

East Lyme Parks Recreation Commission  
May 11, 2023  
Regular Meeting Minutes

Present: Thomas Beebe, Chairman  
Pat Larkin  
Sue Kumro  
Kathleen Kovalanka  
Todd Donovan  
Rob Tukey

Absent: Jackie Curry

Also Present: Jerry Lokken, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Dan Cunningham, Ex-officio  
Marianne Malerba,  
Richard Wu  
Ron and Darlene Stevens  
John Kelsey

Caullin M. Malerba  
TOWN CLERK

2023 MAY 15 P 12:00

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
EAST LYME, CT

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

**1. CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Thomas Beebe called the May 11, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**2. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS.** Mr. Stevens informed the Commission he was the previous owner of the Niantic Inn and came to this meeting because the new owners had discussion with this Commission about beach passes.

He feels Niantic is a unique and wonderful community. Scallops and fishing have been in our history. He added the history and direction of East Lyme is very important to him. Fishing has died and now tourism is bringing people to East Lyme. We now have the Boardwalk and Cini Park. He suggests that the town keeps its tradition.

He felt the Niantic Inn is unique because it has parking. He feels \$75 for one beach pass for one individual is unreasonable. In the past the beach passes covered four people. He asked that this Commission consider changing the fee.

Mr. Beebe stated he appreciates the business you bring in and the money spent at shops and restaurants. We have to be fair to everyone.

Mr. Kelsey stated beach passes were available in the past for KOA. Some of the campers have vehicles and drive to the beach. He also has a commercial parking pass because some campers do not have a car. We have free access to Rocky Neck. Mr. Beebe reported we instituted walk-in passes. A one-hundred-dollar parking pass should cover a family for the entire summer. Mr. Kelsey asked that this Commission reinstate commercial parking passes.

**3. MINUTES**

a) Minutes of April 20, 2023 Meeting. Mr. Beebe asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the April 20, 2023 East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes.

**MOTION (1): Mr. Larkin moved to approve the April 20, 2023 East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Kovalanka. Ms. Kumro abstained from voting. (5-0-1) Motion carried.**

#### **4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.**

Mr. Lokken reported he has hired a new Program Coordinator. On Monday he will have a new full-time Parks Maintainer.

Mr. Larkin asked when will beach passes go into effect? Mr. Lokken replied the Saturday before Memorial Day. We operate weekends until school lets out. After that we will have daily operation.

#### **5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT**

Mr. Cunningham reported the Charter Revision process is moving along. They suggest a 4-year term for the First Selectman. They wish to keep a First Selectman rather than Administrative Officer. They are considering changing the Referendum, because it costs a lot to conduct it. How the Charter Revision is conducted is controlled by the state. Mr. Larkin asked has the Charter Revision looked at the correct type of government. Do they wish to keep the Board of Selectmen and First Selectmen not a Town Manager? Mr. Cunningham stated he did not know.

Seventy-three percent of water meters have been replaced by meter readings that go directly into the Town Hall. The water tank we have on Boston Post Road is being re-habed and coming in under budget. The Water & Sewer Commission has been discussing its capacity.

As of July 10, there will be the following new hours for the Town Hall: Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and a half day on Friday. The Senior Center wishes to keep the regular hours.

#### **6. COMMUNICATIONS.**

Letter dated May 9, 2023 from Zachary Ament, President of East Lyme Little League, regarding tournament season and Little League's concern that the fields will not be returned in the same condition as received. Little League requests that the town require a deposit of a minimum of \$300 with any tournament organizer to restore/replace if issues occur.

Mr. Lokken stated we have the ability to charge this. Mr. Donovan, who also volunteers with Little League, stated we have done much work over the years, and it is a big issue. Given the investments in the fields by Little League, the potential damage to the fields caused by large tournaments, and the need for fields to be made ready for Little League activities the day after tournaments, he feels a deposit and a review of fields conditions following tournaments is justified. Mr. Donovan felt starting on Memorial Day we need a checklist before and after a tournament.

**MOTION (2): Mr. Larkin moved to institute a \$300 deposit for field restoration in accordance with a checklist by East Lyme Little League and contingent upon approval by the Little League President to walk through prior to games and after the last game with the Site Director at East Lyme Little League and Veterans Field upon satisfactory completion of the checklist. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (6-0) Unanimous.**

## **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a) Youth Services Commission reorganization. Mr. Lokken reported the Board of Selectmen is working to appoint three members.

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) Darrow Pond (Todd) Mr. Donovan reported we had several meetings with good discussion and we now can move forward. The company will provide the subcommittee with a final Master Plan Map next week. The Subcommittee had a walk-through and met with DEEP. They wish to have a proposed plan for the public on May 22. On June 5, the subcommittee will have its final meeting. On June 8 the subcommittee plans to bring the final sketch for approval to this Commission and it is its intention on June 13 with this Commission's approval to bring it to the Board of Selectmen. It will have a picnic area, playground, educational component telling the history of the park and town and wetlands vegetation. The outdoor classroom will discuss birds and a wildlife meadow area. It will connect with the Goodwin Trail, ADA and disc golf.

b) Pickle Ball (Sue) Ms. Kumro reported there will be Pickle Ball courts providing the budget is approved.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

a) Celebrate East Lyme political causes. Mr. Lokken reported we rent spaces on Main Street and some organizations may be controversial to others in the community. The Commission expressed no interest in trying to limit those who could participate. Mr. Tukey suggested if we have a problem, we will deal with it. Mr. Lokken suggested if we have a problem, we don't allow them next year.

b) Vending permits. Mr. Lokken reported we have one response from Flavor King for McCook's and Bridebrook for the minimum bid.

**MOTION (3): Mr. Donovan moved to approve Flavor King's vendor permit, contingent on meeting the contract's requirements of insurance. Seconded by Mr. Larkin. (6-0) Unanimous.**

c) **Concert donations.** Ms. Kumro felt a donation box is needed at concerts.

d) **Bridebrook neighbor concerns.** Mr. Lokken reported after the town cut down invasive vines, etc. the area looks better. One neighbor is complaining about balls coming into his yard and youngsters on his property.

e) **Niantic Inn.** Ms. Kumro stated she agrees with the new owners of the Niantic Inn. It's a large increase that they have not factored into their budget. Mr. Larkin felt a \$75 walk in pass is reasonable.

Mr. Lokken stated that having one pass for multiple people was difficult for beach staff to manage. Mr. Larkin asked would we have to consider AirBBs also? Mr. Cunningham suggested selling a single pass that contained sub-passes that could be issued to each individual.

Mr. Lokken suggested the Commission could include organizations that are incorporated with the state as a means of not allowing Airbnb purchases.

Mr. Beebe suggested making a pass to allow whatever we decide and make adjustments for next year.

**MOTION (3): Ms. Kumro moved to allow businesses that provide overnight stays and are incorporated in Connecticut to purchase a non-resident walk-in pass that could contain up to two individual sub-passes for \$75. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. In Favor: Tukey, Beebe, Kumro, Donovan. In Opposition: Kusalanka and Larkin. (4-2) Motion carried.**

Mr. Kelsey stated KOA has some individuals that do not have a passenger vehicle. Mr. Kelsey reported he will use a shuttle bus and give them commercial parking passes. He will let them know they need to have the pass with them.

**MOTION (4): Mr. Tukey moved to set the commercial beach parking pass at \$150. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (6-0) Unanimous.**

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (5): Mr. Donovan moved to adjourn the May 11, 2023 Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting at 9:05 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Tukey (6-0) Unanimous.**

**MOTION (6): Mr. Larkin moved to go into Executive Session at 9:06 for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter. Commission members and Mr. Cunningham were invited attend. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (6-0) Unanimous.**

Mr. Lokken was invited into the Executive Session at 9:15 p.m.

**MOTION (7): Ms. Kumro moved to exit Executive Session at 9:30 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (6-0) Unanimous.**

No action was taken in Executive Session.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary