

# MINUTES

## GREEN SPACE COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 2023

WILLIAM L. PULLEN MUNICIPAL BUILDING MEETING ROOM

ONLINE NON-INTERACTIVE AT TOWN HALL STREAMS

6:30 p.m.

**Committee members present:** Clairlynn Rountree, Kathleen Thornton (Chair), Josh White, and Don Kleiner

**Others present:** None.

**1. Meeting called to order:** 6:30 p.m. by Kathleen Thornton.

**2. Reading and approval of minutes:**

Motion to approve minutes from January 11, 2023 via Heather as discussed and edited by: Clairlynn Rountree

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Kathleen Thornton

3-0-1 abstention (White)

Josh was not at the meeting. Don requested his name be struck.

Motion to approve minutes from March 30, 2023: Tabled.

**3. Public comment:** None.

**4. Discussion of recommendation to Select Board:**

Don said Jay offered the ability to vote electronically by notifying all, to be included in the minutes. His recommendation would be vote tonight then offer Wendy and Heather the opportunity to vote electronically. Kathleen hadn't heard about it. It was via email. Kathleen was fine with it.

Josh said if everyone were here and it were split, we should go around and try to convince each other our thing is the right thing – be prepared to tell why each individual thinks a certain way which normally would be at this meeting. Kathleen thought they could do that tonight with four, and people should stay positive. Don said both proposals have a negative aspect which need to be talked about.

In answer to Don, Kathleen said there were no attorney answers yet. Don was not comfortable proceeding without that information as it's not good due diligence.

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There was discussion on absent committee members. Kathleen talked to Adam and said the issue is a quorum. One solution might be adding more people to the committee. Don noted there was a quorum tonight and raised the point that their select board meeting is one week away. He suggested a letter stating here's where we are, here's what we did, and why we recommend the two options. He felt the committee is one or two meetings away from accomplishing its task. Josh concurred.

The task of the Green Space Committee was discussed. Kathleen went over its history, saying when formed this would be our first task, and they hoped we'd be involved in some of the other town properties. Josh and Don agreed. Josh added once the recommendation is made to the select board the committee really shouldn't do anything. Kathleen urged return to Robert's Rules.

Clairlynn anticipated the board wanting more information on the two recommendations and would be surprised if they didn't have more questions. Don called it mission creep at its finest. Josh felt the last meeting was for their questions. Kathleen urged wait and see. Don said the committee is an information-gathering body. More discussion ensued.

Kathleen felt it important to get everybody's vote, if not at this meeting, then the next. She was fine with electronic voting. They need to vote on what their recommendation is. Clairlynn recommended voting tonight with a deadline for the other two to send an email vote. Kathleen reminded Don was uncomfortable voting without the attorney's answers. Kathleen said they will vote on their choice and their recommendation. They should come up with those statements with a motion and discussion for each one for the next meeting.

Kathleen said she realized she had not sent the questions to the attorney. They reviewed what they had last time.

Kathleen said she would like to send out a document explaining the committee voting rules for the vote on the option.

Motion that our process for defining our final recommendations be a vote of the committee held subsequent to the answers from the attorneys, and at that time this Green Space Committee will vote; members not present will have five calendar days to vote electronically by email to the entire committee and cc the town manager who'll be our safety valve, and that's how we will determine the recommendations to go forward to the select board by: Don Kleiner

2<sup>nd</sup> by: Clairlynn Rountree

4-0

Kathleen clarified this is for both votes. Discussion followed. Prior to the vote Kathleen paraphrased Don's motion by saying they will have a meeting once the attorney has answered their questions; they will vote on individual choices and recommendation to the select board; those members not present will have five days to vote electronically, cc Jay.

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Kathleen also clarified if there is a quorum and you're not here, you give up all opportunity for control (sentence finished by Don). She may send out a reminder. Don said he would like at least a couple days to read the lawyer stuff but wants to move expeditiously. Kathleen agreed but didn't want to rush at the end if issues (individual questions from the select board) come up. Don said they may want a meeting with the committee sitting in the front row. Josh brought up the importance of getting people to understand the lasting impact of their votes.

Josh said this recommendation will go a long way toward future projects, and they need to think about that. Kathleen said other projects may be different but they have a large body of research. Don said the matrix is already built. Josh said with two things going in front of the select board, people should be aware all the information for both options for the rest of humanity is there. Kathleen said other properties may be something totally different, but either way the research is very valuable and includes options not chosen. Don suggested that show up in the initial paragraph of whatever they send to the select board – thorough research, readily available both from committee members and the submitted report; the foundation is laid regardless of the property; this is the information we feel is pertinent.

### **5. Discussion of future agenda items/next steps:**

Kathleen wanted to ask the select board what's next, post-recommendation. What do they want the Green Space Committee to do? She mentioned a Conservation Commission. Josh thought it should change to something more permanent sounding. Kathleen said a Conservation Commission would be broader, and the town had one years ago.

Josh said they as a group should lead the select board into what they think they should look like and do in the future. He favored the Conservation Commission. He suggested an inventory of pieces of property the town actually owns.

Don said Conservation Commissions are in statute whereas this committee is ad hoc and could be disbanded. He read aloud some of the rules. Kathleen said she had worked with Rockport's, which did a lot of things like looking at water quality and land use. Don suggested (soon) viewing the work of this committee as completed per the initial task; you may want to consider formulating a Conservation Commission with a similar task going forward, and these are the duties in statute – it's already been spelled out.

Clairlynn would request they ask if any select board members want to be on this committee as well as getting word out to citizens in general. Don's sense was the select board is too small to have a select person on every committee; one is not required on the Conservation Commission. Clairlynn said they are probably mindful of small towns. She would like to open it up to more members.

Kathleen raised the subject of what they all want to do. She is interested in water quality issues and the properties on Happy Hollow. She suggested putting this on the agenda.

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Don said we're a six-member committee. A Conservation Committee can have no more than seven members. There can be associate members, often lobbyists or interested public. They could attend all meetings and get the minutes but not vote. Kathleen suggested associate members could do legwork, and Josh said provide a different view. She saw this as separate from the recommendation, echoed by Clairlynn.

Proceeding with the select board was discussed. Josh suggested a mention of the commission at the end of the recommendation then pursue it separately.

Kathleen said the attorney's answers could be incorporated into the report with highlights. The presentation could just be what was updated and the votes. Don concurred. Discussion followed.

Don would like this on the ballot in November. Kathleen concurred but also thinks legitimate questions should be addressed. Josh said sometimes you need to steer the conversation in the direction you want it, and committee members should be able to answer questions having done due diligence, research, their earlier questions, etc. They can discuss the merits of the two proposals amongst themselves.

Clairlynn asked if it's appropriate for this committee to say they'd like for both proposals to go forward to the citizens. Kathleen said yes. Clairlynn urged a united front on this, echoed by Kathleen. More discussion followed.

Clairlynn brought up how to get information out to voters. Kathleen said anything on a warrant has to have a public meeting, also advocacy.

Kathleen said for the next meeting, come with an explanation of option choice and what we should present to the board.

**6. Set date for next meeting:** May 18 at 6:30 p.m.

Kathleen may come with a draft incorporating new information.

**7. Adjourn:**

Motion by: Don Kleiner  
2<sup>nd</sup> by: Clairlynn Rountree  
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Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sherry Abaldo  
Secretary