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**Town of Exeter
Swasey Parkway Trustees Meeting
October 23, 2019
6:00 PM
Approved Minutes**

6 **Present were:** Chair Dwane Staples, Florence C. Ruffner, Vice-Chair Mark Damsell and
7 Kathy Corson, Select Board Representative

8 **1. Call Meeting to Order**

9 Chair Staples called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

10 **Old Business**

11 **2. Approve Meeting Minutes – September 18, 2019 & Site Walk September 20,**
12 **2019**

13 September 18, 2019 Minutes

14 Mr. Damsell made amendments to Lines 47, 62 and 93. Chair Staples made amendments to
15 Line 28.

16 **Chair Staples moved to accept the September 18, 2019 meeting minutes as amended.**
17 **Ms. Ruffner seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.**

18 September 20, 2019 Site Walk Minutes

19 **Chair Staples moved to accept the September 20, 2019 Site Walk meeting minutes. Ms.**
20 **Ruffner seconded the motion, with all in favor, so moved.**

21 **3. Eric Sinclair**

22 Mr. Sinclair read out loud a letter he had written to the Trustees concerning he and his wife's
23 request to make a donation of a memorial bench in memory of his late parents. Mr. Sinclair had
24 served on the Fire Department, as a Swasey Parkway Trustee and his mother was a nurse at
25 Exeter and served on the ladies' auxiliary. Mr. Sinclair would like to have the bench installed
26 before the 20th anniversary of his father's death which will be 1/26/2020.

27 Chair Staples thanked Mr. Sinclair for his time and indicated the bench policy which had held up
28 his application would be discussed tonight. The policy had been brought before the Select
29 Board prior to considering his and another application.

30 Mrs. Corson explained to Mr. Sinclair that the Select Board felt having a plan for the memorials
31 was important which is why the discussion was tabled. There will be 46 benches in the
32 Parkway including Mr. Moroz's and no CIP or Master Plan. Other features were discussed such
33 as a climbing apparatus and would like a landscape architect to look at the Parkway and make
34 recommendations for how to move forward and honor them the right way.

35 **4. Park & Recreation Bench Proposal Policy – Greg Bisson**

36 Mr. Bisson from Parks & Recreation consulted with the Trustees on the bench policy and
37 program they are using for memorial benches which are also used in downtown and

38 playgrounds. The program started sometime in the 70s or 80s and many benches are
39 deteriorated, two just removed. Its hard to track down the donors. Maintenance, damage and
40 upkeep can be issues. Funds can be kept in escrow so the legacy lives on. Mrs. Ruffner
41 recommended finding out what other Towns do. Mr. Bisson noted the Danvers, MA plan was
42 reviewed. Mr. Bisson noted that with the maintenance fund it is not specific to your bench, but
43 to maintenance of all the benches. Chair Staples asked Mr. Bisson if he could use his
44 application to draft the Parkways and be consistent. Mr. Bisson agreed to assist with that and
45 added a picture could be posted of a bench that is installed.

46 Chair Staples asked how Parks & Recreation came up with their \$2,400 fee. Mr. Bisson noted it
47 is double the cost of the bench to include perpetual care.

48 There are currently four varieties, granite, composite, wood and concrete. Concrete does not
49 stand up to New England weather and cracks.

50 Chair Staples prepared an inventory. Some of the older benches are not in great condition,
51 especially the concrete. Chair Staples asked how to handle replacement, whether you go back
52 to the families and who pays? Some benches that were damaged were salvaged, some
53 reached out to families. Those benches were inexpensive. There was an Eagle Scout project
54 to replace some of the placards. Some were reboarded. The Lions Club re-stained some of
55 them. Three plaques could be put on one bench if the families agreed. Reaching out through
56 social media is one way to contact. Chair Staples thanked Mr. Bisson for coming in and sharing
57 this information.

58 Mrs. Ruffner indicated there are too many different styles of benches but mostly composite. Mr.
59 Damsell explained the process of ordering and engraving and proofing which can take a few
60 months. The cost of the bench is about \$1,000. Some are 6' and some are 8.'

61 Chair Staples asked about ADA compliance and whether there were regulations for height. Mr.
62 Bisson noted accessibility is what makes them compliant, having a flat surface, even in grassy
63 areas. Mr. Damsell will measure various heights.

64 Mr. Damsell noted Mr. Moroz's bench is granite and he wants to donate a sum of money and is
65 checking with his lawyer. Where would the funds go? Mr. Moroz would like cobblestone in front
66 of his bench. Pavers were done in front of some. The Trustees were in agreement that
67 cobblestone would not be permitted and that concrete landscape pavers would be installed.

68 ***Chair Staples motioned that there be no more granite benches accepted for donation in***
69 ***the Parkway. Mr. Staples withdrew his motion.***

70 ***Mrs. Ruffner motioned that from here on out all benches accepted, installed or replaced***
71 ***will be composite by Dumar and no longer permit granite benches to be accepted,***
72 ***installed or replaced in the Parkway. Mr. Damsell seconded the motion, with all in favor,***
73 ***the motion passed unanimously.***

74 Chair Staples noted during the site walk that one bench is out of line and needs to be brought
75 back closer to the sidewalk. Chair Staples asked Mr. Bisson who installs their benches. Mr.
76 Bisson noted he had two staff members that did but did not believe it would cost more than
77 \$550 and the Trustees could recommend a contractor.

78 **Chair Staples motioned to notify Mr. Moroz that cobblestone is not suitable and that**
79 **diamond shaped paver blocks will be installed at the same time.**

80 **Mrs. Ruffner motioned that to be consistent the policy of the Trustees will be that any**
81 **new benches added in the Parkway will have installed triangle of turfstone paver blocks**
82 **in front of them. Mr. Damsell seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed**
83 **unanimously.**

84 Mrs. Ruffner noted size of the benches was another issue, most are 6' and there are a couple
85 that are 8.'

86 **Mrs. Ruffner motioned that all composite benches installed, replaced or accepted in the**
87 **Parkway are to be no longer than six feet and no shorter. Mr. Damsell seconded the**
88 **motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**

89 Mr. Damsell will let Mr. Moroz know about the stationary base and no on the cobblestones. Mr.
90 Damsell would like to check with Doreen about the donation to the Parkway. Mr. Bisson noted
91 Parks & Recreation uses their revolving fund. Mrs. Corson noted the Trustees would use their
92 own account.

93 Chair Staples noted the inventory laid out some areas where a few more benches could be
94 installed. After Mr. Moroz's bench there will be 46 benches. The area from Water Street to the
95 Pavilion is heavily congested with benches already. From the Pavilion to the North End there is
96 a short distance from roadway to sidewalk. A couple more could be put at Norris Brook. Chair
97 Staples talked to Matt Berube before the site walk and he indicated to be careful of where the
98 sewer pipe is. There is a hill area where two more could go and two more at Norris Brook so
99 approximately six spaces are available and that should be all the benches allowed at this point.
100 Something fun and educational could be done on the North side of Norris Brook. Rain gardens
101 would be a good learning tool.

102 Mrs. Corson recommended having a plan done with a landscape architect for the benches,
103 trees and any apparatus. Chair Staples noted he will be working with the Board on that but they
104 can manage it to approve the location for the next two applications presented to them.

105 Highland Hardwood has a bench that they have taken in and maintained and put back out
106 themselves. Mrs. Ruffner noted it would be nice to have the information available as to who to
107 call and what to order and the costs and where to have engraving done both for the benches
108 and the memorial trees. Exeter Engraving has been used for the trees. Mr. Damsell noted the
109 benches are delivered to the DPW and then picked up there. Chair Staples and Mr. Damsell
110 will look at areas for the other four benches. The applicants can walk with Mr. Damsell to select
111 a location afterward.

112 **5. Pamela Klink & Eric Sinclair Bench Applications**

113 Chair Staples noted the Klink application indicated the Trustees are not responsible to maintain
114 the bench.

115 **Chair Staples motioned to allow the Sinclair and Klink benches in the areas discussed.**
116 **Mr. Damsell seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.**

117 **6. Update on Building Repair, Aeration, Turf Damage**

118 Chair Staples noted some grub damage during the site walk and will work with Kristen Murphy
119 to see what can be done since it is near the 100' buffer to the river.

120 Chair Staples noted the building repair has begun and the blocks are painted. Aeration and
121 overseeding are complete. Mr. Damsell noted there is a bill for that at the Finance dept.

122 Mr. Damsell noted some of the paving blocks have gone missing. Mr. Damsell will follow up
123 with who might have taken the pavers turfstone.

124 **7. Tree Donation and shrub pricing**

125 Chair Staples noted he had prices for the hydrangeas proposed, \$67.50 each. Mr. Short
126 recommended five. Matt Berube indicated he had some funds left for this purpose from the
127 project.

128 ***Mrs. Ruffner motioned to approve Chair Staples discussing with Matt Berube concerning***
129 ***installation of five hydrangeas along the white fencing at a cost of \$67.50 each. Mr.***
130 ***Damsell seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.***

131 Chair Staples noted he asked Mr. Short about the maple tree in memorial for Mrs. Matick which
132 would be a red maple installed for \$485. Mr. Damsell will reach out to them and indicated they
133 want a memorial plaque at the base.

134 **8. Winter Tree Pruning**

135 Mr. Damsell asked what the Trustees would like to do about pruning and whether he should
136 reach out to Chris Kemp to see what needs to be done. Mrs. Ruffner reminded the Trustees
137 would reach out to Yeti about shrub pruning. Mr. Damsell asked if they should allocate funds.
138 Chair Staples agreed there were a couple of areas with big trees but may take a couple of
139 months for him to get back to us, and to let him know he can meet with the Trustees when he is
140 in Town and maybe help with the tree inventory.

141 **9. Missing Signs**

142 Mr. Damsell noted someone removed the signs he installed within a week. Chair Staples
143 recommended holding off on installing the new signs and has not observed anyone feeding the
144 ducks. The signs will be revisited in the springtime.

145 **10. Public Comment**

146 **11. Other Business**

147 Mrs. Ruffner noted a officer came in and asked about the "dusk til dawn" policy and whether that
148 should be as restrictive. The police department is enforcing that policy. Chair Staples
149 recommended he would speak with Russ Dean and find out who made the policy and how to
150 change it.

151 Mr. Damsell noted he heard from the Women's Club who donated the tree recently who would
152 also like a plaque at the base of the tree. Mr. Damsell will measure the other plaques and get
153 the correct size. Mr. Damsell recommended keeping a book as a record of who has donated
154 maintenance or upkeep. Funds are being spent on maintenance.

155 Mr. Damsell noted the pillars are a problem again.

156 Chair Staples noted during the site walk some bushes and trees and invasives that needed to
157 deal with. Chair Staples will reach out to a landscape architect to find out how to proceed with
158 the Master Plan, donations, trees, shrubs, flowers and then get input from the public at a public
159 meeting. Mrs. Ruffner suggested a section of fence could be donated and memorialized with a
160 placard.

161 Chair Staples noted the mowing specifications needed updating. Chair Staples will go down
162 tomorrow to see about the seeding bill.

163 **12. Next Meeting Date/Adjourn**

164 **Next Meeting – Wednesday, November 20, 2019 at 6 PM.**

165 The Board agreed unless there was an emergency there would be no meeting in December.

166 ***Mr. Damsell moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Ruffner seconded the motion, with all in***
167 ***favor, so moved.***

168 Chair Staples adjourned the meeting at 7:31 PM.

169 Respectfully submitted,

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171 Daniel Hoijer
172 Recording Secretary
173 (via *ExeterTv.com*)