

East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission  
Regular Meeting  
March 12, 2020

Present: Robert Pfanner  
Thomas Beebe  
Roger Nadeau  
Sue Kumro

Absent: Todd Donovan  
Pat Larkin  
Jackie Curry

Also, Present: David Putnam, Director  
Kevin Seery, Ex-Officio  
Joe Smith

FILED

Mar 18 20 20 AT 1:30 AM/PM  
David Putnam  
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Pfanner called the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission regular meeting of March 12, 2020 to order at 7:00 p.m.

A moment of silence was recognized in the honor of Charlie Fenick.

2. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS

Joe Smith from Smith Acres was present and requested the Parks and Recreation Commission consider his proposal to use a portion of town owned property on Roxbury Road for farming of various crops. After some discussion it was requested that Mr. Putnam provide more information to the Commission on any deed restrictions and exactly what portion of the land would be farmed.

3. MINUTES

- a.) Minutes of February 13, 2020. Mr. Pfanner asked for additions, corrections or deletions to the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2020.

MOTION: Mr. Nadeau moved to accept the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting Minutes of February 13, 2020 as presented. Seconded by Ms. Kumro. (4-0) approved.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT (See attached report)

Mr. Putnam had the Commission a proposed Memorandum to Parents, Participants and Staff regarding the suspension of Parks and Recreation Programs due to the Corona Virus.

MOTION: Ms. Kumro moved to approve the Memorandum from Mr. Putnam to Parks and Recreation Participants, Parents and Staff regarding the suspension of all programs offered by the Department until further notice, seconded by Mr. Nadeau. (4-0) approved.

#### 5. EX-OFFICIO REPORT

Mr. Seery updated the Commission on the Town of East Lyme's response to the Corona Virus.

#### 6. COMMUNICATIONS

The Commission reviewed an e-mail from the Hartford Marathon/ Foundation in regard to reducing the fee for the Niantic Bay Triathlon. It was the consensus of the Commission to keep the fees as outlined in previous correspondence.

#### 7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Future Park Development- No further discussion
- b. Miracle League Field – Mr. Putnam gave an update in his Director's Report.
- c. 2020-2021 Budgets – Mr. Putnam reported that his Budget Review with the Board of Finance will be conducted on Monday, March 23, 2020.
- d. 2020-2021 McCook Point Fees – Mr. Putnam reported that the Town will not be responsible for paying the state of CT tax on municipal parking lots. It was determined that our fee is an entry fee and not a parking fee.

#### 8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. By-law revision committee, Director Putnam will submit updated by-laws for approval at the April regular meeting with updated fees.

#### 9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD)

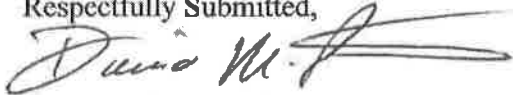
Motion: Mr. Beebe moved to accept Mr. Putnam's recommendations on the Plan of Conservation of Development as outlined and submit to the POCD committee for inclusion. Seconded by Mr. Nadeau (4-0) approved.

- b. Farming Roxbury Road property proposal – this item was discussed under Public Delegations.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Beebe moved to adjourn the Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting of March 12, 2020 7:50 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Nadeau (4-0) approved.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David M. Putnam", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

David M. Putnam, Director

**Director's Report**  
**March 12, 2020**

**McCook Point Park:**

- In consultation with the Finance Director and a representative from the Department of Revenue Services we are not required to pay the tax on municipal parking lots. The fees as listed on my original sheet will go into effect on Wednesday, April 1.
- Upcoming special events – Niantic Bay Boardwalk 5k scheduled for April 26 and Touch a Truck scheduled for May 16<sup>th</sup> will be rescheduled to the fall.
- Ice Cream Vendor proposals will go out shortly.

**Corona Virus:**

- Please see the provided draft memo on programs sponsored by the Parks and Recreation Department on possibly suspending programs. Department Heads met earlier today with Steve Mansfield from the Ledge Light Health District and will be receiving a directive from Ledge Light on Friday.

**Athletic Fields:**

- Fencing project at Veterans Baseball Field is almost complete, the existing backstop has been removed, new fencing fabric added as well as extending the height and width to help with foul balls.
- Remaining work at the Little League Field includes fence protective caps and foul poles, both should be completed in the next week.
- Youth sports are calling regarding usage of the fields, I hope to open early next week, this will be based on weather and Ledge Light recommendations.

**Plan of Conservation and Development:**

- My draft recommendations were provided in your packets, would like any suggestions or additions if necessary. I would like to have Commission's approval on the draft and forward to the Town Planner.

**Budget:**

- Current Operating Budget remains with a modest 2.42% increase, our budget review with the Board of Finance is scheduled for Monday, March 23 at the East Lyme Town Hall.

**Miracle League Field Update:**

- Groundbreaking Ceremony is scheduled for Thursday, March 18 at 4:00 p.m. I would like a representative present from the Commission to be a part of the ceremony.
- Construction started on Monday, February 24, Earth Dynamics has made significant progress, topsoil has been removed, subbase has been approved and gravel compacted on top and drainage dry wells have been installed. We will start weekly progress meetings on Thursday, March 19<sup>th</sup>.
- Memorial Contributions in the name of Charlie Fenick are going to the Miracle League.

## CHAPTER 6: PARKS AND RECREATION

The Town of East Lyme owns and operates a wide array of active and passive recreational facilities as described in the Open Space section of this plan. The diverse array of recreational facilities is complemented by a broad selection of programmed and supervised recreational activities, undertaken by the Parks and Recreation Department designed to appeal to all age groups and interests. The policy set forth in this document is to maintain and enhance existing recreational facilities to meet the ever-increasing needs of the residents and visitors.

### 6.1 CURRENT RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

According to the Parks and Recreation Department, the department has over 200-acres of Recreational space (both passive and active) under their jurisdiction; which includes Parks and Recreation Athletic Fields, Beach Areas, Parks, High School Swimming Pool, Walking Trails, Picnic Areas and Open Space Areas. Of this total; 140 – acres are currently dedicated to active playing fields, which are extremely popular and are used for various organized programs and activities. This results in approximately 700-hours of annual usage per field throughout town. With the addition of the Synthetic Turf Field at the High School the Parks and Recreation Department and Board of Education is working to better the needs of the town's residents. Yet, even with the addition of the Synthetic Turf Field, the town could use an additional synthetic turf field. In addition to the traditional fields and recreation space, East Lyme is fortunate to be a beach front community, which affords the town the ability to operate three (3) beaches, Cini Memorial Park (Niantic Bay Beach), Hole in the Wall Beach and McCook Point Park, the Niantic Bay Boardwalk, mooring areas and boat launches. Since the last POCD the Parks and Recreation Department has made significant improvements at three (3) beach areas regarding restroom facilities, Band Shell, Tent and other amenities. Improvements are still needed to the McCook Point Park walkways, playground areas and picnic pavilion.

Historic and conventional standards for minimum park and recreation areas range from 10 to 15 acres per 1,000-people, depending on the reference source. Using these conventional standards, a desirable park and recreation acreage would be approximately 200 to 285 acres. These areas would include playgrounds, fields, parks, walking paths, recreational complexes and special purpose areas such as beaches and the boardwalk. The acres per population-type standard should be given less weight than the desires and resources of the community and the difference in priorities applied to open space by different communities should be considered. Community input has consistently indicated a desire for expanded municipal open space and recreational land acquisition throughout the community of East Lyme.

### 6.1.1 Recommendations

It is recommended that both the Parks and Recreation Department and Board of Education update their playing field inventories and develop a plan to address needs for locations of new fields and management of existing fields, such as investigating the construction of an additional synthetic turf field(s).

To provide park and recreational facilities that meet the current and future needs of residents, which includes enhancing existing recreational fields and exploring the possibility of additional passive and active recreational facilities the following recommendations are being made:

- Continue to recognize the need for additional recreation fields. The Parks and Recreation Department should identify and develop locations, which can increase the inventory of multi-use recreational playing fields; such as Roxbury Road, Peretz Park @ Bridebrook and areas north of Interstate 95. These areas should be identified and developed in conjunction with Chapter 5: Open Space, Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources.
- Continue to recognize the need for additional passive recreational areas. The Parks and Recreation Department should identify and develop locations which can increase the passive recreational facilities of the town; such as upgrading the Darrow Pond property, the Bobrow property and explore the possibility of developing an area exclusively available for dogs to roam off leash in a maintained area for developing a park setting preferably on open space land. These areas should be identified and developed in conjunction with Chapter 5: Open Space, Natural, Historical and Cultural Resources.
- The Parks and Recreation Department should update playing field inventories and usage to develop recommendations for maintenance and long-term improvements, such as investigating the use of an additional synthetic turf field(s).
- The Parks and Recreation Department should investigate improving the Darrow Pond property to include upgrades to the Hiking Trails, Handicap Accessible Canoe/Kayak Launches for access to the Pond, Designated Trails for Biking, Restroom Facility, Disc Golf, Picnic Areas and other passive recreational activities.
- The Parks and Recreation Department should investigate improvements to McCook Point Park to include; a new Playground Area to replace one of the existing areas that was erected in the early to mid 1990's. Increased usage of the Pavilion and the Tent at McCook from various groups and outings places a need for an additional covered Pavilion area.
- The Parks and Recreation Department should investigate additional parking solutions at all three (3) of their beach locations.

- The Parks and Recreation Department should investigate the feasibility of transient docking for boaters at Cini Park along the Niantic River. The department should also update the Canoe/Kayak launch to make it more user friendly for people with disabilities.

Mr. Beebe

Mr. N. Howard

4-0