

Town of Hudson
Benson Park Committee
Meeting Minutes
April 15, 2010

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The regular meeting of the Benson Committee was called to order by Chair Harry Schibanoff at 7:04 p.m. on April 15, 2010 in the Board of Selectmen Meeting Room at the Town Hall with the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Eagle Scout Candidate James Loshbaugh.

2. Attendance:

Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh, J. Barnes, R. Empey, Clerk P. Nichols, M Lee, C Gagnon, Alternates A. Desrosiers, J. Leone
Excused: Selectman Liaison S. Jasper
Absent: K. Dickinson

3. Public Input

Eagle Scout Candidate, James Loshbaugh accompanied by Selectman Roger Coutu with a Request for an Eagle Scout Project at Benson Park. Selectman Roger Coutu complimented the committee on the work that is being done to get the park open and he supports all efforts that are being made. Selectman R. Coutu introduced Eagle Scout Candidate James Loshbaugh and volunteered any help that would get this Eagle Scout badge. James Loshbaugh said that he would like to take on the invasive plant removal and it appears to be a solid Eagle Project with a fair amount of work and he said that he stood a good chance for this to be approved by the Eagle Scout Board. He wants to find an area that he could work in and study up on native plants and shrubs to be placed in the park that would be long lasting and beautifying for the future. Selectman R. Coutu asked who would be helpful to call on for this project. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh said to call Curt Laffin who is familiar with all areas of the park and its plants. Questions from the Committee followed.

4) Consent Items

- A. Minutes of March 18th Benson Park Committee
 - P. Nichols made a correction to the minutes...misspelled name
 - J. Barnes made a motion to accept all.**
 - C. Gagnon seconded the motion**
 - All in favor...Motion Carries**

5. Old Business

A. Park Opening and Current Activities

- **Chair H. Schibanoff** gave an update on the BOS meeting where Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh presented the Opening Plan. The BOS accepted the plan and now K. Burns is working in the park to get the roads ready for opening day, putting loam down in some areas and cutting back tree branches that are in the way. Fencing is being looked at for some areas of the park. An Insurance Review was done during the week. Discussion on replacing fencing or allow pedestrian traffic in the Thurston Landing area.

P. Nichols made a motion to present to the BOS a recommendation to leave an access opening for pedestrian traffic only (no vehicles) in the Thurston Landing area for a period of time. If damage and graffiti within the park continue this area would be closed.

D. Empey seconded the motion

5 aye 2 nay

Motion Carries

Other safety Insurance issues were discussed by the Committee. Plans were made to review this at another meeting.

B. Signs

- **Jeremy Griffus** looked at our signs with Dick Empey. The old signs were made of high density urethane which make them cost efficient because they will not warp, hold up to the weather, don't crack and give a long warrantee for this reason. Research was done and Jeremy stated he could work with this sign. His Recommended that he would remove any unwanted letters, etc. He wants to leave the Main Entrance lettering, leave the Town of Hudson, remove the Benson's lettering and center Benson in a curve and Park underneath straight across. Keep the sign Green with the white trim and the lettering in Gold Leaf.

Some discussion by the Committee followed.

D. Empey made a motion to accept J. Griffus proposal to refurbish the Main Entrance Sign as he stated and start as soon as possible. J. Griffus is to come back at our next meeting with a drawing of said sign.

P. Nichols seconded the motion

All in favor-Motion Carries

C. Trail Map for Kiosk

- **D. Empey** handed out trail map that he plans to have as center in the Kiosk. The map is numbered for location and safety reasons. Many questions were asked. Chair H. Schibanoff suggested that D. Empey contact the Chief of Police to make sure that the number system would be all right for the Police, Fire and Safety Divisions to relate to. Maps were discussed and possibly two maps (i.e. trails and historical area) were agreed on. Brochures for visitors to take with them were put on hold until a later date. Names of ponds, lakes and wet areas were discussed. Some will be left blank...to be named at a later date.

D. Revision of Rules and Regulations

- **J. Barnes** looked into hours for the Park. The opening every day will be 5:00 a.m. but closure will be adjusted for seasons. J. Barnes gave many different closing times but he was asked to cut it down to two (2) so he gave April 1st to October 3rd close at 8:00 p.m. and Nov 1st to March 31st close at 5:00 p.m.

J. Barnes made a motion to present the hours of the park to the BOS

P. Nichols seconded the motion

All in favor-Motion Carries

D. Empey made a suggestion that another rule be added. No feeding of wild life in park. When people feed the animals and birds this brings the Canada Geese that will destroy grassy areas and leave droppings all over the park. Once this happens it is very hard to get rid of them.

**P. Nichols made a motion to present to the BOS an added rule,
Don't feed the Animals
C. Gagnon seconded the motion
All in favor-Motion Carries**

E. Dog Park

- **D. Briand** chair of the Dog Park sub committee said that he is still waiting on the State D.O.T. J. Barnes read a part of the Deed that stated that within not more than 30 days of receiving a request they would answer. This has not happened. He suggested that our Selectman S. Jasper contact D.O.T. to remind them of this. D. Briand said that he was planning on a letter campaign but he would run this by our Selectman Liaison S. Jasper first. He also said he would like approval of this project from the Committee and the BOS that when he had permission from the State he could start immediately. If they said no to the land then it could be moved or change it. Chair H. Schibanoff suggested that the BOS write a letter saying that we are moving ahead with the dog park (just to push a little).

**J. Barnes made a motion to ask the Board of Selectman to
write a letter to D.O.T. requesting an answer to the Dog Park.**

**C. Gagnon seconded the motion
All in favor-Motion Carries**

F. Guest Speakers

- **Linda Kipnes** from the GFWC Hudson Community Club and also a member along with Representative Michelle Champion of GFWC Hudson Junior Women's Club gave a presentation to the Benson Park Committee about requesting approval to adopt a parcel of land to install a Butterfly Garden. A hand-out of their idea was given to the Committee and their plans are a little more than just a Butterfly Garden with walk-ways and benches and a few natural arch-ways. The clubs would schedule maintenance twice a year and be responsible for coming into the park on different weeks throughout the summer season to water and weed. They plan on putting in perennial flowers and plants that would be low maintenance. Questions and Discussion from the Committee followed. There is a program to become a way-station for Monarch Butterflies and the clubs are looking into this. D. Empey volunteered to be the Liaison between the volunteers and the Garden Group for clean-up.

**D. Empey made a motion to accept this project from the
combined Women's Club and give them permission to go
forward.**

**P. Nichols seconded the Motion
All in favor-Motion Carries**

**A 10 minute break was called at p.m.
Back from break at p.m.**

G. Clean-up Activity

C. Gagnon said that the clean-up scheduled for April 17 or 18th will be cancelled due to weather. A plan to reschedule the clean-up for April 24th from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 pm was discussed. Chair H. Schibanoff apologized to those volunteers who did not get the notice for the last clean-up. The system is being upgraded and it is not completed yet. It should be ready by the next date. Thank you all for your patience. Discussion on work done in the park was well received by the

Committee. New policies introduced the last clean-up were a success. A small amount of volunteers accomplished a lot.

H. Out Reach Communications Sub Committee

- **P. Nichols** gave a brief synopsis of the first meeting of the Communication sub-committee. Plans for the a low key opening of May 29, 2010 was discussed and will eventually be presented to the BOS to see what want on this day. Curt Laffin informed the sub-committee about the Audubon Society's bird count on June 6 at Benson Park. The park will be open at this time. Everyone is welcome to join in. If interested please meet at the park at 6:00 a.m. More than 60 species of birds were identified. A Gala Grand Opening of Benson Park in September was discussed. This will depend on the availability of the Governor if he would like to share in this special day. Other ideas were discussed but not ready to present to the Committee until a plan is close to being presented to the BOS. Questions on publicity for the low key openings were asked and discussed. This would be at the discretion of the BOS.

I. Trails and Paths Sub Committee

- **D. Empey** said that they have completed the Haselton Trail. About 95% complete. Other paths have been done. Some other trails have been worked on and Scouts have worked on the trail near Central Street.. There was a large amount of trash so they will finish this at a later date. The side of Swan Lake has been mowed and raked out and that area is looking pretty good. Some time was spent with a GPS to get accurate mileage of some trails and this will be continued.

4. New Business

A. Bat Houses

- **Chair H. Schibanoff** asked if anyone had information on the progress of the Bat Houses. D. Empey said that he met with a representative of the School along with Curt Laffin to discuss locations that would be suitable to install the houses. His understanding was that the School would come back to the Committee with a plan on where the Bat Houses would go. D. Empey received an email to ask if someone would open the gates because the teacher and students would be coming into the park on April 20, 2010 to install Bat Houses. Questions and discussion from the committee followed. Vice Chair S. Rumbaugh volunteered to be the liaison between the school and the park and will open the gate and stay until all houses are attached.

B. 911 Committee

- **Chair H. Schibanoff** gave an update on the 911 Committee Presentations to the BOS and the Benson Committee requesting that the Memorial be placed on a portion of Benson Park. Selectman S. Jasper suggested that it could be put on a part of the site of the Red Barn. The Committee discussed many pros and cons of monuments being put in the park. Having a group formulate a Monument or Memorial Guideline policy. This was discussed at length. Chair H. Schibanoff reminded the Committee that the BOS would have the final say on where this memorial would be placed. We can only suggest guidelines for the park.

C. Identification Signs

- **Chair H. Schibanoff** mentioned the identifying of different areas of the park to be presented to the Police, Fire and Safety Departments. It should be something that they could get to in an emergency. This was discussed in depth. With many suggestions it finally was decided to see if volunteers would be interested in working on this.

D. Graffiti

- **P. Nichols** spoke of the Gorilla House in the park that is covered with Graffiti. She spoke of her concerns for the opening and is looking for a solution to this problem. J. Barnes stated that last year there was a controversy on this same building and would like our Selectman Liaison S. Jasper to be present when this is discussed. This was tabled until the next meeting. C. Gagnon also said that other areas have graffiti and this will be addressed at the same time as the Gorilla House.

E. Letters of Appreciation/Thank You

- **Chair H. Schibanoff** asked that a policy be put in place to thank companies for donations to the park (i.e. materials, services. Food, etc.). This is already in place and P. Nichols will have a letter ready to send to Pizza Man for donating Pizza's to volunteers.

J. Ice Cream Social

- **Chair H. Schibanoff** mentioned that the Committee's next meeting is May 6, 2010, the same evening as the Ice Cream Social. He suggested that we also have another meeting this month because of the time constraints the Committee has before opening day. Everyone agreed to hold a meeting on Thursday, April 29, 2010. P. Nichols will call to book a meeting room and notify everyone.

6. Other Business/Remarks by Committee Members

- **J. Barnes** mentioned that with so many plans, maps, etc. the chance of getting things confused and mixed up is a very real problem. He would like the above to be catalogued just to keep a record of what we are doing and approving separate from the minutes.
- **A. Desrosiers** will post the cancelled clean-up at the park on the Benson's Animal Farm page and that there will be a clean-up on April 24, 2010.
- **Chair H. Schibanoff** mentioned that many Committee members went to the HCTV Open House and were impressed with the facility. Chair H. Schibanoff said that the Committee should do something on Benson Park (i.e. advertising/history etc.) and utilize this wonderful service.

7. Adjournment

J. Barnes made a motion to adjourn
D. Empey Seconded the Motion
All in favor-Motion Carries