

East Lyme Parks Recreation Commission  
October 12, 2023  
Regular Meeting Minutes

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EAST LYME, CT

2023 OCT 27 A 10:34

*Caunhill*  
TOWN CLERK

Present: Thomas Beebe, Chairman  
Rob Tukey  
Jackie Curry  
Todd Donovan

Absent: Pat Larkin  
Sue Kumro

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

**1. CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Beebe called the October 12, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS.** There were no members of the public.

**3. MINUTES**

a) Minutes of August 10, 2023 Meeting. Mr. Beebe asked for additions, deletions or omissions to the August 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION (1): Ms. Curry moved to accept the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission August 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. Ms. Curry and Mr. Tukey abstained from voting. (2-0-2) Motion carried.**

b) Minutes of September 14, 2023. Mr. Beebe asked for additions, deletions or omissions to the September 14, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION (2): Mr. Tukey moved to accept the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission September 14, 2023 Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Beebe. Ms. Curry and Mr. Tukey abstained from voting (2-0-2)**

**4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.** Mr. Lokken reported a dock came up to the beach. He informed the Commission we are trying to find the owner. If we are unable to find the owner, Public Works will remove it. Mr. Lokken added it is 32'X8'X4'and very heavy.

Mr. Lokken informed the Commission we have a new hire for the Parks Maintenance position. His name is Camron McCollum. He is a graduate of East Lyme and is doing a fabulous job.

**5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT** Mr. Cunningham reported a Referendum on the purchase of the Hathaway, Brainerd Road and Oswegatchie Hills properties will be held at the Community Center on October 17, 2023 from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS.** An email dated October 5, 2023 from June Hoye was sent to Robin Grandieri recommending Kathy Hoye Mingo, a graduate from East Lyme High School. Kathy Hoye was a basketball and softball athlete while attending East Lyme High School. Mr. Lokken stated Jen Brush may also be someone to consider.

## **7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a) Youth Service Commission Reorganization. Mr. Lokken reported the reorganization of the Youth Service Commission was presented to the Board of Selectmen in September. There was general support for the reorganization of the Youth Service Commission. Mr. Cunningham stated there were concerns regarding finances. Recently he was informed there was an opioid settlement to municipalities. Mr. Lokken stated the town has received opioid funds. The town could also get some funds from the Juul settlement. Mr. Cunningham added we will find out the details on it. Mr. Lokken stated state grants are available for Youth Services.

b) Tent Replacement. Mr. Lokken reported we have fund balance available to purchase a tent, but recommended against it due to the relatively low fund balance. We had problems with the previous tent, because it was not engineered properly. Mr. Beebe asked what was the annual revenue from the tent? Mr. Lokken agreed to obtain that information.

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) Darrow Pond (Todd) Mr. Donovan reported the Darrow Pond Committee will meet in December. Mr. Lokken stated the First Selectman would like the new Board of Selectmen to review the information. Mr. Lokken stated he anticipated making a request in the Capital Budget. Mr. Donovan suggested to have the Subcommittee to meet prior to the planned meeting with the Board of Selectmen to prioritize the plan elements.

b) Dog Park (Rob). Mr. Lokken reported he had a meeting in the Parks and Recreation Office. Fifteen to twenty individuals attended. Four of them were girl scouts.

Mr. Lokken stated the Parks and Recreation Commission appoints volunteers for the Dog Park Committee. The next meeting is November 15. There was discussion on its key features. There was a strong consensus about what a Dog Park should contain.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

a) Review of Beach Operations for 2023. Mr. Lokken distributed information on seasonal and daily parking passes comparing revenue 2022 vs. 2023, as well as 2023 beach pricing. He noted that we received \$15,000 less in revenue in 2023 than in 2022. Income from non-residents decreased. He felt it was due to a rainy summer.

Mr. Lokken noted that the Commission set prices to charge seniors and handicapped individuals the same. He noted we received more income from commercial passes.

b) Budget Priorities for 2025. This year we had four full-time staff and four maintainers and yet we are still behind. Mr. Lokken reported we have accumulated additional responsibilities. Mr. Tukey asked have you been receiving complaints? Mr. Lokken replied we have. Mr. Donovan has been receiving complaints that the grass is too high. Mr. Lokken receives much feedback about the restrooms. We need septic pumping several times every year.

Mr. Donovan reported he has heard from the Basketball Board. They have 550 youngsters and it's becoming difficult for parents. The budget is \$30,000 to \$50,000 per year. A Program Coordinator is needed. Mr. Lokken felt organizing an indoor sport takes a significant amount of time. They need to work together with the Board of Education. Mr. Donovan added there is no overhead. We donate back. It would be someone to handle registration and gym time. Mr. Tukey asked is this something Parks and Recreation can take on? Mr. Lokken replied not this year. We have had increased expenses for equipment repairs. We spent \$6,000 for repair of our beach grooming machine. Summer concerts are well attended and we offer them free of charge. We can add extra on everyone's registration. Ms. Curry felt we have the finest soccer field in the state.

Mr. Lokken felt Mike Rak has a wealth of information having been in the department for 40 years.

Mr. Lokken presented a list of potential budget priorities for 2024-25 and the Commission chose to the following as priorities: An additional full-time Parks Maintainer; increased funding for restrooms and equipment repairs, a replacement vehicle for Parks – mason dump or pickup; a vehicle for Parks and Recreation staff; Peretz Park restrooms/garage/parking/lights; erosion control plan for McCook's and Hole-in-the-Wall.

**MOTION (3): Mr. Tukey moved to authorize Mr. Lokken to identify the budget request for Fiscal Year 2024, as outlined above. Seconded by Ms. Curry. (4-0) Unanimous.**

**c. Dog Park Subcommittee appointments.** The following individuals have expressed interest in serving on the Dog Park Subcommittee: Lynn O'Donnell, Jay Ginsberg, Danielle Holsapple, Rachel Poirier, Laura Schultz, Donna Palumbo and Christy Pyatt. Mr. Tukey will contact them and form the Dog Park Subcommittee.

**d. Meeting Calendar for 2024.** The Commission agreed to meet in 2024 on the second week of each month at 7pm in the Community Center, except no meeting in July.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (4): Ms. Curry moved to adjourn the October 12, 2023 Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting at 8:30p.m. Seconded by Mr. Tukey. (4-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Ghersi, Recording Secretary