



TOWN OF HUDSON

Benson Park Committee

Jim Barnes, Chairman

Roger Coutu, Selectmen- Liaison



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January 5, 2017
Meeting Minutes

Present	James Barnes, Richard Empey, Ann Kinneen-Desrosiers, Margaret McQueeney, Jeremy Griffus, Joe Undercofler, Harry Schibanoff, John Leone, Ralph Alio, Roger Coutu. Joe was seated for Shawn.
Absent	Shawn Jasper.
Call to Order	Jim Barnes called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.
Pledge of Allegiance	Ann was the leader of the pledge.
Approval of Minutes	Jeremy moved to accept the December minutes. Ann seconded. Harry noted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Twenty thousand dollars, \$20,000, was the original estimate for repairs to the Office Building.• Margaret will correct the minutes to reflect this.• A vote was taken to approve the minutes with the above correction. Ralph, Joe, and Roger abstained from voting. The minutes were passed.
Public Input	No public input.
Old Business	Park Rules <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Jim - A group size limit of 50 has been imposed on the park. The Benson Park Committee was not involved in this decision. Roger stated Kevin Burns, Highway Department, implemented this restriction to get control over park activities, and it will stay in place until a better solution is presented. If the Committee wants to remove the rule, a discussion with the Board of Selectmen is necessary.• Jeremy recommended to removing it. He does not believe it should be a rule. He then made a recommendation to remove it.• Jim stated we need a motion to remove it and to go to the Board of Selectmen.• Dick said there are wear and tear issues, lack of control, overuse of portable toilets in the park; until a better plan is presented the rule should stand: of two groups of 50 maximum. He went on to say he has witnessed situations where groups have not registered and groups of 65 to 70 kids over-ran the playground. It was very dramatic. Harry questioned if the group limit should

	<p>apply to school groups.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Margaret does not think a limit should be set.• John suggested changing the wording of the rule. It should state; public events are not restricted to the 50 person rule.• Harry stated the question of whom makes/sets policy for the park should be resolved by the Board of Selectmen.• Jim questioned how the rule will be enforced. He stated there are assorted types of groups utilizing the park and each has a different impact on the Park. A couple of examples are wedding and birthday parties; the playground area would not be impacted by a wedding; whereas, a child's birthday party may impact the playground. There are many issues with placing a limit.• Jim stated a motion to vote and to present the issue to the BOS should be considered, and if it is done, Kevin Burns should be in attendance.• Jeremy motioned the current rule of a maximum of 50 people should be removed. Margaret seconded it. <p>Discussion followed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ John, in agreeing with Harry, wants to know who is setting policy for the park.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Benson Park Committee presents suggestions to the BOS for approval, or▪ Kevin Burns from the Highway Department presents suggestions to the BOS for approval.○ Jeremy stated he did not join the Benson Park Committee to restrict usage of the park. To help reduce use, he stated a fee structure might be of assistance.○ Roger spoke on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ The Board of Selectmen had a discussion with Mr. Burns regarding:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• large groups in the park,• no control over these groups, and• lack of registering to use the park.▪ The Board of Selectmen asked Mr. Burns to monitor and to take responsibility for maintaining control of the park. The Board of Selectmen did not set the policy. They expect Mr. Burns to take whatever steps necessary to get control of the park. The Board of Selectmen will not interfere with his decision and will hold firm to allow Mr. Burns to take necessary steps until the Benson Park Committee can address enforcement issues. Police cannot always be at the park. Mr. Burns was given this responsibility at the end of the year
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(2016).

- Dick stated the fall was busy as was August. Mr. Burns' policy is better than no policy and should not be thrown away.
- Margaret asked how many groups called in August to register, and asked if records were being kept. Roger stated the Board of Selectmen will not request reports from Mr. Burns.
- A vote was taken to see if the Committee wanted to address the Board of Selectmen on the policy setting issue. It passed four to three with Roger and Jim abstaining.
- A motion was made to invite Mr. Burns to speak with the Committee. Roger wants a good handle on the park. Jim will contact Mr. Burns to invite him to the next Benson Park Committee meeting.
- Warrant Article
 - Harry asked if it should be amended to read: User and parking fees. After discussion, a decision was made not to request a change in the wording of the Warrant Article.
- RFP – Office Building
 - Jim spoke with Steve Malizia regarding the need to create an RFP for the Office Building's repair. Steve will draft it and will let Jim review it prior to sending it out. Roger noted contractors must be on the State's list of approved contractors.
 - Dick questioned if Bedard will be able to do the job. John stated they will direct and organize the project. Jim said the cost of the project cannot be covered in this year's budget. The money must be encumbered from this year, or it will be necessary to ask the Board of Selectmen for funds. Roger stated there is some money in the Capital Reserve. Harry stated there is \$40,000.
 - Dick said we should proceed with the RFP. The building needs to be stabilized and needs to be done quickly. The RFP is needed to determine the actual cost.
- Long Term Plan
 - Gorilla House – John said the painting has been done; there is no other urgent need.
 - Public Restrooms – Jim has looked at various style – electricity/sewer/water are still needed.
 - Green flush – tank of water, low flow collects waste; it is eventually pumped out.
 - Permanent structure – need engineering help.
 - A maintenance room is necessary for any style selected.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Access to plumbing is required.▪ Dick said he had planned on the above requirements when he measured the back of the Gorilla House for the restrooms.▪ Jim said the State Parks' plan on the cost of restrooms is \$350/sq. ft. He also suggested a family room/gender neutral room. Restrooms must meet ADA regulations.▪ Jeremy asked what the next steps should be. Jim said engineer expertise is needed.▪ John said it is not too early to think about it. We should know what we want so the utilities can be placed in the correct areas. A plan is needed.▪ Jim asked if the Gorilla House should be used or if a stand-alone building should be built.▪ John said the most economical choice should be considered.▪ Jeremy said we should look into both options.▪ Dick said prior to getting any work done, money will need to be spent on the plan. He asked if the town will provide staffing once the restrooms are installed; and said, if not, we are wasting our time.▪ Roger said Mr. Burns would request an increase to the Highway Department staff. This is a few years down the road, though.▪ Portable toilets are becoming more expensive each year.▪ The volume of use is needed.▪ Roger said an engineer is needed to look at our proposals. He can assist with determining the best location. Roger said the Board of Selectmen and Mr. Burns will see that the restrooms are maintained. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Playground Repair<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ A quote for materials has been received.○ There is money for this in The Rec. Department's account. Jim will contact Steve Malizia regarding transferring money to pay for the materials.○ There is a crack in the bear, and it will be replaced. Dave Yates is managing this.○ Harry asked why these items are not covered under the warranty.○ Dick said volunteers/town employees can do the installation. It needs to be done as soon as
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	<p>possible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security Camera <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ John asked about placing a security camera on the Shoe. Roger questioned how it will be monitored and how preventative measures can be put in place to protect it from being removed. ○ Jeremy said lights at night would be an invitation. A DVR would be needed to record activity. It was decided not to have a monitor on the Shoe. • Electric Gate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ After the last snow storm, John found the gate was off its chain. He questioned if there was a maintenance contract. Dick said Mr. Burns takes care of it. In-house repair is the most cost effective way to deal with this issue. • Santa Visit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ John and Harry spoke about Santa’s visit to the barn. It was successful; pictures of Santa with animals was a nice twist. John thanked the members of the Committee who assisted. ○ Margaret thanked the Highway Dept for sanding the area around the barn. Dick said that’s a good example of Mr. Burns’ work. He gets things done quickly. He is actively involved in the management of the park. Roger said Mr. Burns was responsive with the No Skating Boarding signs. He does not want to ruffle feathers. Mr. Burns has a difficult job; he supervises, takes care of water and sewer projects. Roger expressed his gratitude for the upkeep of the park. • Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The next meeting is Thursday, January 26, 2017. ○ Jim may have a conflict with the Thursday, February 2, 2017, meeting.
Adjournments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roger motioned to close the meeting, seconded by John, all agreed. • The meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm.
Action Items – Assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Margaret – minutes; correct minutes from December. ○ Roger - invite Mr. Burns to our meeting on January 26. ○ Jim - contact Steve M. regarding RFP