

East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 12, 2021

Present: Thomas Beebe, Chairman
Jackie Curry
Sue Kumro
Pat Larkin
Rob Tukey

Absent: Todd Donovan
Kathleen Kovalanka

Also Present: Kevin Seery, Ex officio member of the Board of Selectmen
David Putnam, Director of Parks and Recreation
Camile Alberti
Rachel Baer

FILED
Aug 18 20 21 AT 3:20 AM/PM
Karin Helm
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

1. CALL TO ORDER Chairman Beebe called the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting of August 12, 2021 to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

2. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS. There was no discussion at this time.

3. MINUTES. Mr. Beebe asked for corrections, deletions or additions to the May 13, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes of the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission.

MOTION (1): Ms. Curry moved to approve the May 13, 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Parks and Recreation Commission, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Kumro. Messrs. Tukey and Beebe abstained from voting. (3-0-2) Motion carried.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT. (See attached Report). Commission members reviewed email from David Palinkas. There was a consensus of the Commission to allow no swimming at the entrance to the beach at Cini Park between the jetty and railroad bridge due to the current and that only fishing is allowed.

5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT Mr. Seery reported masks will need to be worn beginning tomorrow in all town buildings. The Board of Selectmen will set a meeting date to vote on the Selectmen's suggestion for using the American Rescue Fund funds. Dev's Restaurant opened on Main Street. It was felt it was well done. A 16-year-old Town resident broke the Triathlon record by two minutes. The High School field will have a device to see how well it drains. The field will be cleared out, drainage will be put in to make a level playing field. They have \$120,000 set aside to fix it. The Planning Commission reviewed an application for recreational marijuana on Colton Road. The Town will receive 3% tax revenue from its sales. There are many restrictions on how it can be used. A study will be done on the pool roof to determine what needs to be done.

6. COMMUNICATIONS.

a.) E-mail from Rachel Baer regarding Park policy on balloon releases. The Commission reviewed Rachel Baer proposal regarding limiting balloon releases from Town owned property, including parks, beaches and recreational fields for environmental reasons. Ms. Kumro asked does it happen a lot? Ms. Baer replied each time she is kayaking she removes them from the water. Ms. Baer felt balloons kill countless animals and balloon pieces are found on the beach. She distributed a colored flyer regarding the impact of balloons on the environment. She suggested that individuals instead plant a tree, a garden, purchase a bench or make a donation to a charity rather than release balloons. Mr. Seery

suggested reviewing ordinances used by other towns. Ms. Kumro felt staff should be advised that no balloon release is allowed. Mr. Putnam asked how will it be enforced? Ms. Kumro suggested that the flyer be attached to any request for rental of the pavilion.

MOTION (2): Ms. Curry moved to prohibit the release of balloons in East Lyme Parks and Recreation parks for environmental reasons. Seconded by Mr. Tukey. (5-0) Unanimous.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a.) COVID-19 Updates. Mr. Putnam reported beginning tomorrow anyone coming into Town buildings are required to wear masks. Plexiglass will remain up. Per CDC and the state no masks are required outdoors.

b.) Summer/Beach Season. (See attached Director's Report).

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS.

a.) Darrow Pond (Todd). Mr. Putnam reported the Committee met early in June. The jurisdiction of that property has not been given to Parks and Recreation. We had a survey done. If the Board of Selectmen determines to have 100 acres under our jurisdiction, it would help us to determine what can be done there. A Master Plan for that property is needed. 200' acres are for conservation. He felt the recreational opportunities on that property are different from what we now have. Mr. Putnam submitted a proposal to the Selectmen. Mr. Larkin stated we are now cutting the grass and emptying the trash.

9. NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Kumro reported the woman who takes care of the flowers in the parks is paid by Parks and Recreation. She has done a great job. She has suggested that the fountain be replaced with a water bottle filler.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (3): Ms. Kumro moved to adjourn the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting of August 12, 2021 at 8:00 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Curry. (5-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

**Director's Report
August 12, 2021**

Staffing:

- Our new Program Coordinator Hannah Corrigan started on Monday, June 7, she has done an outstanding job to date.
- Carol Rossiter retired on June 30.
- With the approval of the budget for 21-22 we will be hiring a F/T Maintainer II as of January 1, 2022.
- Board of Finance recently approved a F/T Wellness Coordinator and P/T Therapist position.

McCook Point Park/Beaches:

- Beach Revenue Comparisons over the last three summers:
 - Thru Aug. 12, 2021 \$230,527
 - Thru Aug. 12, 2020 \$139,737 difference of \$90,790
 - Thru June 12, 2019 \$200,622 difference of \$29,905
- Season passes issued as of August 12:
 - Resident – 1,678
 - Resident Senior – 1,866
 - Resident Handicap – 233
 - Non - Resident – 654 (revenue for Non-Resident season passes to date is \$79,115)
- Issue has arisen at the Cini Park entrance to the beach between the jetty and railroad bridge, we have fenced off and signed the area as a restricted area because of the dangerous currents for swimmers. This has impacted the fisherman who would like to use the area.
- July 4th Weekend was a complete rainout.
- Lifeguards have done an outstanding job and looks like we will have coverage for most of the summer for all three beaches.
- Entire beach crew has done a great job especially with our special events.
 - Wednesday and Friday concerts have been well attended
 - Niantic Bay Triathlon was held August 8 with little impact.
 - Theater Under the Shell concluded on August 8.
 - EL Library has been conducting their summer shows on Tuesday nights in the Band Shell.

Charlie's Race:

- We made a presentation to the Fenick Family officially naming the race after Charlie, thank you to Tom, Jackie, and Pat for attending.

Athletic Facilities:

- Fall leagues have started with Youth Football and Soccer, games start around Labor Day weekend.

Programs:

- Playground Program had approximately 200 kids enrolled compared to close 275 in a normal year. Staff did a great job handling all the recommendations.

Events Magazine:

- Fall edition will be distributed later this month.