

CITY OF PORTSMOUTH  
PRESCOTT PARK  
FISCAL YEAR 2016



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# PRESCOTT PARK

## Introduction

The City of Portsmouth Trustees of Trust Funds serve as the operational supervisors of Prescott Park. Operational costs of the park are funded primarily through annual earnings of the Josie F. Prescott Trust, a trust managed, per state law (RSA 31:19), by the Trustees of Trust Funds. Some administrative costs are paid for through the City's General Fund budget. Since the Trust has its own terms of expenditure, the funds proceeds are not appropriated in the same manner as other funds that appear in the City's budget; see budgeted funds in the section on the Budget Document. The Trustees of Trust Funds expend Trust proceeds on the maintenance and operation of the Prescott Park as shown below. Because Trust proceeds are not sufficient to cover all park related expenses in a given year, general fund dollars are utilized for some park expenses (also shown below).

## Operational Budget – Prescott Park

	Josie F. Prescott Trust Fund	City of Portsmouth General Fund	Total
<b>Park Buildings &amp; Grounds Operations</b>			
Park Payroll	\$ 104,446		\$ 104,446
Payroll Taxes	\$ 8,500		\$ 8,500
Retirement and Unemployment	\$ 7,000		\$ 7,000
Worker's Compensation		\$ 197	\$ 197
Health Insurance		\$ 19,117	\$ 19,117
Dental Insurance		\$ 764	\$ 764
Garden Supplies	\$ 19,475		\$ 19,475
General Supplies	\$ 7,325		\$ 7,325
Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 9,000		\$ 9,000
Property & Liability		\$ 3,047	\$ 3,047
Utilities	\$ 26,250	\$ 10,000	\$ 36,250
Other Building and Grounds maint.	\$ 5,500		
Contingency/Other	\$ 1,250		\$ 1,250
<b>Total Buildings and Grounds</b>	\$ 188,746	\$ 33,125	\$ 221,871
			\$ -
<b>Office Administration</b>			\$ -
Office Payroll	\$ 12,480		\$ 12,480
Office Operations	\$ 2,974		\$ 2,974
<b>Total Office Administration</b>	\$ 15,454		\$ 15,454
			\$ -
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	\$ 204,200	\$ 33,125	\$ 237,325

The budget above does not include capital expenses, which in recent years have been primarily funded through the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). In the FY 2017-FY 2022 CIP, investments in the park are identified at a level of \$80,000 for each of the next six years. Infrequent allocations for rolling stock are also funded through the City's General Fund.

### **Josie F. Prescott Trust**

Prescott Park was created and has been maintained by the terms of the last will and testament of Josie F. Prescott, a lifelong resident of the City of Portsmouth. It was her wish that a public park, free and accessible to all, be established along the Portsmouth waterfront replacing what had become a rundown industrial area of Portsmouth. The land to be acquired was designated to be along the Piscataqua River between lower State Street and Pickering Street. Once acquired the land was to be given to the City for the use as a public park. The remainder of the funds, first in a private trust and later in a public trust, have been dedicated to the purpose of preserving and caring for the park in perpetuity.

All funds of the Trust are to be used for the acquisition, improvements, capital projects and the care and maintenance of all aspects of Prescott Park. The approximate value (6/30/2015) of the Prescott Trust is \$3.9 million dollars and has an approximate annual contribution (based on total return) for operations of \$200,000. The assets of these trust funds are invested for low risk growth and to preserve their ability to provide income above inflation over time.

### **General Park Description**

Prescott Park includes over 10 acres of prime waterfront property along the Piscataqua River. There are five distinct areas found within the overall park boundary. First, there is the upper or north park area featuring the parking area, the municipal docks, the Sawtelle walking pier, and the Emerson Hovey Fountain. The next area is the center park containing the "T-pier" and the performing amphitheater and stage. In this area are the public restrooms and snack bar (both seasonal). Adjoining the center park area is the formal garden with the pathways, fountains and full planting beds. The fourth main area is the lower or south park area that includes the two main park buildings, the liberty pole and the "trial garden". The last separate park area is across the Peirce Island bridge and is called Four Tree Island.

## **Park Assets and Information**

**Buildings** - The most prominent building in the Park is the 200 plus year old Shaw's Warehouse. The building features an all-wood construction including the original 12 inch by 12 inch beams supporting the three floors. The Shaw Warehouse is home to the headquarters of the park maintenance staff and supplies and equipment for park operations as well as the offices for the Prescott Park Arts Festival. Also in this building are seasonal public restrooms. Jutting out over the water is the oldest building found in the park, the Sheafe Warehouse (circa 1705). This building is generally used for storage, but in the summer months has been used for a public viewing and a juried art show. Also located on park grounds is the Marine Railway Building. This building dates back to the time when there was ship and boat building taking place in this area. The City currently leases this building, which is the home of the Players' Ring theatre. Nearby the performance stage area is a seasonal public restroom and snack bar, which was completely rebuilt in 2014.

**Piers & Docks** - Adjoining Prescott Park is a small municipal transient boat docking facility, known as North and South docks. Docking slips can be rented or reserved for stays of up to three nights. In addition, the Sawtelle Pier (closest to the Memorial Bridge) and "T" – pier both provide enhanced waterfront access for park visitors.

**Liberty Pole** - At one time much of the lower section of Prescott Park, where the "trial gardens" are today, was part of an open water inlet into what was called Puddle Dock. Puddle Dock continued west under a bridge on Marcy Street (then called Water Street) into a docking and residential area. During the Revolutionary War this bridge was named the "Liberty Bridge" by the local citizenry. In 1824 as part of a fourth-of-July celebration honoring the revolutionary past, a very prominent Liberty Pole was commissioned.

**Four Tree Island** - Just to the east of the main Prescott Park land area just beyond the fishing pier is a small island called "Four Tree Island". It juts out into the Piscataqua River with fine views of the Navy Yard, river boating activity, the Memorial Bridge and the best harbor view of Portsmouth proper. While now connected to Peirce Island by a pedestrian causeway, Four Tree Island once could only be reached by a boat or swimming the fast moving back channel. The Island has several covered picnic tables and main cooker sites along with more public restrooms that are open in the summer months.

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