

East Lyme Parks and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
February 13, 2025

Present: Robert Tukey
Alicia Brothers
Sue Kumro
Todd Donovan
Ben Armstrong

Also Present: Jerry Lokken, Director of Parks and Recreation
Joey DeFillippi, Recreation Supervisor
Quinn Holsapple
Remy Poirier-White
Harper Schultz
Dennis Baggia
Jeff Holsapple
Rachel Poirier
Laura Schultz
Danielle Holsapple
Lynn O'Donnell
Donna Palumbo

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Cassidy Holsapple
TOWN CLERK

The Pledge of Allegiance was observed.

1. **CALL TO ORDER.** Chairman Tukey called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.
2. **PUBLIC DELEGATIONS.** Mr. Baggia reported he has taken over War at the Shore baseball tournaments. He has worked at Long Island High School baseball for 10-15 years and would like to make War at the Shore a magnet for tourism. He informed the Commission that he has had much experience with solving issues that may arise and feels he can fix them. He asked the Commission to let him know if there are youngsters that wish to work.

Mr. Lokken informed him that there will be renovations at Veterans Field and there may be a delay in getting it ready. It is expected to be completed in April.

Mr. Donovan stated we have had issues with porta-potties, field conditions and lack of personnel on site. Mr. Baggia stated we take care of any issues and his son or he will be in this area for every tournament.

Mr. Tukey asked that the discussion on the Dog Park be discussed at this time.

Mr. Lokken reported the Dog Park Subcommittee has met for several years and researched several potential properties to house the dog park and they identified the Roxbury Road property as the best option. The girl scouts are helping with fundraising and Ms. Kumro stated the girl scouts designed their logo. Mr. Lokken added the criteria of the subcommittee is they were interested in having the Dog Park on town owned property, approximately 1 acre, fenced, flat and space for parking. The Roxbury Road property has all of these features and the Town is required to use to for recreational purposes based on the deed. Ms. Brothers stated some concerns about the property including that there is wildlife there, she heard a rumor of a Native American burial site, there's currently no parking there or sidewalks, and no water on the site.

Mr. Donovan reported he has been interested in a Dog Park and he is interesting in revising the question with the Darrow Pond Subcommittee, that may be another possible Mr. Donovan and Mr Lokken will bring up the question with the Darrow Pond Subcommittee again and Mr. Lokken will attempt to schedule a tour of both properties with members of the Dog Park Subcommittee and the Commission.

3. MINUTES

Approval of Minutes of December 12, 2024 Meeting.

MOTION (1): Ms. Kumro moved to approve the December 12, 2024 East Lyme Parks and Recreation December 12, 2024 Meeting Minutes, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Armstrong. (5-0) Unanimous.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

a. **Community Center Expansion Proposal.** The Commission reviewed the East Lyme Community Center Space Needs Analysis and Recommendations.

Mr. Lokken reported there is a proposal in the Town to update the Community Center. The cost for the preferred option is \$17 million, but the CIP Committee cut it from the budget request for FYE2026 and suggested that it move forward as a referendum question.

b. **Budget Update.** Mr. Lokken reported our budget has increased by 5% before the union contract is finalized. We are asking for more seasonal staff. \$100,000 has been cut from our budget request. The proposal to name Sheer Park has been approved by the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Lokken added the repairs to the seawall at McCook's is absolutely necessary.

5. **EX-OFFICIO REPORT** Ms. Carlson was unable to be present and there was no report.

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

7. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS.**

- a. **Filling Vacant Positions on Commission.** Mr. Tukey reported two residents have expressed an interest in becoming a member of this Commission. The Board of Selectmen appoints members to commissions. Ms. Kumro suggested after determining if Mr. Castro is still interested in becoming a member of this Commission that we invite him to a meeting since no member of this Commission knows him.

MOTION (2): Ms. Kumro moved to recommend William Haylon to be appointed to the Parks and Recreation Commission. Seconded by Mr. Donovan. (5-0) Unanimous.

8. COMMITTEE REPORTS

- a. **Darrow Pond (Todd).** Mr. Lokken reported Marjorie Meekhoff informed him that Gail Popoff is willing to take over the Chair of the Darrow Pond Subcommittee.

Mr. Lokken met with Ms. Popoff to go over the history of the Darrow Pond Subcommittee and its focus is on maintaining it. She has been a volunteer to remove invasives at Darrow. She is willing to put in volunteer time and effort into keeping that committee moving forward.

- b. **Dog Park (Sue).** There was no further discussion on the Dog Park.

9. NEW BUSINESS

- a. **Beach, vendor and rental rates for 2025.** Mr. Lokken asked Commission members to make suggestions on 2025 draft pricing for beach admission prepared by Joey DeFillippi.

Mr. Lokken informed the Commission that beach operations is almost all labor and with continual increased in the minimum wage, price increases to match will need to be made every year.

Commission member Ben Armstrong left the meeting.

MOTION (3): Mr. Donovan moved to amend the Parks and Recreation draft pricing recommendations as per Mr. DeFillippi's and this Commission's discussion. Seconded by Ms. Kumro. (4-0) Unanimous.

10. ADJOURNMENT

- MOTION (4): Mr. Donovan moved to adjourn the East Lyme Parks and Recreation February 13, 2025 Meeting at 9 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Kumro. (4-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary