

**Town of Exeter
Swasey Parkway Trustees Meeting
April 9, 2019
Approved Minutes**

Present were: Chair Florence C. Ruffner, Mark Damsell, Dwane Staples and Kathy Corson, Select Board Representative

- 1. Call to Order:** Chair Ruffner called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.
- 2. Approval of Minutes:**

March 11, 2019

Lines 33 and 52 were amended.

Chair Ruffner motioned to approve the minutes as amended. Mr. Damsell seconded the motion. With Mr. Staples abstaining, approved 2-0.

April 5, 2019 - Tabled

The Board met briefly on April 5, 2019 for the purpose of opening bids. Mr. Staples will prepare the meeting notes.

3. Fall Cleanup

\$1,500 was paid last season to the previous contractor who never returned to do Fall Cleanup. Chair Ruffner was in touch with him and he notified her that he believes only the final payment of \$1,300 should be returned. Chair Ruffner disputed this and notified him the contract states \$1,500 is for fall cleanup. The Town made the payment to the vendor. Mr. Damsell recommended the Board notify the contractor by registered mail and send a copy of the contract. Mr. Staples agreed the Board should get back the \$1,500 for fall cleanup. Chair Ruffner will draft the letter for the Board to send. If and when the funds are returned those could be used to pay for Spring clean-up.

Chair Ruffner advised that the owner of Yeti offered to volunteer to assist with some of the cleanup work in the parkway at no cost. Mr. Staples noted he was not opposed to Yeti's gesture. When the new contractor cleans up the parkway this Spring it is unfair to them to have it be such a mess. The parkway had volunteers in the past from Boy Scouts or PEA on Earth Day who would do the area from the boathouse to the pavilion but there have been no volunteers for years and years. It is a risk to reach out for volunteers if the work doesn't get done and the new contractor starts and is unable to do the mowing. Mr. Damsell noted the Key Club offered to volunteer their time on Sunday and Mr. Damsell is also willing to donate his time. Chair Ruffner will reach out to Keith Whitehouse at Yeti to take him up on his offer and have him schedule with Mr. Damsell and Mr. Staples. Chair Ruffner opined it was a big job and would like to pay something.

4. Landscaping Bids and Future Park Project Plans

The Board met to open the bids that were received, on April 5, 2019 and Mr. Damsell made a list. Chair Ruffner noted there was quite a range and would prefer to have someone local. Chair Ruffner asked how many mows is typical for a season. There were 20 last year. Mr. Staples noted 25 were the most when his company did it but they donated two fertilizations. 18-20 are average. One bid noted 30 visits. The Board would like to see charges for mowing per visit rather than stretch over several payments. Mr. Staples noted a few bids seemed really low. Ms. Corson noted the new fertilizer ordinance passed by the Town. Mr. Damsell advised 75' from the water. Ms. Corson asked if thatching had been done – no. Mr. Damsell noted there was some aeration and over seeding when Agway had donated the seed. Different sections should be done yearly. The Board approved this for last year but the leaves were not done, so it is allocated for. Mr. Staples asked where the Board could find specifications. Ms. Corson will send those.

Mr. Damsell and Mr. Staples agreed Haverhill and Bow were too far. Mr. Damsell noted the bids were narrowed down to four with one bid that was way too low for Fall clean-up. The Board agreed to award the bid to Bennette of Newfields who quoted \$400 per mow and \$1,650 for Fall clean-up. Mr. Staples recommended meeting with them to make sure they understand the Board's expectations.

Mr. Staples moved to award the 2019 landscaping contract to Bennette Property Management with the condition that the Board meet with them to go over the contract and if the Board feels they cannot fill the contract will meet again and move forward with someone else. Chair Ruffner seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Mr. Staples will reach out to them.

Chair Ruffner inquired about the lamp post painting and if Julie had put it in the budget for the Parkway and whether that passed. Ms. Corson will ask her. The Town is responsible to pay them. Ms. Corson noted the DPW would do the painting but will find out if Julie put it in the budget and whether it passed. Jay Perkins would be the person to talk to about the lamp post.

Chair Ruffner noted the pavilion needed painting. Mr. Staples noted the wall was falling in by the brook. Chair Ruffner noted she emailed the DPW and was told they would take care of the wall. Jay Perkins would be the person at DPW to talk to about that. Chair Ruffner asked if there were any funds available for painting the pavilion? Mr. Damsell noted the pavilion has an account of \$7-8,000 since it was built and is a town-owned structure. Ms. Corson will ask about that.

Mr. Staples noted the ditch where the pipe was laid which resulted from sinking. Mr. Damsell recommended reaching out to meet with Matt Berube at DPW concerning that and the seeding which he was not satisfied with. Mr. Damsell will contact Mr. Berube. Mr. Staples will contact Jay Perkins to let him know the wall falling into Norris Brook is dangerous.

Chair Ruffner would like to see the fence replaced and recommended a memorial drive to do that where there are so many benches already and wants to get some prices.

Mr. Damsell stated he would like to see the foundation of the park looked at; the roof is leaking at the block building since the last hail storm. The embankment along the wall is starting to decay. Two granite pillars on the Water Street side need replacing. There is a lot that needs to be fixed.

Mr. Staples recommended putting together a list, meeting to look at the items and reviewing comments and prioritizing the work to be done. The Board members will compile a list individually and meet to discuss after.

Mr. Damsell noted Piscataqua was working on grinding the stumps today.

5. Request for Tree Planting by the Exeter Area GF Women's Club

Chair Ruffner received a request from the Exeter Area Women's Club who is disbanding this Spring, to honor their 103 years. They would like to plant a tree, nothing specific.

There is a big open spot by the temporary road by the pump station. Chair Ruffner preferred a flowering tree, however Mr. Staples noted the area is shaded. Mr. Staples noted there is a lilac tree that needs to be replaced which had been a memorial tree. Mr. Staples noted the Board should figure out which were memorials.

Chair Ruffner will call the Women's Club and Mr. Damsell will meet with them.

Mr. Staples moved to allow the Exeter Area Women's Club to plant a tree on the parkway as a memorial for their 103 years of existence and they can be in touch with Dave Short at Stratham Circle Nursery to install the tree with Mr. Damsell to have permission to decide what kind and where. Chair Ruffner seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

6. Request from the Exeter PD to allow Service Dogs at August 8, 2019 Event - Tabled

The Board received a request from Detective Page to allow service dogs at the August 8 event. Mr. Staples would prefer to have them come to a meeting to discuss this and who is responsible. Ms. Corson stated she would not have a problem allowing service dogs in any park.

Chair Ruffner will ask Detective Page to come to the next meeting.

7. Other Business

Mr. Damsell stated he would like to get a schedule of events approved for the Parkway this year. Chair Ruffner asked if there was a calendar online. Ms. Corson will email the schedule

and ask Sherri to send it to you. The Easter Egg Hunt is coming up and hopefully the Parkway will be cleaned up before then.

Chair Ruffner would like the Select Board to take over doing the fees.

Mr. Damsell would like to see a porta potty installed by the block building. Mr. Staples would like to see it be handicapped accessible and installed before Easter weekend or the Easter Egg Hunt on the 20th. Mr. Damsell believes the cost for the porta potty was \$60 per month last year, the handicapped accessible will be more. The Trustees typically pay until July and then Parks & Rec take over.

Mr. Staples moved to have the handicapped accessible porta potty placed in the Parkway. Chair Ruffner seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.

Mr. Damsell brought a painted rock that was found in the Parkway lawn to the attention of Mr. Staples. Chair Ruffner advised this is a national thing and they find them everywhere and have asked not to put in the lawn. Mr. Staples asked those who were watching the broadcast to please not put these rocks in the lawn.

8. Election of Officers

Mrs. Ruffner moved to nominate Mr. Staples as Chair. Mr. Damsell seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved. Mr. Staples accepted the nomination.

9. Public Comment

10. Meeting Policy

Chair Staples discussed the meeting policy and whether it made sense to select a regular meeting interval each month. Mrs. Ruffner advised to notify Sherri so she can post the meeting 24 hours in advance. Ms. Corson attends the Select Board meetings on Mondays. Mr. Damsell noted this was a busy time of year for the Trustees and they may need to meet more frequently than once a month and recommended meeting before the end of this month. Chair Staples will review the calendar and email the members.

11. Adjourn

Mrs. Ruffner moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Damsell seconded the motion. With all in favor Chair Staples adjourned the meeting at 7:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel Hoijer
Recording Secretary
(via *ExeterTv.com*)