public Input

None

#### 4. Presentations

##### A. Ken Matthews – Park Benches

K. Matthews is here to speak on the number of benches the Committee would like at Benson Park. There are 18 benches in the park, including five (5) at the 9/11 Memorial. The Committee stated that 20 was the maximum amount of benches to be placed in the park at this time. More bench requests are being asked of the Friends of Benson Park at this time, and K. Matthews is asking if the Committee wants more than 20 benches and do we want to include the five (5) at the 9/11 Memorial site. If the Committee does not include the five (5) from the Memorial site, than what is the amount we would consider reasonable. He also said that many requests from people are asking to be allowed to pick their bench placement spot. This is basically K. Matthews' presentation and he would like feed-back from the Committee. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that until all the bases are under the benches we have, we should not move forward. The areas that are completed at this time are saturated so until we clean and develop more of the park. J. Leone said that the first 20 did not include the memorial site so he would be fine with fulfilling that number. He also asked if anyone knew if benches would be placed around the playground at this time. If not, this could be an area where benches could be placed. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that this should be held off for now and possible when another area in the spring is cleared, benches or a picnic table could be utilized. He feels that more sites for benches would not be feasible at this time. Chair H. Schibanoff asked if any benches were placed in the North Field. This could be a potential spot for benches. Chair H. Schibanoff asked if the Committee wanted to exclude the five (5) benches from

the memorial and stay with our original 20. N. Undercofler said the memorial benches should be excluded from the original 20 benches. Chair H. Schibanoff asked for a consensus from the Committee on this. P. Nichols asked if Selectman Liaison S. Jasper wanted to stop at the 13 benches and he said he would be fine with the original 20. J. Leone asked if K. Matthews had accepted more than seven (7) requests and he said he had at least five (5) requests for benches at this time.

**B. Jeremy Griffus – Mals’ Pals**

J. Griffus introduced himself and as a member of the Mals’ Pals committee he wanted to ask the Benson Park Committee if they could place a sign at the future site of the Gazebo in order to let people know what would be coming to this amphitheater site in the future. He handed out a black and white copy of the sign with dimensions to the committee for their review. They are not looking to make anything large, just something small and simple with the website address for people to go for more information. N. Undercofler asked where this sign would be placed. J. Griffus said he would like to place the sign on the site but he would hear ideas from the committee. N. Undercofler said the reason she asked was because she has witnessed Weddings taking place on that site with pictures being taken and she thought the sign would be in the way. J. Griffus said it would be a sign that could be readily be taken down or placed in the Grove of Trees that would also be part of this site and could be easily mowed around in this area. Vice Chair J. Barnes asked if this was going to be a temporary sign until the project was started and J. Griffus said yes. Mals’ Pals has a large following and this sign will let others know what is expected to be built in her memory. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper liked the idea of the sign being removable. If this is approved by the Committee tonight, he thought it should also be discussed with K. Burns and he will bring it before the BOS to make sure there are no problems.

**P. Nichols made a motion to accept Mals’ Pals removable signage in the area of this memorial along with the approval of the Road Agent and the BOS**

**Gagnon seconded the motion**

**All in favor – Motion Carries**

Chair H. Schibanoff asked J. Griffus if he had anything to add to the playground update. J. Griffus said that he thought the wood chips would be spread on the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> and if any volunteers were available he would appreciate the help. There would also be a small ribbon cutting on October 16, 2011 to officially open this playground.

**5. Approval of Minutes**

**A. Minutes of August, 4, 2011 and September 1, 2011**

**N. Undercofler made a motion to accept minutes**

**Selectman Liaison S. Jasper seconded the motion**

**All in favor – Motion Carries.**

**6. Old Business**

**A. Train Station Update**

**Selectman S. Jasper** said the Train Station was not going to be worked on until spring (per last meeting). He still thinks that there is a possibility of a new roof being done before Thanksgiving. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper is

working with the State and making some progress. He will attend a meeting next Thursday so that details will be ironed out so that an agreement be in place so that the roof be put out to bid. He will also be working on getting something worked on so that moving the building in the spring becomes a reality. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper also explained other aspects of this endeavor, i.e. Grants, matching Town Funds, etc., more on this at a later date. He also said that another area at the top of the hill where the old barn was situated would make another great overlook. This was suggested by the Town Road Agent, Kevin Burns. It overlooks the 9/11 Memorial and it is something to keep in mind for another project. Chair H. Schibanoff said that mention of the A-Frame shingles was discussed at the BOS meeting. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that would be addressed along with the Train Station roofing.

#### **B. Playground Update**

**C. Gagnon** said that the Highway Department and the playground company worked really hard from Monday through Thursday getting this ready even with the torrential downpours. Everything is in place at this time. Some equipment will not be installed until the playground is ready for use. Grading is being finished and the two (2) entrances at the top of the playground need to be done for the handicap accessibility. Wood chips will also be spread before the playground can be used. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper mentioned that with the weather this project has been delayed but should be open with a small ceremony next week. Chair H. Schibanoff wanted it to be known that the playground company employees were wonderful to work with and had the patience of Job, working with the volunteers.

#### **C. 9/11 Dedication**

**Chair H. Schibanoff** wanted to remind everyone that a Dedication Ceremony was held at the 9/11 Memorial. It will probably be the largest event held in the park for a long time. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper and Chair H. Schibanoff spoke at this ceremony. Chair H. Schibanoff received a thank you note from the 9/11 Committee that he proceeded to read. A. Desrosiers asked if the memorial would be accessible during the winter months. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said If you can walk in you can visit the memorial. There will be no snow plowing, etc., because it will damage the RAP.

### **7. New Business**

#### **A. Bench Foundations**

**J. Leone** spoke of the bench foundations. A few weeks ago this committee installed pavers under a bench for everyone to look at and comment on. He would like to propose that this become the base design for all benches in the park. N. Undercofler asked if the benches near the lake could end up in the lake if they were not anchored down and J. Leone said that this was a possibility, but with the weight of them this was very unlikely. D. Empey said that in his opinion the bench with the pavers looked very nice and thought they would do very well. He would like to see one more row of pavers along the front so that we won't end up with muddy spots instead of grass. J. Leone said another row of pavers would exceed the budgeted amount for this project, but he would look into this. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper discussed this problem and agreed that another row of pavers should be installed. P. Nichols sat on the bench with the pavers and said another row would be better. Chair

H. Schibanoff asked if this would be acceptable to the Friends. J. Leone said there were not a lot of choices, and they were trying to stay away from cement and he would bring this back to the Friends and see if more funds could be found to purchase more pavers. More discussion followed.

**B. Committee Reports**

**D. Empey** said the Trails and Paths sub-committee has been working on the Haselton Farm trail out in the back bridge area. They have completed or nearly completed grading and filling in and upgrading that path near the bridge. It is a big improvement over the mud hole that was out there. They have solved the problem with flooding on the Moose Pond trail and their next project is to repair the area that was washed out by the stream that relocated itself. Chair H. Schibanoff asked D. Empey if he has heard anything about the Grant and where it stands. D. Empey said as far as he understands it, he must submit bills and documentation of bills to be included in what we ask the State or reimburse us. Town Engineer Gary Webster is handling that portion of the Grant. D. Empey said there should be a considerable amount of money to be spent at this time. Caution should be used on how we spend this and make sure everything we spend is able to be reimbursed by the Grant. P. Nichols asked D. Empey if he could get the load of stones he needs to complete a project and he is 98% sure it would be reimbursed. He said the cost of the stones would be about \$150 and he would take the receipt for that amount and give it to Town Engineer G. Webster who would then put a packet together to submit. They do not want this info individually.

**N. Undercofler** reported that on Sunday she had two (2) people who wanted to Adopt-a-Spot. One spot she is very happy about is the Gorilla House. A family who's grandfather worked at Benson Park for 33 years and took care of Tony the Gorilla. The entire family was present and very excited to be able to work on this area. The other location is the two stairs near the Bear Wall. These people have a good friend who is a stone mason and they are hoping he will help with this wall area. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said because of the intricate work involved, this is one of the areas that people should be reimbursed for cement, stones, etc. N. Undercofler said she would take anything for free, but Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that if stones, cement, etc., were paid, maybe the stone mason would agree to work on other areas in the park. N. Undercofler agreed with this. She also said the overlook is an area being restored by a couple who enjoy this and they are getting it ready for someone to use as an Adopt-a-Spot. D. Empey said he views the area in front of the Gorilla cage as a special area in the park, and he wants to know what we should do to insure that the landscaping in that area meets with our view of what we want. He wanted to know if we should be more interested in the plans for this adopt-a-spot and wanted to know the thoughts of the Committee. P. Nichols said she disagreed with D. Empey. She said of all the Adopt-a-Spots that N. Undercofler has let people work on in the park, there was not one of them she would be embarrassed to show anyone. Each one is different and beautiful. If N. Undercofler said someone could do the area in front of the Gorilla house, she would support them. P. Nichols trusts N. Undercofler's judgment because of all the time and work she has put into managing the Adopt-a-Spot areas. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper agreed that if N. Undercofler knew what was going to be done to this area, he would trust her judgment.

Chair H. Schibanoff said he agreed but for a different reason. He felt that this should be kept at a sub committee level. If there was a problem it could then be brought before the Committee. Vice Chair J. Barnes said it should be left at the sub level. N. Undercofler said that there is nothing but gravel in front of the Gorilla House. She discussed with the family the need to rake out the area and some loam put down. There are two entrances to the Gorilla house and there is no path to the opening on the left. The family will be coming before the Committee to present their plans. This area is mostly shade with a small amount of light at the far right corner and N. Undercofler does not advise going beyond this. She said this family is very enthusiastic and willing to take on this area. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that this area is under the drip line of the roof and unless this area is covered with plants or bark mulch, it will splash on the building. N. Undercofler has already suggested white stone.

### **C. Budget**

**Chair H. Schibanoff** said after the last meeting he received notice that the budget was due on October 7, 2011. He called up the Finance Committee that consisted of, Vice Chair J. Barnes, Selectman Liaison S. Jasper and himself. This committee could not get together so Chair H. Schibanoff called Selectman Liaison S. Jasper on the phone and came up with the packet given to the Committee today. We have two (2) different budgets to deal with: Operations for the Committee and Operations of the Park. One is larger than the other. He showed documents; one that shows the Benson Park funds and one that came from Kathy Carpentier, Director of Finance that shows funds expended by the BOS. The balance at this time shows \$27,000. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he did not have time to investigate but he thought that two figures were not right, they might be something left over from last year or already spent. Chair H. Schibanoff explained what was handed out and wants to use this as a document to be sent to the Committee on a quarterly basis. He also explained the way Municipal budgets work. A 10% reduction on this coming budget was suggested by Selectman Liaison S. Jasper. The larger budget is Park Operations. This includes small equipment maintenance. The only thing that was changed was park maintenance. We don't know what we will be doing in 18 months so Chair H Schibanoff will be asking for general repairs and maintenance of the park. Explanations on other figures were given by Chair H. Schibanoff with clarification from Selectman Liaison S. Jasper. Questions were asked and answered. Chair H. Schibanoff asked for a motion to recommend this budget to the BOS and the Budget Committee.

**Vice Chair J. Barnes made a motion to recommend this budget to the BOS and the Budget Committee**

**Selectman Liaison S. Jasper seconded the motion**

**All in favor – Motion Carries**

### **D. Parking/Handicap Parking**

**Chair H. Schibanoff** said it was time to talk about expanding the general parking lot. With the 9/11 Memorial and the new Playground, parking is getting really tight. A. Desrosiers mentioned the handicap parking area. She had noticed that there were no stripes included in the handicap parking area that would allow wheel chair off loading and felt that this should be addressed. She also thought that the lower parking lot had a flat area that a few handicap parking spots could be added. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said

he thought that an overall plan is needed for parking. He thinks there is another 100 feet at the bottom of the hill and he thought a few more handicap spots could be put in the area of the dumpster. Moving the Kiosk and the dumpster would need to be done. He thought we could go another year before anything should be done. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper also said that eventually the parking lot would need to be paved and striped. Discussion and input followed. This was tabled until a future meeting.

**E. Outlook Stairs**

**Chair H. Schibanoff** said he was not sure what was decided about the Outlook stairs problem. D. Empey said he is waiting for his materials from the Highway Department. D. Empey said after receiving the materials he could have the problem solved in two weeks. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said he thought this could wait until spring.

**F. Gorilla House Mural**

**Chair H. Schibanoff** said that the Gorilla Cage Mural was discussed at the last BOS meeting. It was decided to let the painter continue and he understood that the Friends of Benson Park were going to supply some sort of protective surface to it, was this correct. The Friends will not be providing the protective service, it will be K. Matthews. The BOS also had a few more stipulations to go along with this: 1. If the painting is vandalized, the painter must repair it. 2. If it is not repaired, then the BOS reserves the right to paint over it. 3. If other people think it is all right to paint other murals in the park without permission of the BOS this might also lead to painting over this mural.

**G. Gate @ Entrance**

**C. Gagnon** spent a lot of time in the park last week and other people have remarked in general that the gate is not wide enough to allow cars to enter and exit at the same time. Some have almost had accidents because of visibility and she asked if there were plans to make this entrance wider. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that when the Senior/Cable facility was done this would be widened. He also gave more information on this. Discussions followed.

**H. Public Communications**

**Chair H. Schibanoff** has received a number of emails through the Town website. He shared a few with the Committee:

1. A woman requested being allowed to pick some of the Apples from the tree. Answer: Yes she could.
2. Someone requested a second Trash receptacle in the park. Answer: We already have two and no maintenance at the park. Volunteers empty them.
3. Someone requested a special Motorcycle parking place with a bike rack in the handicap area. Chair H. Schibanoff is bringing this before the committee for our consideration. Answer: The Committee sees no need at this time.

**8. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members**

**A. Remarks by Committee Members**

**N. Undercofler** said it was fun working with the company representatives of the playground. They expressed that they had never experienced such Community spirit that they felt in Hudson. They really enjoyed being here, and it was nice to have someone else notice what we know to be true.

**C. Gagnon** also added to what N. Undercofler said. Working side by side all week on this wonderful playground with our own group, the company representatives, and others that are not on the committee that cooked and baked for everyone was a very special pleasure.

**Selectman Liaison S. Jasper** said many of us know that his dad is 89 years old and not in the best of health. One warm, beautiful day he took his dad to the park. His dad had been to the park before it was officially opened so he had seen some of the changes then. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper pushed his dad's wheelchair and his mom walked around the park, seeing the newest changes, visiting the 9/11 Memorial, lawns, flowers, and talking to some members of the committee and other people. His mom and dad were very impressed and the next day his dad told him it was the very best gift he could have given him. His mom was completely amazed at what had been done and proud that there was still a sense of Community in the Town of Hudson.

**Chair H. Schibanoff** said there is a sign on the gate saying ' Do Not Feed The Geese', he thought we discussed this at a meeting and agreed to take it down. If anyone has scissors please take this down. Chair H. Schibanoff also mentioned the remote control car area. He spoke to J. Undercofler and the person that was to do this area will give us his decision by November. He went through his notes and found a person who wanted to do this but it was not an Eagle Scout candidate. He does not know if this man is still interested. If the Scout does not do this he will contact this man to see if he still has an interest. The BOS has accepted a gift donated by Dominique Kaempf and Elizabeth Abbott about a tour of the park that could be taken out at the Library. A transcript of this tour was given to all Committee members and Chair H. Schibanoff asked all to review. On October 8, there will be another wedding in the park. C. Gagnon said this was a clean up day. Chair H. Schibanoff said the wedding would be at 2:30 pm. There will also be a family reunion at the park on the 15<sup>th</sup>, so the park is really getting plenty of use.

### **Next Clean-up**

**October 8, 2011**

**9:00 am – 2:00 pm**

**Rain Date October 9, 2011 – same time**

### **Next Meeting:**

**Work Shop**

**October 20, 2011, Rec. Center**

## **9. Adjournment: 8:33 pm**

**P. Nichols made a motion to adjourn**

**A. Desrosiers seconded the motion**

**All in favor-Motion Carries**