

East Lyme Parks and Recreation
Regular Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2014

Present: Robert Pfanner
William Willetts
Charles Fenick
Pat Larkin
Roger Nadeau
Jackie Curry
Milan Keser

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
APR 8 2014 AT 3:00 AM/PM
Jesley A. Blais
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Also Present: David Putnam, Director of East Lyme Parks and Recreation
Mark Nickerson, Ex officio
Dave Perry, President of Little League
Jay Venditti, Vice President East Lyme Little League Softball
Rod Tukey, Vice President of Little League

Chairman Pfanner called the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting of March 6, 2014 to order at 7 p.m.

PUBLIC DELEGATIONS.

Mr. Perry reported this is the eighth year he has been involved in the Little League and the third year he has been President.

He stated currently we have four fields and three are Little League fields. We use the lower level fields for practice space. We have a concession stand earning \$20,000 to \$25,000.

Mr. Perry attended Board of Education meetings. There is a possibility some of the fields could be taken.

We had a fire at a loss of \$20,000. Insurance paid \$12,000 and we raised \$8,000 to rebuild. We put in a new batting cage at a cost of \$6,000 and a \$1,000 net. We have worked a lot over the past few years and put a lot of capital into improving the fields. A sponsor donated \$10,000 towards rebuilding.

The numbers of children participating in baseball are dwindling. Currently we have 27 baseball teams, which is four less than last year. We lose thirty youngsters per year. Its a slow game and Lacrosse is over in one hour and the number of participants in Lacrosse is increasing. Mr. Putnam stated thirty years ago we used the same fields and we had 14 teams.

Mr. Putnam stated the parking situation is horrible. He asked what would happen if one field became a parking lot? Mr. Perry replied four fields would be better than a

parking lot because the fields are fenced in. We put lights up and we are still paying a mortgage on it.

Mr. Keser stated if new fields were built ten years from now, you will have a nicer area.

Mr. Tukey asked if the Roxbury Road property were used what would be gained? Mr. Pfanner stated you would have 225 feet of fields and 245 parking spots. You would have tennis, basketball, two tee ball fields and a snack bar. There would be a playground, pavilion and maintenance building with 4,000 feet of walking area. Mr. Perry asked if there would be press boxes? Mr. Putnam replied the plan is only preliminary. Mr. Perry asked if the revenue would be shared in the new plan? Mr. Pfanner replied if it were used by other sports it would be shared.

Mr. Perry reported the summer season is tournament season. We now have revenue from that. We have a huge sponsorship program. We display 200 banners and would like that to continue. Mr. Putnam replied the Town wants ownership of the land, because it would be covered under Town insurance.

Mr. Nadeau stated as the years went by we have had less volunteers.

Mr. Tukey reported Field 3 press box has a Kozlowski sign on it. We would like to move the sign to the new location. Mr. Keser stated you would have a better facility and better fields at the new location.

Mr. Perry stated a lot of Middle School youngsters who play baseball can come right to the present fields after school.

Mr. Perry stated lights are important and the concession stand is of concern.

He stated many individuals use those fields as a Dog Park even though we have signs posted.

Mr. Venditti stated in softball we use Veterans Field and the Utility Field at Bridebrook. We are now part time at Field 4 and use the High School JV field for practice occasionally. We have managed to increase our participants.

Mr. Perry reported we have girls playing on Field 4. Boys and girls play Tee Ball (4-5 year olds) together.

Mr. Venditti reported we have three teams for AA softball, three AAA teams and one junior team. We feel girls should play softball not baseball.

Mr. Perry asked how close is the Roxbury Road property to housing units? Mr. Pfanner showed the location on the plan. He stated right now we have four fields with 21

teams. Parks and Recreation takes care of Veterans Field and the High School practices on it.

Mr. Larkin felt the state has regulations on a Dog Park at a beach. He felt we should have one rule for all beaches. Mr. Keser agreed. He felt it is a health hazard to have dogs on the beach. Most East Lyme residents are opposed to it. Mr. Nadeau felt unless the Town is willing to fine irresponsible dog owners it will not work. He felt if a beach was totally isolated dogs could use it, but when a dog can go on an area where there are youngsters, he did not feel there should be dogs. Mr. Putnam stated Ledge Light is looking for a proposal.

MOTION: Mr. Keser moved to propose that we remain consistent with our other beach areas and not allow dogs at McCook Point Park, Hole in the Wall and Cini Park Niantic Bay Beach from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Seconded by Mr. Larkin. In Favor: Keser, Fenick, Nadeau, Willetts and Larkin. In Opposition: Curry and Pfanner. (5-2) Motion carried.

MOTION: Mr. Fenick moved to have Mr. Putnam locate a Dog Park elsewhere. Seconded by Mrs. Curry. (7-0) Unanimous.

3. MINUTES

a.) Minutes of February 6, 3014 Meeting.

MOTION: Mrs. Curry moved to approve the Parks and Recreation Special Meeting of February 6, 2014, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Keser. (7-0) Unanimous.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

See attached report.

5. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a.) Cini Park/AMTRAK Beach Recommendations Dog Park Area. There was no further discussion on this matter.

b.) Future Park Development. There was no further discussion on this matter.

c.) Boardwalk Construction Update. There was no further discussion on this matter.

7. COMMITTEE REPORTS

The following individuals were recommended for the Service To Youth Award: Al Crossley, Robert Blodgett, Deborah Walsh and Tim Swenson.

MOTION: Mrs. Curry moved to recommend Al Crossley, Robert Blodgett, Deborah Walsh and Tim Swenson to receive the Service to Youth Award. Seconded by Mr. Nadeau. (7-0) Unanimous.

MOTION: Mr. Larkin moved that this Commission approves Al Crossly, Robert Blodgett, Deborah Walsh and Tim Swenson for the Service to Youth Award. Seconded by Mr. Nadeau. (7-0) Unanimous.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Keser asked that Mr. Putnam include a Budget Report for review by this Commission monthly.

Mr. Putnam informed the Commission that Mr. Ball received the New England Sports Manager of the Year award.

9. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mrs. Curry moved to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting of March 6, 2014 at 8:20 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Fenick. (7-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

**Director's Report
March 6, 2014**

McCook Point Park:

- Work crew from Gates cleared a new path from the upper picnic area to the Hole in the Wall Beach to provide for easier access while construction of the Boardwalk is taking place.
- I have received a price quote from Arrow Paper for a used 30x60 foot tent to help with the Pavilion not being in use over the summer. The one year old top and all the framing and tie downs is priced at \$9,975.00. I would like to cover

the cost out of the Special Revenue Fund Special Event \$4,500, \$1,500 passport revenues, \$2,500 from our Miscellaneous Account, \$500 from Park and Field, \$500.00 from \$500.00 Equipment and \$475.00 from Materials.

- I met with the Finance Director about accepting day pass sales at the point of sale for McCook, Hole in Wall and Cini Park. We would like the flexibility to accept credit and debit cards as well. I will be working on an accounting policy for securing daily receipts.
- New signage has been ordered and will be installed this spring for the older Playscapes.

Niantic Bay Beach and Boardwalk:

- Bids for the Boardwalk were opened on Feb. 21st with Weise Construction being the low bidder. The project is going through the appropriation stages with the Boards of Selectman and Finance with a Town meeting scheduled for March 19th. No new information on a start date at this time.
- Dog Area discussions for the beach have continued with Ledge Light, please see provided e-mail. They would like to review a detailed plan if commission approves moving forward.

Athletic Facilities:

- Anticipated opening of the fields is scheduled for Saturday, April 5 (weather dependent)
- Most leagues have provided me with their scheduling needs and I starting to put the master schedule together.

Budget:

- Board of Selectman review was conducted on February, 26, the Board of Finance Review is scheduled for Thursday, March 20. Increase in our budget is related to the staffing of the Niantic Bay Beach and the increase in the minimum wage.

Service to Youth Award:

- Please see provided nominations, we have four worthy candidates. We had no nominations last year.

Miscellaneous:

- Spring Program Brochure will be issued next week.
- Men's Softball Organizational meeting will take place March 18 with season to begin on May 12.

- It has been a tough winter as far as postponements of programs we are still making up classes and will be accepting registrations for most spring programs in the next few weeks.
- Upcoming Special Events include:
 - O’Niantic 5K Road Race on Saturday, March 15 – Hartford Marathon Foundation will be using the Hole in the Wall Parking Lot for race registration and parking.
 - Flanders 5K Road Race on Sunday, April 27
 - Connecticut Hike Day on Saturday, June 7 - Oswegatchie Hills Nature Preserve
 - Celebrate East Lyme on Saturday, July 19