

East Lyme Parks Recreation Commission  
December 14, 2023  
Regular Meeting Minutes

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

Absent: Rob Tukey  
Jackie Curry

Also Present: Jerry Lokken, Director of Parks and Recreation  
Candice Carlson, Ex-officio

RECEIVED FOR RECORD  
EAST LYME, CT  
2023 DEC 21 P 12:00  
Candice Carlson  
TOWN CLERK

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

**1. CALL TO ORDER** Chairman Beebe called the December 14, 2023 Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

**3. MINUTES**

a) Minutes of November 16, 2023 Meeting. Mr. Beebe asked for additions, deletions or omissions to the November 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION (1):** Mr. Larkin moved to accept the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission November 16, 2023 Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Kumro. (3-0) Unanimous.

**4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.** Mr. Lokken reported he attended educational sessions and met with vendors at a state professional conference.

**5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT** Ms. Carlson reported the Board of Selectmen met on December 5, 2023 and welcomed its new members. Ms. Santoro and Ms. Thurlow will remain on the Board. We are also filling in assignments for several boards and commissions.

**Mr. Donovan joined the meeting.**

**6. COMMUNICATIONS.** There were no communications.

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a) Budget Request. Mr. Lokken presented the Commission with the Parks and Recreation budget priorities for fiscal year 2024-2025.

Mr. Beebe asked if the 2024-2025 budget request included a full-time parks maintainer? Mr. Lokken stated it does. He added in the past the Department has acquired more properties that need maintenance. Our department is assisting more historical properties and we are maintaining the Town

Hall. Pennsylvania Avenue is a state road and our department helps to maintain it. Our sports seasons are increasing. Our park facilities have been neglected. We now have Darrow Pond and its maintenance is different than a park or beach. In the middle of the summer, we used all reasonable maintainers and could have had more. Mr. Donovan added the Town has more people coming in, a lot of development and a lot of events. Mr. Lokken stated we need Public Works' help when we have special events.

Mr. Donovan asked about Special Revenue? Mr. Lokken stated at the beaches we have gate staff and pass checkers. On a peak weekend they are checking passes and daily beach passes. He is considering whether we wish to staff Cini Beach every day or only on weekends during peak times. We also need to have public safety. Hole-in-the-Wall is a family beach; McCook's is mainly older folks and Cini Beach may not be the best swim area. We are trying to determine if there are savings to be had. Ms. Carlson asked is there a liability if there is a decision to change staffing? The Town has the authority of how it is managed so there would be no increased liability. Mr. Larkin asked that staff begin to take counts of the number of patrons at various facilities. Mr. Donovan asked are we mandated to have lifeguards at all beaches. Mr. Lokken stated we are not.

Mr. Larkin asked about tent replacement. Mr. Lokken stated it is a capital project and the tent will be included.

Mr. Lokken stated we have had complaints about portapotties. Ms. Kumro suggested looking into a different company. Ms. Carlson stated our goal is to bring people to town. Mr. Lokken reported portable toilets are typically cleaned once a week. Mr. Larkin stated restrooms are needed four months in the winter. Mr. Lokken stated we are adding portable toilets to Bridebrook in the budget request. The Special Revenue Account has approximately \$20,000. of fund balance. Ms. Kumro agreed to check into whether or not nip money can be used. Mr. Larkin asked what programs are going into Youth Services? Mr. Lokken stated they will have a meeting on Monday. We will finish this year. Our Special Revenue Fund is funding its staff.

Mr. Larkin suggested looking at projects at Darrow Pond. Mr. Lokken reported the list for Darrow Pond includes disc golf, trails and outdoor classrooms. Mr. Donovan stated the Subcommittee has itemized and prioritized them.

Mr. Lokken reported at Peretz Park we are requesting funds to redo the restrooms, garage, new lights, a septic system and field renovations at a cost of \$2 million. The septic system is a large expense. Ms. Kumro stated if we do not get approval for the \$2 million dollars, we need a plan for our septic system. Mr. Donovan asked can our restrooms be separated by order of preference? Mr. Donovan asked if the fields are being rented? We could have lights on at night. Mr. Larkin suggested adding it to the upcoming budget as a replacement. Mr. Larkin asked when are lights on at the park? Mr. Lokken replied only when there is a scheduled event. Ms. Carlson asked have you looked into grants?

**MOTION (2): Ms. Kumro moved to forward the Parks and Recreation budget as presented by the Director with the changes discussed this evening. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (4-0) Unanimous.**

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) Darrow Pond (Todd) Mr. Donovan reported he will speak for the Darrow Pond Subcommittee at the Board of Selectmen Meeting on December 20.

b) Dog Park (Rob). Mr. Tukey was unable to be present, and there was no report.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

a) Election of Officers.

Ms. Carlson asked for nominations for Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2024.

**MOTION (3): Mr. Beebe moved to nominate Rob Tukey as Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2024. Seconded by Ms. Kumro.**

Ms. Carlson asked if there were any other nominations, and there were none.

**A vote was taken and Mr. Tukey was unanimously elected Chairman of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2024.**

Ms. Carlson asked for nominations for Secretary of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2024.

**MOTION (4): Mr. Larkin moved to nominate Sue Kumro as Secretary of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2024. Seconded by Mr. Beebe.**

Ms. Carlson asked for any other nominations, and there were none.

**A vote was taken and Ms. Kumro was unanimously elected Secretary of the Parks and Recreation Commission for 2024.**

b) Commissioners were encouraged to forward any names and statements of intention of prospective new commissioner members to the Chair for consideration to fill vacant seats.

c) Ms. Curry's Retirement from this Commission. The Commission was asked to consider how to honor Ms. Curry for her 20 years on this Commission.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (5): Mr. Larkin moved to adjourn the December 14, 2023 Parks and Recreation Regular Meeting at 8:20p.m. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (4-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary