

FREEDOM PARK

Freedom Park Committee Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at Lowell Town Hall
Start Time: 5:00 pm

CALL TO ORDER FOLLOWED BY PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Heidi Laub, Alice Dahl, Mark Myers, John Alessia and Mindi Arnold-Buchler.
Other attendees: Kevin Gray and Craig Hendrix.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: John Alessia made a motion to accept the July 2020 meeting minutes. Mark Myers seconded that motion. Motion carried.

REVIEW OF FREEDOM PARK CLAIMS: Alice Dahl made a motion to accept the claims. Mark Myers seconded that motion. Motion carried.

REPORTS:

Director of Parks, Mindi Arnold-Buchler reported the dog park currently has 78 members with \$3,765.00 collected at this time. Mindi suggested to the board that they may want to consider offering a discounted membership option for the remainder of 2020. The board agreed to offer residents a \$20/ non-resident \$25. John Alessia made a motion to offer a discounted membership. Mark Myers seconded that motion. Motion carried.

Movies in the Park Movie Screen

Cedar Creek Township donated an outdoor movie screen in 2009, valued at \$510.00 to Freedom Park for movies in the park. The movies were discontinued and the screen has been in storage for several years. Alice Dahl asked if the board would agree to allow her to repurpose this item and take it off the inventory for Freedom Park. John Alessia made the motion to approve this request. Mark Myers seconded that motion. Motion carried.

Amenity Ideas for the Dog Park

Mindi suggested the idea of investigating the option of installing a pond/ swimming area at the dog park. She believed this could be an amenity for the dog park and would draw more membership. Heidi stated pond maintenance would be very difficult to maintain. Mindi then suggested the board could look into a self-service dog wash system as an opportunity at revenue. Electric and water sources are not available near the dog park which would prove to have additional expenses to an estimated \$45,000 unit. Discussion followed and the board decided that other projects should take precedent over something like this.

Complaint about dogs at Freedom Park

Mindi then reported that she had a complaint from a patron that unleashed dogs were occupying the trails and interfering with other park patrons. Mindi wanted the board to know that she did reach out to Chief Matson asking for additional patrol and that she would ask the board if they felt it was necessary to install more signage. At this time, the board would like to continue to monitor the situation and review it in more depth if the problems persist.



Board Members

Heidi Laub
Chairman
West Creek
Township

Mark Myers
Vice-Chairman
Town of Lowell

John Alessia
Secretary
Lowell Town Council

Alice Dahl
Cedar Creek
Township

Mindi Arnold-Buchler
Director of Parks

MAINTENANCE REPORT

Public Works Director, Kevin Gray updated the board on maintenance projects at Freedom Park.

Projects Completed

- Gazebo landscape project complete
- Shrubs at entrance trimmed
- Brick walk has been cleared and maintained
- Tree trimming has begun and will continue
- The shell scale insects are invading all of the maple tree at this time. Spraying will take place in the fall.
- Eagle scout fire pit area was cut and will be planted in the upcoming months.
- Weeds were sprayed in parking lots and volleyball courts. Weed spraying will continue with emphasis on trails and horse shoe pits.

Repairs

- The batwing mower tires and drive shaft. Tractor and batwing will need replaced in the future. Kevin asked the board to begin to prepare.
- Weed whips have had a lot of wear and tear and have needed repair, possibly replaced.
- The dump truck in the barn needs new brake lines and has an oil leak.

Kevin wanted to know if the board would like for him to fix it and get it up and running. He estimated under \$1,000.00 in repairs. The board discussed the need for a vehicle that could be used at all times at the park. Kevin stated that he will get estimates to the board before beginning the work if the repairs will go over \$1,500.

Heidi had concerns about the condition of the sand volleyball courts. Heidi would like to see this area placed on normal maintenance lists as it is listed as an amenity of the park. There was discussion about normal maintenance and special project maintenance. Mindi suggested the board could go into work session where they could prioritize what normal maintenance and special maintenance projects priorities should look like. She believed it would be effective to prioritize work needed done with maintenance. Discussion continued about the need to hire an additional part time seasonal staff. Alice asked if another part time person will be hired for the remainder of the season. Kevin stated that he does not feel its necessary to hire someone at this time. He would like to hire this position early next season.

Budget

Craig Hendrix discussed the need to work through a budget for next year and staffing should be addressed. The board commended the existing staff on keeping up with the park and would like to see additional help onsite to assist him. Alice stated that the last installment of the bond will be paid in 2021 which will free up additional funds for her to assist with the budget. Craig would like to plan the budget accordingly for 2021. Heidi suggested investigating hiring landscaper to take care of the property and omit the need to purchase new equipment. Discussion followed about looking into outsourcing options on maintenance. Mark Myers suggested it would be nice to see what that option would cost. Kevin stated he would seek some proposals for the board to review. Heidi asked if she could see a breakdown of hours worked at Freedom Park for budgeting purposes. Kevin stated we can provide that for the last few years. A budget work session will be planned in the upcoming weeks.

OLD BUSINESS:

Freedom Park Office Building

Mindi shared a letter from Sharon Speichert of Old Town Appraisers. This letter was a preliminary estimate giving the board her opinion on the value of the park office building and garage. Sharon believes the office building and garage would be valued at \$125,000 in its current state. Sharon states the building without the garage would value at \$115,000. She also noted that the building would need a total remodel to capture a value of \$150,000 or more. Craig discussed the process of selling the property and subdividing it from the park with the board. The board discussed the pros and cons of keeping the property. The board discussed keeping the property and demolition of the office building. Alice Dahl made a motion to take the building down and keep the property. Mark Myers seconded that motion. Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS:

No new business. Heidi reported she spoke with the Rotary Club and they mentioned they are looking for projects within the parks. The board believed the volleyball court renovations would be a great project. Mindi stated she would reach out to them to discuss the scope of the project further.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CORRESPONDENCE: No announcements and correspondence.

NEXT MEETING:

The board will not meet in September. Their next scheduled meeting will be October 20, 2020 at 5:00 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ADJOURNMENT: John Alessia made the motion to adjourn at 5:54 pm. Mark Myers seconded that motion. Motion carried.