

East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
December 8, 2022

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EAST LYME, CT

2022 DEC 28 P 12:47

*Carroll Hill*  
TOWN CLERK

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

Absent: Rob Tukey

Also Present: Jerry Lokken, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Joanna Moore  
Jennifer Brush  
Heather Tukey  
Julie Gallo  
Nikki Buzzelli  
Dianne Jenn-Page

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

**1. CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Beebe called the December 8, 2022 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS.** Ms. Moore, as a representative of Pickleball, requested that Parks and Recreation in its budget request include funding to build Pickleball courts next year. As a Physical Therapist she knows how good it is for the community socially as well as getting outdoors. Ms. Kumro stated she has seen support for this but funding is needed. Mr. Larkin stated this request will go into the Capital Budget. Ms. Moore said players play all year round. Mr. Larkin stated when the group first came to this Commission they informed us they would fundraise. Ms. Moore suggested charging a fee for participants.

Ms. Buzzelli as a member of the East Lyme Senior Class Committee reported that the East Lyme Senior Party for the last 38 years has provided a safe drug and alcohol party for all high school seniors. The party is headed up by volunteers and it costs \$30,000 a year for one night. She asked that they be insured under the town's insurance policy. Mr. Beebe asked whether the group could carry its own insurance. Ms. Buzzelli thought it could be under the town's umbrella. Mr. Beebe stated the need for organizations to be treated fairly. Ms. Curry asked if you could have a special rider for that night. Ms. Fenn-Page thought there would be no extra cost if it was a Parks and Recreation rider. Mr. Beebe stated First Selectman Seery is checking on how the Town's insurance carrier might view it.

**3. MINUTES**

a) Minutes of November 10, 2022 Meeting. Mr. Beebe asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the November 10, 2022 East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes.

**MOTION (1):** Mr. Larkin moved to approve the November 10, 2022 East Lyme Parks and Recreation

**Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Kumro. Ms. Kivalanka abstained from voting. (5-0-1) Motion carried.**

**4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.** (See attached Report). Mr. Lokken reported he has hired a new Park Maintainer and he is continuing to interview for the Foreman's position.

Whether or not the Parks and Recreation can be combined with Youth Services is being reviewed by the Town Attorney.

The Little League volunteers are helping to upgrade the fields. Ms. Curry asked whether or not it is a good idea to sod the fields in December? She was informed it is not too late to sod them.

Mr. Lokken reported the large flagpole came down today. He has been asked by several individuals for pieces of the flagpole.

Mr. Lokken reviewed the budget request for 2023/2024 relative to where we stand and what we ask for. He reported COVID was hard on the Special Revenue Fund. The Parks and Recreation fund balance was less than \$40,000. It is desired to have 10% of the annual expenses in the fund balance. This will need to be addressed in the budget for next year. He suggested considering the following options:

1. Eliminating the \$10,000 payment to the General Fund every year.
2. Parks and Recreation pays for custodial services in the Community Center on Saturdays. He feels this should be taken care of through the General Fund.
3. Regarding Cini Park, the town receives lease payments from the commercial fishing operations. He will ask if revenue from lease payments can help fund the parking and restrooms at Cini Park
4. He would like to ask for two lawn mowers and an automatic line painter in the Capital Plan, funds to start construction of enhancements at Darrow Pond, Pickleball courts at Peretz Park, and an additional vehicle to be used for beach operations and recreation staff.
5. We will also try to purchase a raft replacement for McCook Point Park.

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Mr. Lokken intends to request the Youth Services/Preventive Coordinator to become a full-time position.

We currently have several employees spending time cleaning restroom facilities. He may propose to bring in a cleaning service to take care of this. Our parks maintainer staff have many other chores to take care of and it would save us from adding another position.

In terms of staffing, he plans to request an upgraded position to handle beach operations/park project position and to request a new position to do events and community outreach.

**5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT** Mr. Lokken was asked to report for Mr. Cunningham who was unable to attend. The composting trash cans are being worked on. The Board of Selectmen has asked commissions to review the Ethics Commission.

Mr. Larkin reported the change to combine Parks and Recreation with Youth Services does not have to go through Charter Revision.

Members of the Commission felt the Holiday Stroll was very well done.

## **6. COMMUNICATIONS.**

a.) Letter dated November 19, 2022 was received from the East Lyme High School Senior Class Party Committee.

**MOTION (2): Ms. Kumro moved to discuss insurance for the East Lyme High School Senior Class Party. Seconded by Ms. Curry. (6-0) Unanimous.**

## **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a.) Park Rules and Fees Review. Mr. Lokken reviewed comments from Mr. Larkin and Ms. Curry. Mr. Lokken suggested that resident be defined. Mr. Larkin suggested an individual who is eligible to vote. Mr. Donovan suggested asking First Selectman Seery.

Mr. Lokken referred to state leash laws and suggested assuring that they are observed in town. Mr. Donovan asked what about service dogs. Mr. Lokken stated we can only ask what service the animal provides.

Mr. Lokken asked if the Commission is satisfied that the parks are open from sunrise to sunset. Mr. Beebe and Ms. Kumro suggest locking the restroom facilities but that there was no need to close parks.

Mr. Lokken suggested adding an item that says the Commission sets rental, parking and other fees but the Director can modify them based on the best interests of the Department. Ms. Kovalanka felt the Director knows more than this commission on the needs for his department. Any dissatisfied citizens have the right to bring their issue to the Commission. Ms. Kumro stated banners and signs should be taken down after an event. It was suggested that there would be no signs allowed unless the Director approves it. Banners are acceptable. Mr. Larkin felt fees should be reviewed yearly.

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) Darrow Pond (Todd) Mr. Donovan reported we had a Zoom meeting to develop a plan. Mr. Lokken stated the Committee gave the consultant information. The Committee felt a draft plan is needed prior to receiving public input.

b) Pickle Ball (Sue) Ms. Kumro suggested that this group have a Chairman and engage in fundraising.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

a) Batter up Baseball Camp fees. Memo dated November 17, 2022 was received from Bill Buscetto regarding fees for its camp. Mr. Donovan reported for over 30 years East Lyme youngsters and youngsters from other towns have enjoyed this camp. Donations are made to Little League and given as scholarships to East Lyme students. Ms. Kovalanka asked is there much maintenance for this event? Mr. Lokken replied the restrooms need to be cleaned, trash needs to be removed and there is wear and tear on the fields. Consensus was to allow Mr. Lokken to work out a fee with Mr. Buscetto.

b.) Park Tour. Mr. Lokken suggested that the Commission tour East Lyme's parks and members expressed interest once the weather get better.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (3): Mr. Donovan moved to adjourn the East Lyme Parks and Recreation  
December 8, 2022 Meeting at 9:15 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Lokken.  
(6-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary