

Bristol Parks & Recreation
Ellingwood Information Center
July 7, 2020

Commissioners present: Clyde Pendleton, Sandra Lane, Laurie Mahan (phone)

Also present: Lara Sargent, Pat Porter, Candy Congdon

Meeting called to order at 6:00 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes:

Sandra made a motion to approve the minutes from the June 15th meeting, Clyde seconded, and motion carried.

Pemaquid Beach Park:

Lara provided an update on park admissions. The month of June saw a 50% increase in visitors over last June with 2100 paying visitors in 2019 and 3200 paying visitors in 2020. With the \$1 increase the beach made almost double the amount in admissions from last year: June 2019 = \$8,670, June 2020 = \$16,170. Leftover merchandise has been selling very well so more merchandise has been ordered. Most park visitors are wearing masks through the pavilion area and the monitoring of the restrooms is working out well. Beach staff are pleased with how the season is going.

A resident sent an email asking if a section of the parking lot could be set aside for local residents only. Laurie asked how this could be enforced. Clyde said this would require an extra staff person to monitor because there would be no way to know which Maine residents were local so this would not work.

Sarah Gladu from Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust has asked for permission to do some decorating of the Beachcombers' Rest Nature Center. She was thinking of painting animal track trails in bright colors on the floor in the nature center. They would use high quality paint and have a track guide on the wall. She also asked about mounting a birch bark canoe on the ceiling and have interpretation about Wabanaki connections to Pemaquid. They have a guy who could help with installation. The Commission liked these ideas but are still waiting for a donation toward the space that Coastal Rivers Conservation Trust had informally committed to last year. The Commission would like to verify CRCT's intentions before committing to further enhancements.

Tammy from the S.S. Minnow has asked about hosting bands at the beach in the evenings and wondered if the Commission would allow this. Clyde said there would have to be staff onsite and there would be a 50-person minimum. If Parks was going to provide staff, then they would have to pay for the staffing. The group discussed allowing people to bring their own alcohol for these events. A BYOB license could be obtained. Laurie thinks the Parks could benefit from allowing alcohol at evening events – not sold but allowed. The topic would need to be researched and discussed further but for now the Commission will keep the no alcohol policy. Clyde thinks a conversation with the selectmen would be in order before making any decisions.

A question has come up about weddings at the beach. Would the Commission allow tents to be put up in case of rain? The Commissioners thought it would be ok if it were on the side with bandstand. Clyde mentioned that for weddings, the event would have to have an ending time, so the staff was not there all night and he suggested this to be 10pm. Laurie agreed with this time.

Now that the pavilion is complete, the Parks Department discussed a way to thank everyone involved, Thank you cards were sent to the donors but the group had previously discussed the possibility of an ad in the Lincoln County News. Clyde suggested a quarter page ad. Lara will put together an ad and have the Commission approve at the next meeting.

The maintenance crew will be installing the big sign at the beach this week.

Lighthouse Park:

Lara provided an update on park admissions. Lighthouse Park admissions are down over 50% which is likely because many of the visitors are usually from other states. Last June LHP made \$31,413 in admissions and this year it made \$14,766. Thankfully, admissions seemed to pick up this past weekend and has remained steady this week – maybe due to the quarantine restrictions being lifted for visitors from NY, NJ and CT.

The topic of late visitors to the parks was discussed. People often come in around closing and pay the admission fee but then do not get to use the facilities very long. In the past, ticket colors for the next day were handed out near closing, to allow these guests to come in the next day, but this required these admissions to be accounted for the next day which is a cumbersome procedure. Lara suggested that any visitor coming in within 30 minutes of closing will get their ticket

written on with “Good for (next day date)” with initials and a park pass punch so they can use it the following day. Clyde made a motion to accept the policy, Sandra seconded, and motion carried.

The Congo Church would like to reserve the Learning Center for September 13 from 9-1. They are asking for five tables and could have up to 49 people. The Commissioners said this was fine.

Parks received two inquiries (from the same family) about the poison ivy near the rocks at the lighthouse. Lara responded to them saying there are signs warning of the poison ivy and signs saying to stay off the rocks and if people obeyed the signage there would be no issue. However, she did also explain that a summer resident was looking at safe ways (not harmful to the environment) to eradicate it but the conversation got put on hold due to COVID. After explaining this, they sent ideas for safe ways to remove the poison ivy and Lara shared with the Commissioners and they took it under advisement.

The Keeper’s House painting is scheduled to start on Monday, July 13th. Lara shared the contract and pay schedule with the Commissioners. Clyde and Lara will meet with the contractor on Monday.

Park Passes:

Both LHP and Beach staff have asked about selling the discount passes at the ticket booths. The Commission discussed that purchasing those at the booths could create a bottleneck in the line and also be hard to keep track of the inventory so it was decided that these would continue to only be sold at Ellingwood.

The group confirmed that Property Taxpayers that get passes need to pay \$25 each year.

Lara was approached by a Bristol Consolidated School staff member about the possibility of BCS staff getting Bristol Park passes. The Commission discussed that most staff members are Bristol residents anyway and they would prefer not to allow non-residents to get passes.

Memorial Benches:

The Parks Department has been approached by many people about memorial items in the parks. One family is ready to purchase a bench overlooking Lighthouse Cove. Another family is interested in purchasing a new picnic table at LHP with a plaque on it. Ledgewalker Builders and Highland Building Services (who built the pavilion) have asked about purchasing two benches for Pemaquid Beach as a gift to the Parks after completing the project. Two other parties are interested in purchasing a bench or Adirondack chairs to be placed near the bandstand. Sandra suggested that any donated memorial bench, chair or picnic table be for someone who had been a resident of Bristol. Laurie suggested to accept the donations presented but that any other donations would be halted until the Commission discusses criteria going forward.

Leases to be signed:

The Art Gallery and Snack Shack Leases were signed by two of the Commissioners. Laurie attended by phone so will stop in to Ellingwood to sign them.

Executive Session:

The Commission went into Executive session MRSA 405(6A) at 8:06 to discuss staffing. Executive session ended at 8:15.

Public Comments:

Pat brought up that searching for Pemaquid Beach on Yelp comes up on the seventh page. Laurie is looking into it.

Meeting adjourned at 8:19 p.m.