**Salem Parks and Recreation Commission**

**Minutes of Meeting**

**Date and Time: Tuesday, May 18, 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 April Minutes. Bob Callahan seconds. Roll call was then taken, and the Minutes were unanimously approved.

First on the Agenda:

**City of Salem, Willows Metered Parking Fees**: Dave Kucharsky, Traffic and Parking Director, made a presentation with recommendations for signage and expectations for increases in parking rates to make sure everything was consistent. His presentation included recommendations to the Traffic and Parking Commission, which was approved, and he advised that it would go to the City Council for approval.

He stated there would be enforcement of meters from April through October. Meters would be $1.00 per hour from 8:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. with 15-minute parking for restaurant pick-up. The meters at Restaurant Row would be $1.00 per hour from 8:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. seven days a week with a two hour limit.

The new lot and those spaces across from dead Horse Beach will be $.50 per hour with a four-hour limit. This will be free for residents or non-residents with a parking sticker. Fort Avenue is formalizing resident parking and maintaining unregulated parking and no parking areas.

He advised that the rates didn’t go into effect until April 2022 per City Council. Fort Avenue has space for four motorcycles and four spaces for pick-up/drop-off. Handicap space behind drop-off and pick-up area have been added.

Bob Callahan asked if the effective date of the parking increases was 2022 and if the meters in front of the arcade would go into effect this year and stated he did not think that the City Council had anything to say with Park & Rec.

Debbie Amaral when the parking area was to be completed.

Trish O’Brien said she has a meeting with the Mayor and not 100% sure why this was delayed but advised that the Mayor wanted to move on this as soon as possible. It was originally slated to be done by July, but she was not sure if this was true anymore.

Debbie Amaral asked the reason why City Council wanted to delay. Dave Kucharsky said he thought it was because of the impact on businesses last year.

Debbie Amaral said people would be looking for enforcement and Dave Kucharsky said yes there would be enforcement and it was in the budget asking for an additional enforcement person.

Debbie Amaral asked how the delay affect the overall charging, actual spots and the like. She stated that the last point stated $.50 per hour with a 4-hour limit, sticker parking and free for resident. Dave Kucharsky stated at the time he wasn’t sure if non-residents with parking stickers could park for free.

Amy Everitt stated it looked like what the Board talked about this time. Bob Callahan said he thought The Commission should have some discussion on the metered area – i.e., increase right now or put off until next year.

Councilman Robert McCarthy stated he advocated during the City Council meeting not to increase meters because there were a number of businesses that could not open last year. He advised that the businesses were very appreciative of the 15-minute drop zones last year. He further stated that the project being talked about is planned to start on Jun e 1 and would not be completed until November. He stated that the tennis courts were coming out and he had a big concern about the parking issues. He also stated that he was concerned because we would be asking people to park further away and pay more. He said we needed to give businesses a break.

Debbie Amaral said she was concerned about this and Bob Callahan said he agreed with Councilman McCarthy. Last year was a tough year and holding off on increasing prices to next year would be fine.

Councilman McCarthy stated they had asked multiple times about this because it had been tied up in City Council. He stated this should have been done 6 years ago and they would have received a lot of money for the Willows.

Bob Callahan stated there was no need for a motion to stay the same. Debbie Amaral asked if the Board wanted to approve the same date as City Council proposed.

Bob Callahan makes a motion to raise rates next year in line with City Council. James Shea seconds. Roll call is taken and it passes unanimously.

Councilman McCarthy stated he only wanted an increase in fees. All other changes can be made now.

Debbie Amaral stated that if we in fact go with the plan that would be a change in the rates for motorcycles. If new parking is added there would be some price increase.

Councilman McCarthy said he was in favor of drop zone for 15 minutes in front of businesses.

Dave Kucharsky said he would speak with Trish O’Brien about making sure parking stalls on Restaurant Row go in.

Debbie Amaral stated that the Board was appreciative of Dave Kucharsky’s work and enforcement.

Next:

**Kim Emerling, VFW Gold Tournament** – Kim Emerling stated that it was new this year to come before the Board. The event requested would be on August 2, 2021.

Bob Callahan asked about the proceeds of the event. Kim Emerling said proceeds go the vets and then the community. Anything over and above operational costs go the he vets.

A motion is made by James Shea, seconded by Bob Callahan. Roll call was taken, and unanimously passes with the understanding that details needed to be worked out with the golf course.

Next:

**Charlie Sinclair, AOH National Tour** – This request is for an event on June 14, 2021 at the Old Salem Green. James Shea advised that Mr. Sinclair called before the meeting to advise he could not be here. Mr. Shea stated this was a tour they have had for several years and there have been no problems.

James Shea makes a motion to approve the event. Bob Callahan seconds. James Shea stated they needed to be sure the financials were up-to-date i.e. scholarships and that the information was turned in to Trish O’Brien. Roll call is taken and it passes unanimously.

Next:

**Adelaide Gross** – This request is for the use of the Willows Shell for a wedding on September 12, 2021. She advised it would be alcohol-free and there would be a swing band with dancing on the grass, and potluck dinner. The event would be from 11:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. which included an hour for set-up and an hour for break-down.

James Shea made a motion to approve the event. Amy Everitt seconds. Roll call is taken and it passes unanimously.

Next:

**Autumn Chandler** – This request is for a birthday party and use of the Willows Shell on June 26, 2021. The event would take place from 2:00 P.M. until 6:00 P.M. Set-up would be at 11:30 A.M. and break-down until 7:30 P.M. Ms. Chandler advised there would be approximately 50 people and amplified sound.

Amy Everitt makes a motion to approve the event. Bob Callahan seconds. Roll call is taken and it passes unanimously.

Next:

**Ellen Talkowski, Haunted Happenings** – Ms. Talkowski advised they were expecting large crowds and that the City was asking to use portions of the Common for vendors.

Events to include:

* Fiesta Shows on the Common on October 1-3, 8-10, 11-31, 2021. E.J. Bean to provide 4-5 food trucks.
* Food Truck Festival on the Common on September 25 and 26, 2021
* Salem Common Neighborhood Association – to run kiddie carnival

Ms. Talkowski the 2 biggest questions asked were what to do at night and what to do with kids. She stated the Witches Circle would be back again on October 31st. There would be beer gardens set up in different places around the City. She advised they are expecting approximately 150 vendors on the Comon and some street performers who would perform from 12:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. on Saturdays and 12:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M. on Sundays. She advised the performers would be vetted and family friendly.

There was discussion about load-in and load-out for vendors and crowd control and moving people around the City. It was stressed by the Board that Ms. Talkowski was to be the contact person.

Ms. Talkowski said the City knows what is doing regarding events in October and the police know what they are doing.

Bob Callahan stated that the Common was a huge location and one of the easiest locations for police to patrol.

**Steve Kapantais, 23A Wisteria Street** – Mr. Kapantais wanted to be assured that during the Haunted Happenings events and Food Truck events that the Common was ADA accessible Ms. Talkowski stated she and John Andrews would speak about this to accomplish any needs.

**Christine Madore** – She stated she wanted to speak in support of the team that will be coordination activities on the Common in October. She said she didn’t think the City could find a better team.

**Alan Hanscom, Washington Square** – He stated he was glad vendors would be on the Common and said he would fight the idea of putting a beer garden on the Common. He said in the past there was an attempted assault and extensive vandalism.

Debbie Amaral advised that the beer garden was with other entities and required licensing. She advised that this Board only approves use of the Common.

Ellen Talkowski stated that the Alcohol Commission goes through the Licensing Board.

Debbie Amaral stated she was concerned about spacing with vendors and was advised that there would be a least 5 feet between each vendor with plenty of room to move around and there would be pedestrian paths.

John Andrews advised that after the first weekend with vendors they would see how things went and could any changes as need.

**Susan Moulton, 98 Washington Square East** – She asked 3 specific questions:

* What are vendors being charged
* There is an ordinance that says all monies collected for use of the Common, and she wanted to understand where those monies went.
* Damage by cars and trucks should be borne by vendors and wanted to know what kind of assessment would be done regarding damage.

Ellen Talkowski advised Ms. Moulton that the City takes responsibility and the lead on this. She also advised that the City puts in line items on the budget to offset costs that the City incurs during Halloween, i.e. extra police, port-a-potties, evening activities, etc.

Ms. Moulton stated that the Common sustains wear and tear and if monies are raised for using it, they funds should be directed back to wear and tear.

James Shea advised that over the years the City has put in money for fences and the bandstand.

Debbie Amaral stated that parking in Salem makes money, but these events on the Common cover themselves i.e., policing, sprinkler systems, etc.

Ms. Moulton asked if after vendors and trucks leave someone makes an assessment. Ms. Talkowski advised that in the past the Director of Operations for Public Services did that. Trish O’Brien advised that Ray Jodoin does check the sprinklers.

**Liz Aberg, 10 Forrester Street** – She advised that she is part of the Friends of Salem Common. She advised she would like to follow up on the fee schedule. She said this is a City event which means any event so long as not entirely not-for profit. She stated vendors should be charged $25.00 for a permit and money should be put into receipts and go into the Salem Common Association account. She also questioned how vendors were vetted.

Ellen Talkowski again advised that the City insurance covers any damage and that the merchant marketplace was under an existing contract.

Ms. Aberg stated all contracts could be renegotiated and amended and stated she did not understand why for profit vendors cannot give the Salem Common Association $25.00 a day as a vendor fee.

John Andrews advised that vendors are vetted and are primarily local North Shore and Essex County artisans and that they are very particular in who they accept.

Debbie Amaral advised that the Board was here today to give a blanket permit to the City for the Haunted Happening events.

**Jenn Santo, 25 Washington Square North** -- She asked about parking during these events.

Ellen Talkowski stated no vendors get parking spaces and that when all Department Heads meet with the Mayor, the Mayor wants to make sure that the parking clerk or police respond to resident parking calls.

**Ann Sterling, 29 Orchard Street** – she advised there was a lot of chatter on social media about bathroom issues on the Pedestrian Mall. Ellen Talkowski advised that was a private entity.

James Shea makes a motion for approval of the Haunted Happening events. Bob Callahan seconds. Roll call is taken and passes unanimously.

Next:

**Pioneer Village Update** – There was a lengthy discussion from Margaret Wood, Matt Odens and the Elio team. This is about the relocation of Camp Naumkeag.

Margaret Wood explained that Pioneer Village was built in 1930 and preserved by the City of Salem at Forest River. She stated the following:

* Offers an opportunity to talk about pre-colonial history.
* Recognizes the arrival of Governor Winthrop.
* First living history museum in the county.

Matt Odens stated that the project is estimated to cost $3,900,000.00.

James Shea asked if the existing buildings, etc. would be moved or dismantled. Ms. Wood advised that the buildings were previously built as a stage set and they would have to disassemble and rebuild.

Steve Kapantais said he was concerned about parking. He said the current plans all show 10 parking spots and he said they needed more than the bare minimum for ADA parking.

Please see below link for presentation

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rot66pilf2zhcue/AACXBlHXov3H0c4hyosunIQYa?dl=0>

**Melissa Nowak, 19 Columbus Avenue** -- Ms. Nowak stated that buses would be coming in for tours and wanted to know where they would be idling, etc. Ms. Wood stated there would be a trolley site which could be utilized as temporary drop-off and pick-up and that Destination Salem would direct them to parking areas.

Ms. Nowak wanted to know where the Destination Salem spots would be. Elizabeth Peterson said there would always be a space to send visiting drivers to.

Debbie Amaral asked who was on the Committed and was advised of the following:

* National Park Service
* Peabody Essex Museum
* Salem State University
* Historical New England
* House of Seven Gables
* Salem Trolley
* Salem Public Education System
* Essex National Heritage

Bob Callahan stated that the Committee did a fantastic job.

**Old Business**:

CPA had its final meeting and Park & Rec fully funded for Willow and Camp Naumkeag. Did not get golf course, but once final numbers come in, may bet money.

New Business:

None

James Shea makes a motion to adjourn. Bob Callahan seconds and it passes unanimously.

The meeting ended at 9:46 P.M.

Next meeting – Tuesday, June 15, 2021, via Zoom.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Clerk