

Draft Governance Recommendations

Blue Ribbon Committee on the Prescott Park Master Plan





Prescott Park Master Plan

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On January 11, 2016, Mayor Blalock appointed a Mayor's Blue Ribbon Committee on the Prescott Park Master Plan. The Committee was charged creating a Master Plan for Prescott Park (including Four Tree Island) and reporting back to the City Council no later than December 2016.

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- [Prescott Park Master Plan Committees](#)
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- [Web Comment Form](#)



News Releases

- [January 11 Prescott Park Public Discussion](#)
- [December 21 Prescott Park Public Input Forum](#)
- [November 4 2016 Draft Concepts for Committee Discussion](#)
- [Concepts for Prescott Park October 13 and 15 Forums](#)
- [Prescott Park - Presentation & Feedback Session Prescott Park Master Plan BRC 10/13 and 10/15](#)
- [Prescott Park Master Plan Announces Initial Input Opportunities](#)

Committee Documents and Presentations

2017

- [January 11th Material - 12-12-2016 - Draft Governance Recommendations - Blue Ribbon Committee](#)
- [January 11th Material - Presentation on Prescott Park Master Plan](#)
- [Public comments received through web comment form February 2016 to January 6, 2017](#)

2016

I. Blue Ribbon Committee Report Back: A Plan for Prescott Park - Outline

A. Introduction to Report Back by Blue Ribbon Committee

B. *Weston & Sampson Final Deliverable

I. Introduction

II. Existing Conditions Narrative (with report as an appendix)

III. Process Description

IV. Park First Approach

V. Design Tenets

VI. The Preferred Plan

VII. Park Usage and Capacity Guidelines

VIII. Design Guide for Fixtures and Amenities

IX. Phasing and Opinions of Probable Cost

X. Conclusion

C. Blue Ribbon Committee Recommendations for Governance

I. Governance Framework

II. Recommendations for Governance Moving Forward

III. Principles for Future License Agreements

IV. Recommended Provisions for License Agreements

V. Other recommendations

***Content to come from Weston & Sampson**

II. Governance Framework (Summary)

1. The **City Council** is the policy making body of the City of Portsmouth and controls City-owned land and its uses
2. The **City of Portsmouth owns** the land that makes up Prescott Park
3. The Portsmouth City Charter Article V; section 5.3, charges the **City Manager to oversee all City property**
4. Deed restrictions establish the eligible uses of the property ("**parks and recreational purposes**")
5. The Will of Josie F. Prescott establishes a Trust (financial) whose income "**shall be used for the maintenance**" of the Park.
6. Current **proceeds from the Trust are insufficient** to fund the annual operating costs of the Park (full and part time salaries, supplies, and maintenance costs, etc.).
7. The City's **Trustees of Trust Funds oversee the Trust** (financial) in their role as defined in State statute.
8. The City's Trustees of Trust Funds have provided the supervision and oversight in the Park as **a matter of tradition as opposed to a requirement** of any document or law.
9. The **Charitable Trust Division** at the State of NH Attorney General's Office oversees Trusts and property held in trust to ensure they are used in a manner consistent with the intent of the maker of the Trust.

III. Recommendations for Park Governance going Forward

Principles for Future License Agreements

Recommended Provisions of License Agreements

III. Recommendations for Park Governance going Forward

- Governance to be carried out in a manner consistent with deeds and City ordinances
- Identify the Prescott Park Master Plan in the Capital Improvement Plan
- Prescott Park come under the management control of the City Manager, consistent with the City Charter
- Mayor to appoint a Blue Ribbon Committee Prescott Park Policy Advisory Committee
- Upon adoption, City Manager to work with organizations with existing agreements to plan for 2017 season.

Examples of City Manager Responsibilities

- day-to-day operations and maintenance of the Park facility ;
- negotiation and implementation of license (i.e. currently known as operating) agreements;
- management of dock operations and reservations Four Tree Island and weddings;
- the development of administrative and personnel structures necessary for the operations;
- general oversight of licensed activities within the Park;
- In coordination with the City's Legal and public safety departments, ensure the enforcement of City policies, ordinances, and compliance with applicable deed restrictions and life, safety, and health codes.

Prescott Park Policy Advisory Committee

- Charge - Using the 2017 Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Committee on the Prescott Park Master Plan as a guide, provide advice to the City Manager with respect to park policies, events, activities, and services in the Park; operations of licensees; serve as a communication forum.
- Make-up should include: member of the City's Trustees of Trust Funds, a City Councilor, two residents of the City (at least one of whom resides in the area surrounding the park), and a member of the City's Cultural Commission, Art-Speak.

Other Recommendations

- City Manager to use agreements in place for calendar year 2017.
- New Policy Advisory Committee appointed as soon as possible for 2017.
- City Council should evaluate Advisory Committee structure in 2017.
- New license agreements should be effective no later than January 1, 2018. City Council approves license agreements.
- Park Improvements shall be planned, funded, and owned by the City of Portsmouth and carried out in conformance with the Master Plan for the Park.

Other Recommendations

- Encourage a variety of formal programs with priority given to visual and performing arts and the City's maritime culture and history.
- BRC PP Committee recommends the City provides and/or permits others to provide amenities, which directly enhance users' experience of Prescott Park as a park; including availability of restrooms and food and refreshments (this does not include alcohol, which is prohibited via Ordinance and deed restriction).
- BRC PP Committee recognizes the value and purpose of open green spaces and urban parks as places of respite, recreation and enjoyment. Maintaining this special status includes limiting commercialization, which unchecked, can disrupt the park atmosphere.

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