**FINAL**

**Salem Parks and Recreation Commission**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Date and Time: Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 6:45 P.M.**

**Meeting Location: Via Zoom**

**Members Present: Debbie Amaral, James Shea,**

**Bob Callahan, Amy Everitt**

**Also Present: Patricia O’Brien**

**Clerk: Kathleen Fitzgerald**

**Meeting Called to Order**

Debbie Amaral called the meeting to order at 6:45 P.M. She welcomed everyone to Zoom and stated that the Board would approve the Minutes from the September 15, 2020 meeting and then the public would have a chance to speak for a maximum of three minutes. The Park & Rec Commission would ask questions first and the public would need to raise their hand and be recognized to speak. Debbie advised that when the Commission votes, there must be a roll call.

Amy Everitt makes a motion to approve the January Minutes. Bob Callahan seconds. Roll call was then taken, and the Minutes were unanimously approved.

First on the Agenda:

Susie Moulton – Friends of the Salem Common. Ms. Moulton came before the Board to discuss and report on conditions on the Common. She discussed the Halverson Report as follows:

Paving:

* replace metal edging
* Maintenance of concrete paths (resolve ADA issues)
* Improve secondary entry plazas
* Sidewalk paving

Furnishings:

* Trash receptacles
* Benches (24 of different sizes and shapes) \*\*
* Signage and wayfinding (need to show history of Salem)
* Main entry plaza improvements (dress up)  
    
  Tree care and tree replacement:
* Continued tree care and Norway Maple replacement (add greater variety of trees)

Site Lighting (uneven and different kinds of lighting needed)

Lawns and ground covers

Irrigation (uneven and not throughout the Common)

\*\*The recommendation is to restore 20 benches and add 20 benches and to anchor them and set them equally apart. The report stated that it is more expensive to restore and better to purchase new ones.

Ms. Moulton advised they received an appropriation in the amount of $50,000.00. She advised there was a meeting with the Mayor on March 1st to decided how to use the money.

Debbie Amaral asked if the Salem tree warden was involved and Ms. Moulton said he was.

Amy Everitt asked how this fit into the signature park. Ms. Moulton said $3.1M needed to be raised or spent on the Salem Common. She said this report gives the City information to see out they will spend the money.

Bob Callahan said he would like to commend Ms. Moulton on the amount of work and time spent on this and questioned whether she has been in contact with the Planning Department because if they were doing private fundraising, coordination with the Planning Department is very important. Ms. Moulton advised she had met with Jenna Ide and that the Mayor was interested in using some of the $50,000.00 for ADA issues.

Trish O’Brien advised that the Planning Department was involved and that it definitely was a team effort.

Debbie Amaral asked if the consultant used for this has done any other of our parks. Ms. Moulton didn’t know and stated they were based out of Boston. Debbie Amaral also asked how much the entire project would be. Ms. Moulton said $2.9M.

Debbie Amaral recommended she work with the Jenna and that it was clear the City staff was using this report and incorporating it into their thinking. She also stated that tying in people we have used on other projects gives comfort.

James Shea asked about the $186,00.00 for benches. He asked if they had considered people donating for benches. Ms. Moulton said they would match the donation -- ;i.e. if someone paid $2,000.00, they would match $2,000.00.

Trish O’Brien said there was still a bigger conversation in terms of costs. She said she didn’t know if there needed to be that many benches. Ms. Moulton said that there were sections of the Common where the benches were great but said there needs to be a plan so it looks coordinated.

Ms. Moulton stated she would send the Executive Summary and the entire report to Trish O’Brien to distribute to the Board.

Amy Everitt asked if Ms. Moulton had access to the ADA Report. She said she had seen it and that she went to the ADA meeting. Trish O’Brien stated that the report was no where near accurate regarding costs. Amy Everitt said they report identified the issues even if the costs were inaccurate.

**Liz Aberg, 10 Forrester** Street -- She said in answer to a prior question, Halverson worked on the Salem Witch Trials project and the Salem Willows Study.

Next:

**Leanne Mercadante and Dylan Protus** – They are requesting use of the Common on August 21, 2021 for their wedding ceremony. Set up would be at 2:00 P.M. with the wedding starting at 4:00 P.M. and ending at 5:00 P.M. Breakdown would be finished by 5:30 P.M. They would need electricity for the officiant to have a microphone. There would be a maximum of 40 guests and there would be no chairs.

Debbie Amaral stated that she hoped there would be no Covid restrictions in August, but if there were, they would have to abide by State and City regulations.

Bob Callahan makes a motion to approve. Amy Everitt seconds, roll call is taken, and it passes unanimously.  
 **New Business**:

CPA Update. Trish O’Brien advised that Bob Callahan was our representative. She stated that we applied for funding for the pool last year and it was rejected because they were not happy with approving a request that bonded and tied up a large portion of CPA funds. She said we went back this year with a request for $175,000.00 for the project to continue and stay on schedule and the request was approved.

Mack Park Food Farm requested $15,000.00 to allow them to have a building for temporary storage which allows them to extend the growing season.

Bob Callahan advised that we were extremely lucky because usually when you put in these requests you don’t get the full amount requested. He stated we tried to push the importance of these projects and we were very lucky to get the full amount on both projects. He said the entire committee was very supportive.

James Shea thanked Bob Callahan for being the Board’s representative because the Board needed someone like him to go to the meetings. Amy Everitt concurred.

Next:

Appointment Letter Approval for Trish O’Brien.

Amy Everitt makes a motion to approve a two-year extension for Trish O’Brien to expire on January 31, 2023. James Shea seconds. Roll call is taken and passes unanimously.

Trish O’Brien stated she loved working with the Board and appreciated their support.

**Councilman Domingo Dominquez** -- He stated he was very happy that Trish O’Brien was reappointed and said he just returned after having Covid. Debbie Amaral said it was great that he was recovering.

Next:

**Superintendent’s Report**:

Golf Course – Bob Callahan stated it was good to see the numbers at the golf course were so good considering Covid restrictions.

Debbie Amaral said she was interested to see what happens with the parking meters at the Willows and that at the last meeting she felt pretty positive. Bob Callahan advised that Dave Kurcharsky would be setting up a meeting with someone from his Board, Trish O’Brien and himself to discuss parking in the area and said they hoped to bring back some revenue to the Willows without affecting Salem residents who deserve to use the park any time they wanted to at minimal costs.

Debbie Amaral suggested extending the parking stickers. Bob Callahan said everything was up for discussion.

Amy Everitt asked if the Board had any information on the appointment of a Commissioner since there is an opening.

Trish O’Brien said she has had some conversations with the Mayor and she is looking into some options. She stated that the Mayor was looking for some diversity. She said if anyone had any suggestions to please forward the names to her.

A motion to adjourn is made by Amy Everitt seconded by Bob Callahan. Roll call was then taken, and unanimously passes.

The meeting ended at 9:31 P.M.

Next meeting – Tuesday February 16, 2021 via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk