

East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 10, 2022

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2022 DEC -5 P 3:33


TOWN CLERK

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

Also Present: Jerry Lokken, Director of Parks and Recreation
Dan Cunningham, Ex officio

Absent: Kathleen Kovalanka

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

1. CALL TO ORDER Chairman Beebe called the November 10, 2022 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS. There were no guests.

3. MINUTES

a) Minutes of October 13, 2022 Meeting. Mr. Beebe asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the October 13, 2022 East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes.

MOTION (1): Ms. Curry moved to approve the October 13, 2022 East Lyme Parks and Recreation Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Larkin. Mr. Donovan abstained from voting. (5-0-1) Motion carried.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT. (See attached Report). Mr. Lokken reported we interviewed maintainers today. He plans to offer the maintainer position next week.

Three individuals applied for the Foreman's position. The position is being advertised in professional organizations, on the town's website, and through the Golf Course Superintendent's Association. He is looking for an individual with skills equal to the person that left.

5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT Mr. Cunningham reported the Board of Selectmen voted to purchase a new water heater and pick-up truck for the school system. It will be forwarded to the Board of Finance.

Three recycle containers have been purchased with money from the nip recycling funds. The First Selectman will choose where they will go.

The Charter Revision Commission is moving forward. They had a Public Hearing. He recommended anyone who is interested to attend its meetings.

Millstone had a drill a few weeks ago and it went very well.

The Public Safety Building project has been closed out and completed. There will be an Open House at the Public Safety Building.

6. COMMUNICATIONS.

a.) Miracle League Agreement Review. Mr. Larkin asked what is the agreement with the Miracle League? Mr. Lokken stated as we move forward, we will include the Miracle League in reserving fields. The Agreement outlines who has what responsibilities. Parks and Recreation can schedule after school activities at the Miracle League. Mr. Larkin asked is Parks and Recreation responsible for maintaining it? Mr. Lokken replied we are responsible for bathrooms. We are responsible for repairs, based on available resources. The property belongs to the Board of Education. We are scheduling it. Mr. Lokken stated he plans to charge a rental fee.

Mr. Lokken added we received another piece of communication from the Public Trust stating that the sculpture is on hold.

Mr. Lokken informed the Commission that the Youth Services Commission met prior to this meeting. Mr. Larkin stated he has been a member of Youth Services Commission since 2006 and Ms. Kovalanka is also a member. The Youth Services Commission has had a difficult time getting new members. Since the Charter Revision Commission has been formed, we may be able to recommend that Parks and Recreation and Youth Services Commissions be joined together. We need a body to serve as the Youth Services Commission to be eligible for state grants. Mr. Larkin reported that members of the Youth Services Commission would be willing to step aside if the Parks and Recreation Commission took over responsibility. Prior to forming the Youth Services Commission, Youth Services was a 501(3c). Mr. Larkin stated it would need to be changed in the Town Charter. The Youth Services Commission agreed to keep it going this year and it can change thereafter. The Youth Services budget is a part of the overall Parks and Recreation budget. Funding for Youth Services programs is in the Special Revenue Fund and it has run a deficit over the years. Mr. Larkin added everyone knows Youth Services needs support. Mr. Cunningham suggested that members attend meetings of the Charter Revision Committee. Mr. Larkin stated he attended one of their meetings last week. Mr. Larkin volunteered to present the suggestion to the Charter Revision Commission.

MOTION (2): Mr. Larkin moved to recommend to the Charter Revision Commission to merge Youth Services and the Parks and Recreation Commission. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (6-0) Unanimous.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a.) McCook Tent/Pavilion. Mr. Lokken reported there has been no movement on the pavilion. Mr. McDowell looked into the cost and style. There is interest in a pavilion rather than a tent. If we get funding for a pavilion we will ensure that it is placed in an area of the park that we have the ability to build it on. The deed for the property has restrictions that we must conform to.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Darrow Pond (Todd) Mr. Donovan reported we have new life on Darrow Pond. Mr. Lokken distributed information to the Commission. He added we awarded a contract with FHI Studios. They are ready to begin work and attend a public meeting to see what issues individuals have. Mr. Beebe suggested using information from the survey.

b) Pickle Ball (Sue) Ms. Kumro reported we are getting an estimate on building four Pickle Ball courts at Bridebrook. She would like to get it on the Capital Improvement budget. Presently they are going to Lyme Shores, using the tennis courts and Community Center.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a.) Hiring Authority

a. Motion to delegate the authority to hire personnel for the Parks and Recreation Department to the Director of Parks and Recreation.

MOTION (3): Mr. Tukey moved to delegate the authority to hire personnel for the Parks and Recreation Department to the Director of Parks and Recreation. Seconded by Mr. Larkin. (6-0) Unanimous.

Mr. Lokken informed the Commission the Town Clerk requested the 2023 meeting schedule for the Parks and Recreation Commission.

MOTION (4): Ms. Kumro moved that the Parks and Recreation Commission meet in 2023 on the second Thursday of each month, except for July when there will be no meeting. Seconded by Ms. Curry. (6-0) Unanimous.

b.) Parks Rules and Fees Review. Mr. Lokken presented a proposed revision of park rules to Commissioners. There was discussion on several items included in the rules, but the overall objective is to make them more simple and understandable. Commissioners will need to review them and send any suggestions to Mr. Lokken who will assemble another draft for next month. Mr. Beebe asked Mr. Lokken to put together an estimate of how simplified fees would affect revenue production. Mr. Lokken will present information comparing revenue from last year with what revenue would be for the same sales using proposed fees.

10. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (5): Mr. Tukey moved to adjourn the East Lyme Parks and Recreation November 10, 2022 Meeting at 8:35 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Curry. (6-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary



TOWN OF EAST LYME PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

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Monthly Report November, 2022

Community Collaborations



The Department supported the Holiday Stoll event that attracted hundreds of people to downtown Niantic. Parks and Recreation contributes to the event by setting up the holiday tree in the green, assisting Niantic Main Street with equipment, and we providing “Magical Strolling Elves” for the event. The elves will return in a few weeks to perform at the magic show.

Currently, we have 47 participants enrolled for the Holiday Lights Parade, which is right on target for the event.

Professional Development

Recreation Staff members attended the annual Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association conference and attended educational sessions, met with vendors and networked with other professionals. Staff members will be working to implement best practices and other good ideas gleaned from the conference.

Social Equity

The Department collaborates with Groton Parks and Recreation to host monthly Dances Without Limits. Adults from the area come to enjoy a night of dancing with a DJ, snacks and socialization. This is an event many look forward to each month, and it is an opportunity for adults with disabilities to enjoy a night of socialization. Various staff members help to staff the event and we also have student volunteers from East Lyme High School.



Meeting Customer Demands

Our Ski Club Program has received overwhelming interest post pandemic. We've filled the program in 2022 and 2023, and the primary factor limiting us from providing opportunity for even more youth, is attracting chaperones. We have a number of youths on the waiting list and as we add chaperones, we'll be able to accommodate more. For the first time this year, we are offering apparel at a separate cost, for those who wanted hoodies, long sleeves, or t-shirts.

On Election Day, we offered two cycling opportunities. The first was a leisurely ride from McCook Point Park out and around Black Point and the beach neighborhoods. Staff members were joined by several bikers, all of retirement age, and they had a lovely time talking programs and how to make cyclists feel safer while on the road.

The second cycling program was a "School's out Mountain Bike Ride" at Rocky Neck State Park. Our club rides ended due to decreasing daylight, but this was an opportunity for youth to spend their day off from school outside. While Rocky Neck provides a place for us to meet, these bikers are emphatic about a Bicycle Playground/Pumptrack included in the Darrow Pond property plan.

Updates

Cooperative Projects

- Little League Field 4 fence – Hayes volunteered and removed the old dugouts on Field 4 and we're working with a company to install chain-link fenced dugouts.
- Little League Field 2 - irrigation funded primarily by Little League was installed.
- Little League Field 3 sod – We've identified a vendor to replace infield sod on the field and work will begin in December. ELP&R and LL are sharing the cost.
- A new flag pole was installed in Liberty Green funded by the East Lyme Public Trust.

Department Staffing

- A new Park Maintainer started on December 1.
- The search for a Parks Foreman is continuing.