



# Town of Tewksbury *MINUTES*

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Committee: Open Space and Recreation Plan Committee

Date: Thursday, August 3, 2023

Time: 6:00PM

Location: Tewksbury Town Hall, 1009 Main Street, Tewksbury, MA Main Hall

Members present: Tom Branchaud, Susan Young, Paige Impink, Ray Bowden, Bruce Shick, JW Buckley, JoAnn Brace, Peter Chase

Members absent: Karyn Sliva

The meeting was called to order at: 6:04 PM

Meeting Motions / Actions and Summary of Discussions:

## Committee Business

The committee reorganized due to the June appointments for the new session of the committee.

Bruce Shick nominated Tom Branchaud for chair, seconded by Susan Young. All in favor.

Tom Branchaud nominated Bruce Shick for vice-chair, seconded by Paige Impink. All in favor.

Bruce Shick nominated Paige Impink for clerk, seconded by JW Buckley. All in favor.

The minutes of the May 15, 2023 and June 8, 2023 were unanimously approved.

Open action items were reviewed. Headset purchase through Tareila grant item was closed. Beaut Comm feedback on stewardship guidelines closed.

The committee agreed to move 2347 Main Street to the list of parcels to be permanently protected at town meeting. Tom will submit the parcel list to Richard.

Tom added an action item for the committee to create a strategy for protecting parcels, balancing town vs. committee perspectives. Tom will add to future agenda for discussion as well.

## Stewardship

Tom created a slide deck to help define stewardship. The committee's charter right now is "Facilitate the stewardship of open space." This leaves it loose as to what that really encompasses. The committee reviewed and discussed the stewardship guidelines and agreed that more research must be done. Discussion points included:

- How to engage stewards?
- How to gather input/problems from the field, whether via a form on the town website or other means- and through which department? DPW? Town manager? Email to a designated committee member?
- What role would a committee member have in educating/managing stewards?

Tom's proposal was to have a structured volunteer-based approach with guidelines and a committee member position that manages the program. JW proposed an approach that requires less management overhead by the committee. Further discussion is needed so no decision was made about the program but all agreed two elements should be addressed regardless of the program structure:

1. The committee should document guidelines for volunteer stewards to ensure their activities are consistent and aligned with the intention of the committee and town.
2. An arrangement with the town is needed regarding the support town departments will support the open spaces and how to engage their support.

Paige asked about how other groups handle stewardship, such as AVIS. Paige will reach out to Bob Rauseo and invite to meeting.

Paige also will follow up on action item to see how the town will support OSRC with disposal of trail debris a la Beaut Comm arrangement. Email to David Lizotte was forwarded to Richard and Kevin Hardiman for discussion. Bruce also has had discussions with Vinny Bomal of Facilities. Seems unclear where responsibilities lie.

Susan reported that the pollinator gardens are overgrown and difficult to even identify in some places. Susan felt that more mature plantings might help. She will investigate options and report back. Prior plantings were from the New England Wildflower society pollinator kits but do not appear to have thrived.

Tom will invite Chief Columbus and Lt. Williams to the next meeting to discuss how to collaborate with the police department on park patrols, keeping people safe, and protecting the parks.

### Outreach

Tom reported that he attended the Community Roundtable at the library. Felt the only synergy possibly was with the Public Health Museum for walks at the Pines Cemetery.

The committee will attend the Community Market on Thursday, August 17. Bike rodeo was not well attended. The committee decided not to participate in the Fall Festival.

The Pinnacle walk scheduled with the library went well. Tom used the headset. Four walks total organized by the library-Poplar Well Fields, Rogers Park, and Chandler Well Fields coming up.

Susan showed off the new OSRC table skirt for use at outreach events. She is also going to see if we can store the rolling kiosk and tub of materials in the shed at town hall.

### Development

The committee voted to submit the following parcels to the town manager for inclusion on the warrant for permanent protection approval at October town meeting:

- 1) Parcel 84-17, 61 Cynthia Road
- 2) Parcel 3-24, Melrose Avenue

- 3) Parcel 3-22, Melrose Avenue, (Kernwood Forest)
- 4) Parcel 95-96, 2347 Main Street

### Old Business

Bruce said that the funding for pickle ball courts are on the October warrant.

Tom said that there has been no response from Harvard regarding the Pine Hill Cemetery.

Bruce asked Tom to follow up on the rain gardens with the town. The town is supposed to be maintaining them. They serve an important role in the protection of Long Pond and should be restored so they can function optimally.

Some work was done on the TMHS nature trail. Bruce provided guidelines. Only a portion of the recommended work was done after Bruce went back and checked on site. It's not clear who will be responsible for the maintenance of the trails. Tom suggested further requests to discuss the approach be routed to him before moving forward.

### New Business

No new business discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at: 7:58 PM

Next meeting:           Date: September 14, 2023  
                                  Time: 6:00PM  
                                  Place: Town Hall

Respectfully submitted, Paige Impink, Clerk

Minutes approved by Committee on: September 14, 2023

Documents: Documents shared can be viewed in the Office of Community Development.