

Town of Hudson
Benson Park Committee
Meeting Minutes
January 6, 2011

1. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Benson Committee was called to order by Chair Harry Schibanoff at 7:02 p.m. on January 6, 2011 in the Board of Selectmen Meeting Room at the Town Hall with the Pledge of Allegiance lead by N. Undercofler.

2. Attendance:

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

3. Public Input

None

4. Presentations

A. Girl Scout Gold Project

Laura DeAngelis introduced herself to the Committee. She is a Girl Scout and resident of Hudson. Laura is looking to earn a Girl Scout Gold Award. This is the equivalent of an Eagle Scout Badge. Laura said that in looking for a project to earn this she went on the Town Website and found a page with many Benson Park projects. The one she found the most interesting was the building of bird houses, duck nesting houses and bat houses. At this time she is still in the research phase but she would like to take on this project during the summer months. Chair H. Schibanoff asked when she would make her decision on this and she said in a matter of weeks. J. Leone said that the Park has a number of bat houses at this time so if possible she could concentrate on bird housing and duck nesting housing. N. Undercofler mentioned that the listing that was on the web was an older one and other projects would be added in the future. Chair H. Schibanoff gave the Committee a hand out of the old listings for review. Chair H. Schibanoff asked if the Gold Award had the same criteria as the Eagle Scout Badge. L. DeAngelis stated that it is structured differently. Her project must be new, sustainable and completed within eighty (80) hours. J. Barnes asked if she would be constructing the Bird and Duck Nesting houses in the wet lands mitigation area. L. DeAngelis stated that she would. J. Barnes said that some sort of permission from the State Conservation Dept. would be needed. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that a letter could be sent to D.O.T. If they don't respond within Thirty (30) days then the project could proceed. J. Barnes told L. DeAngelis that she should formulate a plan and return to the Committee. He said that this would be a reasonable project. Chair H. Schibanoff stated that most of the projects were in the Historical Area and this would focus some attention to the Trails area.

B. Train Station Location – Bernie Manor

Gary Webster, Town Engineer, is appearing for B. Manor this evening. G. Webster handed out a few sets of plans showing some of the locations that were chosen for the Train Station. Due to the historic nature of the Train Station placement a meeting was held with Natural Resources. An architect came up with three (3) plans for placement. G. Webster explained some of the plans for a walk out basement. He said that a meeting was scheduled for next week and he just wanted the Committee to see the plans before making any decision. He does not need a firm decision now. G. Webster gave some detail on what is happening with the Train Station and he said that he finally has a contract with the architect. An estimate was given to Chair H. Schibanoff and it was

explained to the Committee that at a later date the foundation would be done, the Train Station moved onto the new foundation, a new roof, gas sewer, water and electricity added. This is all the money that would be available at this time. With the cost of everything G. Webster said that he expected the Volunteers would be finishing the inside of this building. He also explained the archeological study that was being done while they were digging locations for water and sewer. The artifacts that were on display to the Committee came from this site. G. Webster went into some detail about his meetings and the drawings from the Architect. He also stated that all the work on the drawings have been done in house by his interns and by doing that a lot of money has been saved. G. Webster said that the Train Station did not need a slate roof, that a shingle roof would be acceptable to the State. Questions were asked and discussions followed. D. Empey gave his thoughts on all plans but he prefers plan A. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper gave his thoughts on the plans. He had envisioned the station with a track and possibly a train car of some kind to really let people have a feeling of this station at a later date. Some of the plans do not give enough room for this to happen. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper prefers option C. There was a discussion on the walk out from the basement and how close the station would be to the fence. D. Empey and Selectman S. Jasper sketched a newer design for the building layout. While this was being done, G. Webster let the Committee know that some monies have been approved for the project and while it is not a large amount it is at least a start. J. Leone asked G. Webster about a time line when things could be started. G. Webster stated that if everything went according to plan, it could go out to bid around May and the work would be started in the summer. The new rough design was finished and called plan D.

C. Gagnon made a motion to accept plan D

P. Nichols seconded the motion

All in favor – Motion Carries

5. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of December 2, 2010

Gagnon made a motion to accept minutes

J. Barnes seconded the motion

Motion Carries

6. Old Business

A. Monument Policy

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that he felt that the Park did not need a Monument Policy. Any monuments should be looked at on an individual basis. **J. Barnes** said that if the time came when the Committee was inundated with requests then we could address this policy then.

B. Volunteer Procedures for Students

Chair H. Schibanoff said that C. Gagnon has received requests from students needing volunteer hours but we have no contact with the school. C. Gagnon said that one student wanted 30 hours before March. There are no work or clean-up plans at this time. C. Gagnon said that she could not guarantee that anything would be available at this time or for the next couple of months. It is not the time of year that the Committee could schedule something for Student to do. After much discussion and feed back from some Committee Members, Chair H. Schibanoff suggested that this Volunteer Procedure be Tabled until a later date.

C. Budget Approvals

Chair H. Schibanoff said that he had been before the BOS with our budget and they approved it. He also appeared before the Budget Committee and other than a few questions, they approved our Budget. **N. Undercofler** asked what the dollar amount for the budget was. Chair H. Schibanoff said there were two (2) budgets, \$24,000 for the Park budget and \$4,000 for the Committee's use. **J. Barnes** said that he wanted to know how much money we have spent this year. He said that we were

supposed to get regular updates and we have not had any. Chair H. Schibanoff said he would speak to D. Yates who has this information. J. Barnes said if we were responsible for that money then we should be seeing a report at least of a regular basis. For example: We could approve something and then find out we don't have the money for it. D. Empey stated that if the budget is passed at the Deliberative Session the money would not be available until July 1, 2011. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper agreed with this.

D. Vision Statement

Chair H. Schibanoff said that this document was received at our last meeting and P. Nichols asked that it be put on the agenda. P. Nichols read S. Rumbaugh's statement and thought it was in keeping with the policy of Benson Park. Chair H. Schibanoff asked if this could be tabled until our next meeting so that the Committee could have a chance to review or change it if they desired. This was the consensus of the Committee.

7. New Business

A. Election of Officers - 2011

Chair H. Schibanoff opened the floor to nominations for Chair of the Committee, Vice Chair and Clerk.

P. Nichols nominated H. Schibanoff to be Chair of the Benson Committee

All in Favor: H. Schibanoff elected Chair of the Committee for 2011

P. Nichols nominated J. Barnes as Vice Chair of the Benson Committee

All in Favor: J. Barnes elected Vice Chair of the Committee for 2011

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper nominated P. Nichols to Clerk of the Benson Committee

All in Favor: P. Nichols elected Clerk of the Committee for 2011

B. Committee Reports

Chair H. Schibanoff said that not much was going on at the moment. P. Nichols said that she had posted a flyer in the Kiosk informing park visitors of the Audubon Society Christmas Bird Count being held in the Park. This date was January 2, 2011 so the flyer has already been removed.

Chair H. Schibanoff asked Selectman Liaison S. Jasper if the Town would be plowing the parking lots. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said yes but it would not be done until all other plowing was complete. D. Empey asked if the gate entries were going to be shoveled. With a heavy amount of snow the gates could not be open. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said he would speak to K. Burns, Road Agent to see if this could be done when the parking lots were plowed.

D. Empey reported on the Path and Trails Committee. They are working on doing a GPS evaluation of all trails. This will be used in the future for adjoining trails and to make a more accurate trail map. There is a study being done to raise the level of the two ponds on the north end of the park to their original levels. This is in the preliminary stages by a former Committee Member that is interested in doing this. He hopes to have more information at a later date.

C. Artifacts

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that the artifacts that were found at the testing of the site for the Train Station would be taken to the next BOS Meeting. After that he thought they should go to Concord. Their final disposition is unknown at this time..

D. Selectmen Actions

Chair H. Schibanoff said that the BOS approved the new Committee Members. The BOS approved the budget. They accepted the Ticket Booth from Eagle Scout M. Undercofler. They approved the gazebo that we talked about at our last meeting and this will be going forward. Chair H. Schibanoff signed off on the bridge that Eagle Scout Candidate S. Lichtenberg finished. P. Nichols wanted to congratulate these young men, S. Lichtenberg would be our second Eagle Scout and it would be great if we had a Gold Scout Award added to this. These young people are a credit to the Town and to the Park for the phenomenal work they have done. Chair H. Schibanoff asked the Committee to review the list of projects to be done in the park. This list is out-dated as some of them have been

done. If the Committee can come up with new projects to add to this and bring it to the next meeting it would be appreciated.

8. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members

A. Winter Clean up Schedule

None scheduled at this time

B. Next Meeting Date

Chair H. Schibanoff said that the Committee would meet on January 20, 2011. The Recreation Department will be presenting their plan and site for a playground at the Park.

C. Remarks by Committee Members

N. Undercofler wanted to know if the Committee had ever thought about meeting in a workshop environment about setting goals, etc. **Chair H. Schibanoff** said that this was discussed before but the Committee has been too busy. **N. Undercofler** went on to explain that it was hard to give directions to people visiting the park because the roads have no names. This was discussed with many ideas and thoughts. It was decided that a Sub Committee be formed to name these roads and a possible new map planned with the streets included. **N. Undercofler** agreed to Chair this Sub Committee with **A. Desrosiers, J. Barnes and C. Gagnon**.

A. Desrosiers does not have much time to visit the park and wanted to know if the usage is still good. **R. Alio** said he has been into the park and seen snowshoe tracks, ski tracks, even met a few people. **P. Nichols** said she rides by the park almost every day and goes in when she can. On a nice day there are lots of cars in the parking lot and some days just a few, but she thought people were still taking advantage of Benson Park. **D. Empey** said that the trails are seeing a lot of use and he has been encouraged by this.

C. Gagnon said that she is glad to be on the Committee again and welcomes the newer members.

J. Leone asked if there was a town policy to let people know when it was safe to skate on Swan Lake. He has been approached by visitors to the park and asked if it was safe to skate and he was unsure what to tell them. **Selectman Liaison S. Jasper** said we don't tell people they can skate. It is up to them to use their own judgment and common sense. **A. Desrosiers** asked if anyone knew the depth of Swan Lake and no one knew. **J. Leone** said that this could be a project for spring.

P. Nichols congratulated the newest members of the Committee and best wishes to those members who moved up and a Happy New Year to all.

Chair H. Schibanoff thanked everyone for voting for him again. He also wanted to thank everyone that helped him with the annual report. He appreciated the input and it has been sent to be published in the Town Report.

Next Meeting:

January 20, 2011

7:00 PM Board of Selectman meeting room

Town Hall

9. Adjournment: 8:27 PM

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper made a motion to adjourn

C. Gagnon seconded the motion

All in favor-Motion Carries