

East Lyme Parks Recreation Commission  
March 14, 2024  
Regular Meeting Minutes

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EAST LYME, CT

2024 MAR 20 A 8:20

*Candice Carlson*  
TOWN CLERK

Present: Robert Tukey  
Thomas Beebe  
Pat Larkin  
Ben Armstrong

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 March 14, 2024 Parks and Recreation Commission Regular Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

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

**3. MINUTES**

a) Minutes of February 8, 2024 Meeting. Mr. Tukey asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the February 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

**MOTION (1): Mr. Armstrong moved to accept the February 8, 2024 Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Beebe. (4-0) Unanimous.**

**4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.** Mr. Lokken reported the Board of Selectmen made changes in the Capital Budget. The town is trying to pay for items in cash or doing long-term bonding since interest rates are now high on short-term financing. There is \$128,000 in ARPA funds remaining for the Hole-in-the-Wall project and \$25,000 remaining for the playscape project. The proposed budget calls for the ARPA funds to be shifted to fund several capital items requested. The lights for the pickleball court were cut. Ms. Carlson suggested applying for grants. The Board of Finance Budget Hearing for Parks and Recreation will be held on April 10 at 5 p.m. Mr. Larkin added the Maintainer position has been cut. Mr. Lokken added ARPA funds can only be used for eligible items.

**5. EX OFFICIO'S REPORT** Ms. Carlson reported an opioid grant in the amount of \$60,000 has been received. Mr. Lokken stated it went into the General Fund but has not been allocated. The town has the ability to determine where it goes.

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

**7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a. Filling Commission Vacancies. There remains one vacancy on this Commission. Ms. Carlson will bring this matter up to the Selectmen.

## **8. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

a) Darrow Pond (Todd) Mr. Lokken worked with the Planning Department to apply for a Recreation Trails grant from CT DEEP to construct trails at Darrow Pond. We have letters from various advocates regarding accessibility. The Goodwin Trail would have an added loop and existing trails can be improved. He informed the Commission there is a map of the area in the Parks and Recreation Office.

b) Dog Park (Rob). Mr. Tukey reported we had a positive meeting. There was discussion on locations. The sub-committee is planning a site visit on the field on Roxbury Road and they wish to survey residents. The cost of the Dog Park is expected to be \$25,000 to \$50,000. The Dog Park Committee is willing to raise funds. The subcommittee also discussed possible features and rules in the park.

Mr. Larkin asked have they looked at other locations? Mr. Lokken replied they discussed Darrow Pond property and an area near Care & Share. Veterans Field is also being considered. Mr. Larkin stated it already has parking. All that would be needed at Veterans Field is a fence and some ground cover. Veteran's Park is not used 60% of the year. Mr. Beebe added there are no homes at that location. Veterans Park also has restrooms and shade.

## **9. NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. 2024 Fees**

a.) Vending in parks and events. Mr. Lokken reported two months ago Ms. Kumro discussed having vendors at concerts. We have a database of trucks and can invite them to submit a bid. We would like to have a vendor for Friday nights and if it goes well also have it next year on Wednesday nights. He asked if Commission members wish to consider requesting donations? Mr. Armstrong asked are you able to accept credit cards? Mr. Lokken agreed to check on that.

b.) Proposed Pickleball Court Usage. Mr. Lokken stated a meeting has been scheduled with pickleball users to discuss plans for court use once they are open. We will discuss scheduling, rules, fees and other items.

Mr. Larkin reported we charge \$385 for a child to come for summer programs for 7 weeks and five hours per day and he wondered if that covered the cost. Mr. Lokken reported that it is close to break-even every year. Commissioners wondered why they have never voted on program fees. Mr. Lokken agreed to share additional information regarding the Special Revenue Fund in the next budget cycle so Commissioners can see whether programs and events generate excess revenue or not.

Mr. Lokken reported that in terms of Special Revenue Fund the operations of the Community Center does not come out of that budget.

**10. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (2): Mr. Beebe moved to adjourn the East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission's March 14, 2024 Meeting at 7:55 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Armstrong. (4-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary