

## **Minutes for the May 27, 2025, Gerald Park Association Budget Meeting**

### **Held at the Coventry High School Lecture Hall, minutes taken by board secretary Lisa Catanese**

The meeting was called to order at 6:01pm. A quorum was established. Board of Directors members present were Lisa Catanese, Pam Cropley, Lisa Lowell, Eric Miller, Raymond Perugini, Darby Pollansky, and Dave Sutherland. Absent were Teri Norman and Kevin Ryan. About 34 GPA members also were present as well as GPA tax collector Laura Young.

**Audience of Members:** Kelley Sutherland suggested a station at the beach for dog droppings. Susan Stroberg suggested we also consider a receptacle for cigarette butts. A camera at the beach also was discussed, but we don't have electricity there, so maybe a type of trail camera could be considered. Charlotte Anderson asked that spaces in the walkway pavers be fixed so people using assistive devices to walk can pass over it more easily. Raymond Perugini said he is looking into a permeable fill and hopes it will be in place by July 4. Dave Cristelli suggested a flagpole with a solar light on top so the U.S. flag can be flown 24/7. Susan Stromberg said she would donate a State of Connecticut flag if we were to put up a flagpole. Jim Cropley said the Town is planning to replace the drain that runs from Avery Shores to the lake, to fix the erosion issue at the beach.

**Minutes:** Minutes from the April 16, 2025, Board of Directors meeting were approved. Motion by Eric Miller, second by Dave Sutherland, approved unanimously.

**President's Report:** Eric Miller reported that the Town may not have the grant money to pave Avery Shores this year, so paving would likely be pushed back to next year. He also said that a resident pointed out that the GIS listing on the Town website for the GPA beach is incorrect, and he will call the Town to fix it.

**Tax Collector's Report:** Laura Young submitted a report showing a tax collection rate of 95.48%. Two properties are newly delinquent and 10 are habitually delinquent, for a total of \$12,369 due to the GPA. She has placed liens on the delinquent properties, but the GPA will not recoup the back taxes until the properties are sold.

**Treasurer's Report:** Eric Miller made a motion to discuss this under the budget vote in New Business. Seconded by Raymond Perugini, approved unanimously.

#### **Committee Reports:**

- **Beach/Beautification:** Kelley Sutherland said the wooden picnic tables are aging and have peeling paint and loose boards. We have three coated-steel tables, and she suggested we buy one new table a year, at a cost of about \$1,000, to replace the wooden ones. Dave Sutherland said a new life preserver and rope were purchased to replace the older ones, which were falling apart, and a new tree was planted at the park.
- **Member Involvement:** Planning will start soon on activities that include full-moon paddles, Gerald Park Day, and maybe a marshmallow-roasting night.
- **Environmental:** No update. Lisa Catanese noted that a link is on the GPA website for the Coventry Lake Advisory Committee, for up-to-date information on the health of the lake.
- **Fuel Oil Cooperative:** Finished for the year. Thanks to Ben Emanuele for coordinating this.
- **Website:** Lisa Catanese said after many years of having a free website, we now need to pay \$20 a month. She also pointed out that spaces on the racks at the beach for kayaks, canoes, and paddle boards can now be reserved online through a link on the homepage, for all GPA residents who are current on their taxes.
- **Welcome to GPA:** Lisa Lowell said no new residents have moved to the Gerald Park Associations since her last report.
- **Bylaws and Park Rules:** On hold.
- **GPA Taxes:** On hold.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Discussion of “paper roads” owned by the GPA:** Eric Miller said the GPA would like to cease owning Chase Avenue and Overholt, which were planned as roads decades ago but never used as such. They are now covered with trees, some of which are failing, and the roads are a liability to the Association. Cutting down the trees would possibly cost \$100,000. He said the options are to continue ownership and continue to pay insurance on them, or attempt to hand them over to abutting property owners.

Tamara Sendewicz asked why the GPA Board is acting on this issue now. Eric Miller said there is more clear-cut space now on the adjacent lots, making falling trees more of a hazard, and also that the GPA Board was waiting to address this until the Avery Shores turnover was complete.

To turn over the properties to abutting landowners, the GPA would need to the properties surveyed, and the Town would have to approve the redrawn maps. Jim Cropley suggested that the abutting property owners be contacted to gauge their interest. Kelly Sutherland asked if the “roads” could be kept as a walking path, but Pam Cropley said having people walking through would increase liability. She said the GPA does not pay very much in insurance for those “roads”.

Lisa Catanese suggested that a letter be sent to the abutting property owners to ask if they would be interested in obtaining them. Jim Cropley suggested asking the next-closest property owners if the abutting owners declines. Bill Thurston suggested asking an attorney what can legally be done with these properties. Eric Miller said he would do some research and share his findings at the GPA Annual Meeting in September.

**Discussion and vote on approval of the 2025-26 proposed budget:** Eric Miller went through each line item of the proposed budget. Several changes were suggested by GPA members:

- The \$250 set aside in the current budget to donate to July 4 fireworks will be made this fiscal year, and another \$250 would be included for next year. A resident had suggested increasing that amount, but those GPA members present were not in favor. Marilyn Barrett pointed out that private donations can be made.
- Based on GPA members comments, the line item for Beach Repairs/Drainage was increased from \$500 to \$1500; the Beach Beautification/Improvements from \$500 to \$1500 (to accommodate the purchase of one picnic table); and Office Supplies/Postage/Copying from \$800 to \$1000.
- Noting that we have a surplus this year of \$14,125, GPA members agreed to put \$7500 into the Capital Improvements budget.
- Eric Miller called for a vote on a 2025-26 budget total of \$20,600, seconded by Raymond Perugini. The vote 20-0 with 2 abstentions.
- GPA members advised the Board that we should keep more funds in the GPA checking account than in past years and agreed that this total should be \$15,000. The remainder in the checking account will be used to offset the tax burden on GPA members for 2025-26. Eric Miller called for a vote on this, seconded by Raymond Perugini. The motion passed 19-0 with 1 abstention.

**NEXT BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING:** The next Board of Directors meeting will be held via Zoom on Wednesday, July 9, 2024, at 6pm. The Board also set the date for Gerald Park Day, which will be Saturday, July 26, with a rain date of Sunday, July 27.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48pm.