

Town of Hudson
Benson Park Committee
Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2010

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

A meeting of the Benson Committee was called to order by Chair H. Schibanoff at 7:00 pm. October 7, 2010 in the Community Development Room at Town Hall. M. Lee led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Attendance:

J. Barnes, R. Empey, , K. Dickinson, late, C. Gagnon, M. Lee, Selectman Liaison S. Jasper, P. Nichols Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh, Alternates John Leone, and A. Desrosiers

3. Public Input

None

4. Presentations

None

5. Approval of Minutes

A. Minutes of September 16, 2010 and September 18, 2010 Benson Park Committee.

J. Barnes made a motion to accept minutes

C. Gagnon seconded the motion

All in favor...Motion Carries

6. Old Business

A. Grand Opening Feedback

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that the Opening went well, not too long, and having the Alvirne Marching Band and Color Guard in attendance along with the B Naturals singing the National Anthem really made the day. He also complimented the work done in the park the week before this event and how nice everything looked.

Chair H. Schibanoff let the Committee and the Community know that the televised portion of the Opening is now being shown on HCTV, Channel 22. He also said that the view from the Staging area was incredible. He never realized the panoramic view that can be seen from that spot.

C. Gagnon wanted to thank the Scouts again for providing drinks, passing out cookies and cleaning up after the event.

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh also gave major Kudos to the Senior's for providing all those cookies for the event. There was more than enough to go around and they were delicious.

P. Nichols thanked everyone from volunteers, the Selectmen, the Committee, and the Honorable J. Lynch for making the day a perfect one. The group walking in front of the Band looked so professional and the B Naturals were exceptional.

B. Activities in the Park

Chair H. Schibanoff asked if anyone was surprised to hear that there will be a wedding in the park? P. Nichols said that she was shocked to hear this. She thought that this would be something that would happen later but not at this early stage in the Parks growth. A. Desrosiers was surprised too and wanted to know if there was an area that had been chosen for the wedding. Chair H. Schibanoff said that there was not an area picked. They would determine the spot on the day of the wedding. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh asked about what plans for equipment, electricity and all that goes with a wedding have been determined. P. Nichols asked about vehicles for the wedding party and guests...would they be allowed in the park? D. Empey has a few concerns about this. What would be required if anything from the Committee and if they used the Staging Area and children were playing frisbee or kick ball what would happen? Is the Committee obligated to help out? C. Gagnon said that she has been to many weddings in public areas and you can't stop anything from happening around you. Fire trucks will go by, people will walk by or stop and watch, children will play or cry...this can happen at any public place so we are not responsible. Chair H. Schibanoff asked if more information was needed and Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh said that she would like D. Yates to update the Committee on this. J. Barnes said he thought we would learn as we go. What is our role in this...information from D. Yates...what if anything can be done to protect the park. More discussion followed. Chair H. Schibanoff said he would talk to D. Yates and see what else could be done in relation to this. Another issue he spoke of was what is going on in the park concerning other activities with the volunteers. He said that things are happening without the knowledge of the Committee and to date no problems have happened but in the future what if something did go wrong without the Committee's knowledge. C. Gagnon said that people are intimidated with coming before the Committee to request a project. She felt that there should be someone they could go to for information and guide them in this process. It was discussed at length with input from Committee Members. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh asked if she could identify areas in the park that needed to be protected from Adopt-A-Spot projects. Some areas are habitat sensitive and should be excluded from any clearing and left in their natural state. The Committee agreed to let her make recommendations on these areas.

7. New Business

A. New role of the Benson Park Committee

Chair H. Schibanoff said now that the Committee is not concentrating on the Grand Opening what is the role of the Committee now. P. Nichols said that there is work to be done for the future. Just because the Park had its official opening, work will still be required in the future to keep it going. Clean-ups will still go on, buildings need to be worked on, winter activities, a playground, picnic areas, benches, etc. will still need to be planned, work will be required for any years to

come. D. Empey felt that there will be many things to continue doing so he does not see a new role, just a continuation of the old committee. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper, J. Barnes, C. Gagnon and A. Desrosiers added to this discussion.

B. Budget 2012

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper went over the Operations budget at this time and explained what was needed for the future. Some things will come under the Road Agent's budget but alarm system will be under our budget. Small equipment for the Trails Committee will be entered into this budget. Rental equipment and two toilets also be added to this budget but the toilets will be only for 8 months of the year. Sewer lines, electricity, etc. was discussed and added to the budget. Questions and discussion on wrap, etc. followed. Second part of budget was the committee budget and nothing could be seen to warrant an increase. Printing expenses and office supplies would basically remain the same. D. Empey questioned the cost of brochures and P. Nichols stated that the demand for these had decreased. The only time more brochures were needed was the weekend with new visitors. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh asked about the Archeologist, was this in relation to the Train Station? Selectman Liaison answered that this was required with any digging in the Historic Area.

J. Barnes made a recommendation to present this budget to the BOS

D. Empey seconded the motion

All in favor...Motion Carries

C. Committee Reports

P. Nichols let everyone know that Thank You letters were written and signed by Chair H. Schibanoff and will be posted tomorrow morning. There will also be a Thank You notice in the Hudson/Litchfield News. There is a notice in the Kiosk and on Hudson Cable TV for a clean up this coming weekend.

J. Leone wanted to thank the Building Committee and all volunteers that worked so hard to get ready for the Grand Opening. The enthusiasm shown by everyone to finish painting the A-Frame and part of the Elephant Barn was amazing. J. Leone also said that the front and left side of the Gorilla house has some areas that need attention and would be looking for some funds to shore up this area. He will bring a cost estimate to the next Committee Meeting and Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said if there were enough available funds in the current budget he would not have to go before the BOS to request this money.

D. Empey said that two of the bridges were almost completed. He received some complaints about trip hazards on some trails. Signage should be added to help keep people on the trail. The trail on the north side of Beaver Pond is being used extensively and this will be reviewed. All things considered its business as usual.

C. Gagnon said she needs projects for the next clean-up so she could plan where to place the volunteers when they come to the park.

A. Desrosiers spoke with C. Gagnon to have volunteers take pictures of the Grand Opening. Some had responded and she is waiting for copies of these pictures. At this time there is nothing new.

D. Parking Lot Issues

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh brought up the issue of parking in the Main Parking Lot due to the increased attendance in the park. On very busy days, visitors are

parking on the road and along the drive entering the park. This is leaving room for only one vehicle to enter or leave the area. She felt that this was an opportunity to expand the parking to accommodate more vehicles. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper has noted this problem and if the Committee agrees he will bring this up at a BOS meeting. D. Empey suggested that the Road Agent look at the area above the parking lot. He found an old road there and wondered if it could be used as a second exit. He went into detail and answered questions that Committee Members had about the area.

E. Non Cash Donations

Chair H. Schibanoff mentioned that he has been receiving emails and phone calls about memorabilia. He has been forwarding these calls and messages to the Friends of Benson Park because he was unsure where these inquiries should go. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that the Friends or the Historical Society would be acceptable. The Historical had set up a Benson Memorabilia Collection in the past. He felt that at this time the Historical Society would be the best place to store these artifacts because they have the facilities and an accounting system for this. The Friends of Benson Park should discuss this with the Historical Society. The Committee should not be involved.

8. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members

A. New Sign

Chair H. Schibanoff spoke with J. Griffus regarding the sign for the Handicap area. J. Griffus said he is about half finished with it.

B. Pumpkin Fest

Chair H. Schibanoff asked if the Committee was doing anything at the Pumpkin Fest being held in Hudson at Hills House grounds. C. Gagnon said that the Friends of Benson Park would have a table and that another area will be designated as a Volunteer Sign-up area, Adopt-A-Spot and information on the Dog Park. C. Gagnon asked if anyone would like to help staff any of the booths just let her know. The dates are October 15th, 16th, & 17th. Check paper for hours.

C. Request from the Boyer Family

An email was sent from the Boyer Family with a request to name there Adopt-A-Spot Serenity Brook. This was discussed at length and it was found that the Brook passing through this area already has a name. We cannot change this. Signage was discussed again. Putting this area on the map was also discussed at length. Chair H. Schibanoff said that he would respond to the email from the Boyer Family and send it to the Committee for approval.

D. D. Empey has cleared an area coming into the park and another area with the hopes that a playground would be suitable in this spot. He asked for feedback from the Committee in what he is doing and wants to know if it is acceptable. The Committee agreed that what he was doing was in the bounds of the Trail Committee jurisdiction and to continue clearing brush.

E. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper reported on the Trail Bike riders in the park and this has been dealt with. He said that the Road Agent wanted feedback on plowing in the park this winter. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper said that the upper area

between the Office Building and the Elephant Barn should be done the same as last year and the Main Parking Lot should be plowed. C. Gagnon said she thought that shoveling around the gates to get them open should be included. This was agreed on by the Committee.

- F. **K. Dickinson** passed around a piece of recycled plastic from a bench company for the Committee to see.
- G. **Chair H. Schibanoff** had one more thing to bring to the Committee. What happens when a Pine Tree falls down and blocks the entrance? A. Desrosiers called him about this and he was a hundred miles away. D. Yates called Selectman Liaison S. Jasper because the Highway Department does not work on weekends. Selectman Liaison S. Jasper made the decision not to pay overtime to have the tree removed at this time because there was an alternate way into the Park. He also said that the Highway Department was responsible for the wonderful split-rail fence at the entrance to the Park. They did not like the jersey barriers. Thank you Highway Department.

9. Adjournment 8:59 pm

Selectman Liaison S. Jasper made a motion to adjourn
C. Gagnon Seconded the Motion
All in favor-Motion Carries