

East Lyme Parks Recreation Commission
January 11, 2024
Informal Discussion

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EAST LYME, CT

2024 JAN 16 A 8:27

Candice Carlson
TOWN CLERK

Present: Robert Tukey
Thomas Beebe
Pat Larkin

Absent: Sue Kumro
Todd Donovan

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

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

1. CALL TO ORDER Chairman Tukey called the January 11, 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission Informal Discussion to order at 7:05 p.m.

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

3. MINUTES

a) Minutes of December 14, 2023 Meeting. The December minutes were tabled until there is a quorum.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT. Mr. Lokken reported there have been three large storms that damaged the seawall and a large portion of the parking lot was lost. A temporary fix has been done. Mr. Lokken added fortunately we may be able to use some ARPA funds. The town insurance does not cover the damage.

5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT Ms. Carlson reported the Board of Selectmen made appointments to boards and commissions. If members of this Board are willing to be reappointed, they need to make it known.

Mr. Beebe stated he sent an email in December to Dan Cunningham regarding new members. To date he has not received a reply.

Ms. Carlson reported the Selectmen are trying to navigate a plan to permanently fix the seawall which will be costly.

She added Mr. Donovan made a presentation to the Board of Selectman on Darrow Pond and it was well received. Ms. Hardy was concerned that it may be over-developed.

6. COMMUNICATIONS.

a. Nehantic Burial Ground. Mr. Lokken reported he was contacted by a reporter doing a story on the possibility of re-establishing a burial ground for the Nehantic tribe on a portion of McCook Park. Several months ago the Commission expressed support of the possibility but it is waiting for additional

information from the tribe whether what they want to do it possible in terms of burying remains of tribal members.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Filling Commission Vacancies. There are two vacancies on this Commission. Messrs. Beebe and Donovan are willing to be reappointed.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

a) Darrow Pond (Todd) Ms. Carlson reported Mr. Donovan's presentation on Darrow Pond was well received by the Board of Selectmen.

b) Dog Park (Rob). Mr. Tukey asked that another member of the Commission be liaison to the Dog Park Subcommittee since he is now chairman of this Commission.

9. NEW BUSINESS

a. 2024 Fees

a.) Beach Parking Passes. Mr. Lokken distributed a report on Beach Parking Passes to compare how many passes were sold, what the revenue was from the sale and the average price in 2022 vs. 2023. Amounts did not include sales tax that is collected separately.

b.) Beach Admission. Mr. Lokken distributed a report on Beach Parking and Admission for 2023 and asked the Commission to consider the admission for 2024. Mr. Tukey stated we need to raise revenue. Mr. Lokken added we are very close to a net zero and expenses are increasing. The minimum wage went up by 4.5%. It has increased from \$15 to \$15.69.

Mr. Tukey felt we should keep the cost as low as we can while giving good service.

Mr. Tukey reported we need to make things more efficient. Mr. Lokken added the largest number of passes are sold to seniors. The seniors are being subsidized by the others. Do we change the senior fee or lower the resident fee? Town employees and active military and their families qualify for resident rates.

Ms. Carlson asked have you considered the non-resident and commercial price? Mr. Lokken replied the non-resident is \$175. That was raised \$50 in 2022. He added we sold 2,300 passes to residents. Residents pay to operate the beach. Mr. Beebe suggested increasing the non-resident fee by \$25. He asked what are your expenses? Mr. Lokken replied to cover expenses we need to increase the fees by 5%. Mr. Tukey suggested increasing all fees by 5%. Mr. Larkin suggested increasing the fees by 10% per year and see if it affects who comes. Mr. Beebe felt increasing each by the same percentage is fair.

c.) Pavilion Rental. Mr. Lokken distributed information on the cost of renting the pavilion.

d.) Vendor. Mr. Larkin stated the vendors pay what we ask for. Mr. Lokken stated we have discussed having vendors at the concerts. We have 10 concerts on Friday and 10 on Wednesday. The concerts are free. We also have Camp Out Night.

e.) Athletic Field Rental. Mr. Lokken distributed information on the fees to rent the Athletic Fields.

f.) Pickleball Court. Mr. Lokken distributed information on Pickleball. No fees are charged at the present time.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The Informal Discussion adjourned at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

