

East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
December 10, 2020  
Via Zoom

Present: Jackie Curry  
Todd Donovan  
Thomas Beebe  
Pat Larkin  
Roger Nadeau  
Sue Kumro

FILED

DEC 18, 20 20 AT 1:30 AM/PM  
*Brooke Thomas ATC*  
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

Absent: Robert Pfanner

Also Present: Kevin Seery, Ex officio member of the Board of Selectmen  
David Putnam, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Rob Lemire

**1. CALL TO ORDER** Acting Chairlady Curry called the December 10, 2020 meeting to order at 7:12 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

**2. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS.** Mr. Putnam reported he met with Mr. Lemire and discussed whether or not East Lyme would be interested in Disc Golf in East Lyme. Mr. Lemire gave Mr. Putnam a tour of the Killingworth facility. Mr. Putnam felt this would be a great use at Darrow Pond.

Mr. Lemire reported he has been a Cubmaster for eight years and the father of four children. He noticed some youngsters were not interested in sports but needed to build-up their self-confidence. He found that Disc Golf was good for these youngsters. Disc Golf is an 18-hole course and takes an acre a hole. He showed Commission members a power point presentation. He felt it was the fastest growing sport in America. It is a perfect social distancing sport. It is an activity that can take place year-round. It can be played at any age. It's a great sport for families and retirees. The PDGA has 46,000 active members. Five thousand individuals a year join it. They are able to compete in tournaments. There are 260 active members in Connecticut. There are 28 courses and six under construction as of last year. He showed a map of courses and felt there are more needed in this area. He felt it is a great opportunity to bring it to the shoreline community. In Killingworth it brought friends together. Its about practice in power. There are all different kinds of discs. Each are used for different shots. He showed the basket used for Disc Golf. With this activity large healthy trees are not removed. He showed tee boxes and narrow fairways. They try to use the key features of the area. There are 10 different ways you can throw a disc. You can use different baskets in different ways. He showed a Disc Golf course. The key feature is safety from the current hiking paths. There has never been an accident in the state. He is in a community with disc golfers who have been playing for twenty years. The cost of a Disc Golf course is about \$20,000. It's an activity where there can be 75 people playing at the same time and it needs very little upkeep and maintenance. There may be some mowing needed. Ongoing maintenance of tee paths costs less than \$1,000. Mr. Putnam asked do you use all twenty acres? Mr. Lemire replied you can integrate other activities within that area with good planning. Mr. Lemire offered his services to Mr. Putnam free of charge. We could design a course. Mr. Larkin asked is there a cost to play? Mr. Lemire replied most courses are free and some pay to play. Mr. Beebe asked if the town would be purchasing baskets and other materials needed? Mr. Lemire replied the baskets are \$6,500, and the tee pads \$10,000 to

\$15,000. Mr. Beebe asked have you experienced any vandalism? Mr. Lemire replied they have padlocks on the baskets. Only a lost and found was broken into. As far as destroying property and baskets they have not had any problems. Mr. Beebe asked how much maintenance will volunteers do? Mr. Lemire replied a community of local disc golfers would take control of ongoing maintenance. Mr. Beebe asked if this would be a problem because of union workers? Mr. Putnam felt his maintenance workers would be grateful for the help. Mr. Putnam stated he was impressed when he toured the Killingworth Disc Golf course. He could tell the pride that went into it. Mr. Donovan asked Mr. Lemire if he has played with his own children? Mr. Lemire replied he has gone with his own family. Mr. Donovan asked about baskets. Mr. Lemire stated all tee baskets are different. The cost varies. Mr. Donovan asked how Mr. Lemire would rank Darrow's Pond? Mr. Lemire felt it was beautiful and has open fields. There are awesome growth trees and key features. There is a pond with signature conditions. You have trees defining the fairway. Mr. Donovan asked how are our features rated. Mr. Lemire felt it would depend on the design. He felt it is great for kids to be outdoors. He would hope to have towns compete. He was asked what would be done about stumps? Mr. Lemire stated the stumps would stay put. He was asked how long it would take to build it? He replied it took him and two men a year. If we had equipment it could be done in seven months. Ms. Curry asked where is the Disc Golf course in Salem? He replied north of the roundabout. He added time is spent in the design, because you have to deal with different seasons in the year. It also takes time to figure out where the features are and where you can throw safely. Your Master Plan for the property has to be known before you can come up with a design. Mr. Beebe asked from the commission's standpoint to your proposal what would be the next step. Mr. Putnam felt we would have to continue to have discussions. He felt it would be a great amenity. He was very impressed with it. Mr. Donovan asked can we get a return on our investment over time? Mr. Lemire stated you can have tournaments that bring in money. With PDGA proceeds 10% to 15% goes back to the course. Mr. Putnam felt we can have sponsors. He would like it to be a free event. Mr. Lemire added in Killingworth its Parks & Recreation does four-week sessions at \$50. East Lyme's population increases in the summer and tourists are looking for local activities and can pay to play. Mr. Putnam asked if there were any concerns? Mr. Seery stated this is still not a Parks and Recreation area. Mostoway Road is very narrow. He suggested having discussions with residents in that area. He suggested also having discussions with the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Putnam felt a Master Plan for the area is needed.

**3. MINUTES.** Ms. Curry asked for corrections, deletions or additions to the November 12, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION (1):** Mr. Beebe moved to approve the November 12, 2020 Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (6-0) Unanimous.

**4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.** (See attached Report).

**5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT** Mr. Seery reported the Town Hall building is closed until further notice.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS.** There were no new communications.

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a.) COVID-19 Updates. (See Director's Report)

b.) Parks and Recreation budget review. Mr. Putnam revised the budget incorporating this Commission's input. It now has a 1.4% increase. The union contract raise in wages is a 2.25% increase. Mr. Putnam did a salary survey and East Lyme is middle to low as far as the Assistant Director's salary. Ms. Curry suggested that the layout for the Beach

Enterprise Fund begin further down the page so that it can be on one page. Mr. Larkin asked how much does this Commission do for historical houses? Mr. Putnam replied they incur expenses of \$4,000 to \$5,000 per year. Mr. Seery added you will have the Police Complex added to your charges. Mr. Putnam felt an additional Maintainer is needed.

**MOTION (2): Ms. Kumro moved to approve the Beach Enterprise fees, as submitted. Seconded by Mr. Beebe. (6-0) Unanimous.**

**MOTION (3): Mr. Larkin moved to approve the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission Fiscal Year 2022 Budget in the amount of \$775,667. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (6-0) Unanimous.**

#### **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS.**

a.) Charlie Fenick Recognition Committee. Mr. Putnam plans to reach out to the Veterans Council to plan to recognize Charlie Fenick. Mr. Nadeau invited Commission members to work with him on recognizing Charlie Fenick.

#### **9. NEW BUSINESS**

a.) Election of Officers for 2021. Ms. Curry asked for nominations for Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021.

**MOTION (4): Ms. Kumro moved to nominate Tom Beebe as Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021. Seconded by Mr. Larkin.**

**MOTION (5): Mr. Nadeau moved to nominate Bob Pfanner as Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021. Motion withdrawn.**

There were no other nominations for Chairman.

**A vote was taken and Mr. Beebe was unanimously elected Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021.**

Ms. Curry asked for nominations for Vice Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021.

**MOTION (6): Mr. Beebe moved to nominate Pat Larkin as Vice Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021. Seconded by Ms. Kumro.**

There were no other nominations for Vice Chairman.

**A vote was taken and Mr. Larkin was unanimously elected Vice Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021.**

Ms. Curry asked for nominations for Treasurer of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021.

**MOTION (7): Mr. Larkin moved to nominate Jackie Curry as Treasurer of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021. Seconded by Ms. Kumro.**

There were no other nominations for Treasurer.

**A vote was taken and Ms. Curry was unanimously elected Treasurer of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2021.**

A suggestion was made to recognize Mr. Pfanner who has served as Chairman of this Commission for a long time. Mr. Seery suggested to have a testimonial for Mr. Pfanner next spring.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (8): Mr. Beebe moved to adjourn the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting of December 10, 2020 at 8:30 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Kumro. (6-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gherzi, Recording Secretary

**Director's Report  
December 10, 2020**

**McCook Point Park/Beaches:**

- In my budget submission on page 12 is my recommendations for beach entry fees to the 2021 summer season.
- I will provide the commission with my recommendations for vendor fees at our January meeting (McCook, Cini Park and Peretz Park).
- All restroom facilities have been closed for the winter. Porta-potties have been placed at each end of the Boardwalk.
- The reverse Niantic Light Parade will be held on Saturday, Dec. 12<sup>th</sup> with a rain date of Sunday Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>. Committee has worked hard to provide a safe event. A huge thanks to Dominion Energy for sponsoring the parade again this year.

**Staffing:**

- One of our maintenance staff members tested positive for COVID, in an abundance of caution the remaining maintenance staff will be quarantined for 14 days per Ledge Light recommendations.

**Athletic Facilities:**

- All restroom facilities have been winterized and closed for the winter.
- Fencing project is ongoing at the Veterans Memorial Park Softball Field. Chain link fencing will be replaced along the baselines from foul pole to foul pole including the backstop and dugout areas. Split rail fencing has been installed along the southerly entrance to the park.
- We will continue to monitor CDC and State of CT guidelines for the possible resumption of play for spring sports.

**Darrow Pond:**

- Thank you to Rob Lemire for his presentation tonight on Disc Golf, I think the Darrow Pond area is a perfect location for this sport.

**Budget:**

- Budget package was included in an e-mail sent out yesterday, with Commission approval I will submit to the First Selectman and Finance Director in the next few days.

**Programs:**

- As of today all Town Municipal Building are closed to the general public. Public will need to make an appointment for in person meetings or business and will be escorted into the building. We are looking to go virtual with programming starting after the first of the year. Programming staff is working on creative ideas for this winter.

**Miracle League Field:**

- Fundraising is ongoing for Phase II, To Design will be submitting plans to the Zoning Office shortly for approval on the restroom and playscape facilities.