

**Park Commission Meeting
February 13, 2008 (Amended)**

Present: Bob Christiansen, Bill Gardiner, John Mercer, Mike Interbartolo, Bob Beshara, Deputy City Solicitor, Robert Van Campen, Nick Gove, and Joan Bell

Motion: By Bill Gardiner for the Park Commission to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation. The Commission may come out with a vote.

Second: John Mercer

Roll Call Vote:

Mike Interbartolo	Yes
Bob Christiansen	Yes
John Mercer	Yes
Bill Gardiner	Yes

Open the regularly scheduled Park Commission Meeting 7:00PM

Motion: By Bob Christiansen to change the order of the agenda to;

- Hesseltine Field shed request
- First Pond
- Public participation

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

I. Hesseltine Field Shed Request

President of Churchill American Little League, Tom Russell was back before the Commission with plans and designs for Churchill American Little League and Melrose Youth Soccer to combine their resources and place a storage shed for the use of storing equipment and to house a port a potty. They would like to possibly sell tonic and candy if it is agreeable to the neighbors Tom stated there is a beautiful new field in place and they would like to add to the park in a positive way not take away from it with the support of the City of Melrose and hopefully the neighbors. Nick described where he would like to see it located and why.

Wendy Butts 40 Hesseltine Ave

Wendy stated there are already problems with the box that is currently there. Kids tip it over, hide alcohol behind it and she feels it going to continue. She is also upset that the park even though it is temporally fenced in is being used as a dog park that no one picks up after their dogs. Another concern is if you are going to put a car port like covering over the end of the shed for a port a potty she is afraid that this will just give the kids as well a adults another hiding place.

Gail Williams 31 Hesseltine Ave.

Gail first wanted to commend the Parks Department on making needed improvements to the park and so far things have been done respectfully with the neighbors in mind, what does concern Gail is that the city is trying to force to much into a small neighborhood park that is set in a very residential area. She would like to see a plan with sketches and would like to see some neighborhood involvement in the decision making of where this shed is to be located.

John 30 Hesseltine Ave

Is the shed going to be used to store mowers or just equipment?

Tom Russell stated equipment and some grass applications, drying agents etc...

John can see a need for the storage shed and is willing to be involved in the process of determining where best to locate it.

Nick will work with a sub committee made up of Bill & Bob from the Park Commission and the neighbors, who are interested, get some drawings done and coordinate a letter of notice to the neighbors before the next Park Commission meeting on March.....

II. First Pond

For the public record the Park Commission and the City have been served with a legal action and injunction on the issue on raising and lowering the board in the slue sway on First Pond. We are all going to be sensitive to what is said and what can be said so, everyone please respect that.

Walter Sikora 63 Slayton Rd

Walter reminded the Commission of the meeting 6mths ago and the decision that was made to lower the boards during times of heavy rains, Walter feels that the removing of the boards has worked he and others have not had any substantial amount of water up until two weeks ago. When he heard the boards were put back up during times of rains.

Park Superintendent, Nick Gove explained that the policy that was put in place 6 months ago was to keep the water level 1 inch below the board and the water was not to overflow the board, if it did it would be pulled and the pond would be drained to below the 1 inch level and then the board put back in. Nick checked the board earlier today and the water level was below the 1 inch line and it was not overflowing the board.

Alderman Peter Mortimer stated the top board is locked down tonight and the water is overflowing the board and started to around 3:00pm so according to the policy the board should have been pulled.

Chris Walsh, 2 Mt. Hood Terrace

Has had flooding in the past and is here at the request of Mr. Mortimer to voice his concerns with the neighbors to the Commission.

Joe Hickey, 5 Mt. Hood Terrace

Lived here 12 years has had water 7 times. He wants to see the problem resolved if one person can complain to stop the policy then Mr. Hickey has no problem himself or with the neighbors to get an attorney to protect their homes.

Brian Burke, 51 Slayton Rd.

Has had water in the past and anything the Park Commission can do to not raise the water table would be a good thing.

Patricia Wright the attorney who represents Mr. Perry of 1 Mill Rd.

There has been a lot of anecdotal evidence as to what is the cause of the flooding is in Ward 6 and to her client property. She feels it is incumbent upon to the City of Melrose to find out what the real problem is. She feels the anecdotal evidence is not base on any research i.e. storm water analysis and hydrology testing. The sleuth way is not the solution to the water drainage problems in ward 6. Her recommendation is to have the city do a storm water analysis to find of just what the drainage system is and find out why the residents of ward 6 are getting flooded.

When asked if the boards should be kept in or out Ms. Wright stated its called resist colloquia (things speaks for itself) if you lift the board up her client's property gets flooded. Mr. Perry's property can't be flooded to the point where he suffers. She believes the boards should stay in.

Anthony Perry, 1 Mill Rd

Mr. Perry stated that when the boards are removed it is sending thousands of gallons of water onto his property. He couldn't reach his property due to the road and surrounding property being under water.

Chris Walsh

Wanted to know if the board system always been in place.

Peter Mortimer stated they were installed in 1933.

Alderman Peter Mortimer

Peter gave some background on how the pond systems were established. He feels there are three are three competing interests

1. The Park Commission which uses all the Ponds for irrigation
2. Mr. Perry who does not want his property flooded.
3. Ward 6 with water issues.

Alderman Mortimer feels the neighborhood has been saved by using this policy and believes it should continue to stay in place. He asked the Commission not to add another board on with the spring thaw coming. Mr. Mortimer stated these are prime conditions taking place right now you don't need to be an engineer to see what you need to see and invited everyone to go down to 16 Stillman Rd and view the a sis drain that was put in by the city that City Engineer, Bob Beshara elected not to connect to the city's storm drain system which is full and overflowing. The Alderman would like all the boards removed in the winter and let the natural flow of water take place then it wouldn't be a nuisance or sudden trespassing on Mr. Perry's property and the neighborhood water problem would be solved.

Chairman Interbartolo stated the issue before the Commission tonight isn't over whether the policy works or doesn't work the issue before the Commission is whether the Commission can legally let the water flow on Mr. Perry's land. That's the claim that is being brought against the City and until such time that the City Solicitor has the opportunity to address the legality of that the Commission has to go by legal councils recommendation, The Commission should pursue looking into bringing on an engineer to see what the possibilities are to relieve everyone's water issues and to determine if it is the ponds that are causing damage to the properties whether it is Mr. Perry's or anyone else's.

Deputy City Solicitor, Robert Van Campen,
Stated the issues facing the Park Commission tonight is a very specific legal issues. Mr. Van Campen is here to advise the Park Commission on the legal action Mr. Perry has taken against the city his recommendation to the Park Commission is to close the sleuth way on a temporary basis until such time that they can work out the legal aspects of this litigation against the City and the Park Commission

Mike Interbartolo stated to those that were here in April when the Commission voted to approve the policy that the Commission also had reservations about any impact that it would create down stream, up until now the Commission hadn't heard of any but now they have through legal action Mr. Perry is taken

Motion: By Bob Christiansen to close public participation

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: By Bill Gardiner to follow the City Solicitors recommendation and close the sleuth way on a temporary basis until the legal matters can be dealt with. All 4 boards will be put in place and locked down until that time.

Second: Bob Christiansen

Vote: Unanimous

Motion: By John Mercer to recommend that the Superintendent of Parks with the Chairman of the Park Commission and the Public Works Director look into what type of study can be done to monitor the situation on both Mr. Perry's property and the private homes.

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

III. Signing of Warrants

Warrants were reviewed and signed.

IV. Approval of The Minutes

The minutes were tabled until next month's meeting.

V. Mt. Hood Report

1. Membership list 2008

An updated list was submitted, 16 applications have been received.

2. Outstanding Gift Certificates

YTD \$344.00

3. Monthly Financial Report

MTD \$19,775.00

YTD \$19,775.00

4. Marketing Plans/League Rates

One of the ads that GMC ran in the Boston Globe netted a 140 players tournament.

5. Report on General Operations of Golf Course

a. Report on staffing levels

There is currently four (4) on staff.

b. Copy of Maintenance Log and Monthly Certification

A copy was submitted and is on file in the Parks Department office.

6. Capital Improvements

a. Clubhouse steps/patio

Nick will obtain a cost estimate for the project from Meridian Associates. If the estimate is approved by the Sub Committee the project will be advertised in early February.

b. Fire Alarm System Project, Clubhouse Insulation Project

The work has been completed except for a few punch list items. The Fire Department has an inspection set up for next week. Nick will get an estimate to eliminate the conduit from the wall in the Carr Room.

c. Touch up work

The Commission offered to purchase the paint if GMC found that they had some down time and wanted to repaint the rooms where the ceiling have been replaced due to installing the insulation.

d. League Rates

Motion: By John Mercer to table discussion until next season.

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

e. Irrigation System

Golf Course Superintendent, Mike Ford spoke to the Commission about updating the irrigation system. The current system can sometimes take up to a month and use 3 employees to find a break in the system. Mike's recommendation is to go with the Stratus II system which cost a little more now but you'll be able to tie the front and back 9's together later at a lower cost. The goal is to have one central system working the entire golf course. Mike predicts it would take about a week to set up the system.

The Commission would like a price to do the entire course and to have a discussion at the next meeting when the Commission would like to prioritize the CIP projects for 2009.

7. Update on sledding accident

A police report was submitted which really didn't say too much. Nick has requested form the Fire and Police departments to be notified in the future when an incident occurs on Mt. Hood property.

f. FY 09 budget

Mike passed around working FY 09 budget for the Commission and GMC to check and fill in any missing figures before it needs to be turned into the Auditor.

g. Transferring Funds for FY 08 PILOT Payment

Motion: By Bob Christiansen to pay the additional funds for restructurings the park superintendent's salary from the capital improvement line item.

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

VI. Park Department Report

A. General Park Dept. Report

1. East Knoll

No Change

2. Lebanon Street Park

No Change

3. Skate Board Park

Conceptual plan is in the works; Nick has informed the committee that they need to do a presentation before the Park Commission at the March meeting. Nick is working on informing the neighbors of the March meeting.

4. Gooch Park Minuteman Plaque

A group of neighbors and the Melrose historical society would like to replace a plaque that had been vandalized and removed from the park. It will be laser engraved on a stone at the foot of the flag pole. The inscription will read

“Here stood an elm tree under which a company of eighteen minute men of North Malden, now Melrose, gathered early in the morning of April 19, 1775 to march to Lexington and Concord, where they fought in the first battle for freedom in the Revolutionary War.”

Motion: By John Mercer to approve plaque with the minute men inscription in Gooch Park.

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous

B. FY 08 Park Department Budget

A copy of the budget was submitted and reviewed.

V. Recreation Department Report

A. Recreation Revolving Fund

A copy was submitted and reviewed.

Next month Chuck will have the projected programs for the summer and the process for hiring the summer help.

The Mayor has informed Chuck he will be allowed to use the Milano Senior Center for nighttime programming.

Motion: By Bob Christiansen to adjourn.

Second: Bill Gardiner

Vote: Unanimous