

DRAFT 8-16-2019

Town of Stratham

Parks, Areas & Facilities Naming and Dedication Policy

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent approach and procedure to be followed by the Select Board for naming Town owned areas and facilities.

Objective:

Establish a process and set of criteria for approving requests made to the Town regarding naming facilities. Ensure that parks, recreational areas and other Town-owned facilities are easily identified and located. Ensure that given names to Town owned areas and facilities are consistent and reflect positively on Town of Stratham. Encourage public participation in the naming, renaming and dedication of these facilities.

Definition:

Town-owned areas and facilities includes all property assets under the Town of Stratham ownership including, but not limited to buildings, structures, open space, public parks, natural areas and land.

Criteria:

The policy of the Town of Stratham is to name parks, recreation areas and facilities through an adopted process utilizing established criteria emphasizing community values and character, local history, geography, environmental, civics and service to the community.

1. The following criteria shall be used in determining the appropriateness of the naming designation:
 - a. Geographic Location
 - b. Natural Features
 - c. A person or place of historical or cultural significance
 - d. A person, group or feature particularly identified with the land or facility
2. The process to name parks, recreation areas and facilities should proceed at least 12 months after the Town has acquired title to the land and/or formally accepted the dedication.
3. Conditions of property donation as agreed upon by the donor and the Town shall be honored regarding the naming of the parks, recreation areas and facilities subject to these adopted policies.
4. Names that are similar to existing parks, properties or facilities in the Town should not be considered in order to avoid confusion.

5. The Town reserves the right to change the name to maintain consistency with these policies.

Procedure:

- a. A request for naming of a park, recreational area or facility shall be submitted in writing to the Select Board through the Town Administrator.
 - i. The proposed name
 - ii. Reasons for the proposed name
 - iii. Written documentation indicating community support for the proposed name
 - iv. Description/map showing location and boundaries of the park
 - v. If proposing to name a facility within a park, include a description/ map showing the location of the facility.
 - vi. If proposing to rename a park or facility, include justification for changing an established name.
 - vii. If proposing to name a park or facility after and outstanding person, include documentation that describes their contributions to the Town. Written documentation of approval by next of kin to be honored (if available/ possible) is required as part of the proposal.
- b. Those submitting a naming request should show how the proposed name is consistent with the criteria stated in this policy. Town staff will review the proposal for adherence to the stated criteria and authentication of statements relative to contributions in the case of an individual before forwarding to the Select Board. If the request is incomplete, staff will contact the applicant, in writing, and provide them with the opportunity to resubmit as revised request.
- c. The Select Board will offer the opportunity for public input on the proposed naming during a public hearing noticed in accordance with State law. The Public hearing should take place no sooner than two weeks and no later than 6 weeks following the receipt of an accepted application request.
- d. The Select Board will hold a public meeting to discuss the completed request application. At least two votes will be required, the first to accept the application as complete; and the second, to approve or disapprove the recommendation or take some other action. The second vote (to approve or disapprove the request) shall take place at a meeting subsequent to the public hearing in order to permit additional comment to be submitted.
- e. The Select Board may initiate the naming process in accordance with this policy whenever deemed necessary and/ or in the best interest of the Town.
- f. In the absence of any naming requests, the Select Board shall adhere to the criteria stated in this policy in recommendation of name.
- g. The Town Administrator will be responsible for communicating the Select Board's decision in relation to the naming/renaming within two weeks of such a decision.
- h. Following approval of a name by the Select Board, nothing in this policy shall compel any expenditure or capital project related to replacing or creating new signage. The timing, manner and strategy for affixing appropriate signage shall be at the complete discretion of the Select Board.