

TOWN OF ESSEX

29 West Avenue

Essex, CT 06426

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING

Minutes of the Essex Park & Rec Meeting held on Jan 9, 2024 at 5:30pm at the Essex Town Hall and via Zoom

1. Call to Order: Brette Fitton called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.
2. Attendance: C. Field, B. Fitton, D. Needleman, A. Mosa, and Essex Park & Rec Director, MaryEllen Barnes.
Absent: J. Bean, C. Perry
One member of the public, Bill Colihan, attended via Zoom.
3. Approval of Minutes: November 14, 2023 Regular Meeting: With a motion by C. Field, and a 2nd by D. Needleman, the minutes were unanimously approved.
4. Public Comment: Bill Colihan said that he wanted to listen to the meeting to learn about the Essex Park & Rec Commission. As he lives in the cottage next to Hubbard Field, he has a vested interest in the ballfield, etc.
5. Financial Reports & Budget Review Year to Date and for 2024/2025 Fiscal Year: With a motion by D. Needleman and a 2nd by A. Mosa, the financial reports were accepted for discussion.
Discussion on the Financial reports: B. Fitton asked about the figure of \$67,215.23 for the Recreation Programs Fund YTD Expense Actual as the column of expenses was not adding up. The Expense Actual is \$83,437.58. The YTD Revenue Actual should be \$90,824.19. ME Barnes will review. and revise. ME Barnes reminded that the expenses appear on the reports as Current; the deposits will always appear 2 months later. It was discussed that there should be a notation on the reports about this. B. Fitton said that we would table approval of the Recreation Programs Fund until revisions are completed. B. Fitton asked about the Longevity figure in the Budget and if the expenses need to account for the annual increases. D. Needleman said that the budget automatically includes the increase of Longevity.

With a motion by D. Needleman and a 2nd by C. Field, the Budget was approved. With a motion by D. Needleman and a 2nd by C. Field, the General Fund was accepted.

6. Directors Report, Parks & Program Updates

Park Events

The Essex go Bragh Irish Parade and the Easer Egg Hunt will be held on different dates as follows:

March 23rd – Essex go Bragh Irish Parade

March 30th - Easter Egg Hunt

ME Barnes said that while P&R had discussed holding the Essex go Bragh Irish Parade and the Easter Egg Hunt on the same day, it wasn't practical both in terms of safety and organization. Mosa will serve as the Grand Marshal of the Irish Parade (which had been rained out last year). There is no update on the Race the Train event.

ME Barnes noted that the Essex Ed Groundhog Day Parade will be held on **Sunday, January 27 at 2pm**. This parade is a Town parade (not a P&R parade).

Winter/Spring Programming

Yoga (ages 16 +), New Programming – Kids Cooking, return of Cupcake Decorating (ages 6-16) Archery (ages 8 and up), Zumba, Running Rams (grades k-8) Basketball(k-8) Tennis (ages 7-15) Tennis (Adult 16+) Zumba (k-6), Men’s Basketball – we have had a great turn out for the fall season of programming. Our Current focus is on Youth Basketball with over 80 registered – Our Travel league has commenced with Recreation League. Our K-1 coed league starts tomorrow. In between we are hosting an indoor conditioning clinic with Coach Capezzone again this winter as well. Summer Camp planning is already underway!

Parks Update

All Parks –Fall cleanups are complete and we are working on spring maintenance plans.

Hubbard Park - STEAP GRANT UPDATE – NO NEW UPDATES

7. Old Business
 - a. Update on Fitness Trail Project: Discussion was tabled.

8. New Business:
 1. D. Needleman asked if the tarp has been put back on the field. ME Barnes will inquire.
 2. C. Field said that the sidewalk in front of the Essex Town Hall gets icy. ME Barnes will let DPWS know.
 3. D. Needleman said that members of the public are asking if there can be a fence installed for Grove Street Park for safety reasons. The concern is that children ride their bikes too far away from the Park.

9. Commission Overview:
 1. C. Field reported that Dickinson Park looks good.
 2. D. Needleman will stop by Comstock and report back.
 3. B. Fitton said that the ball park looks great; she watched people playing basketball.
 4. D. Needleman said that the basketball backboards are not UV resistant; they look foggy and are supposed to look clear. They are indoor rather than outdoor backboards. Otherwise, the courts look good.
 5. ME Barnes reported that the Grader Field is property owned by the Fireman’s Association and is used for training. It is not available for sale.

10. General Discussion: There was no general discussion.

With a motion by C. Field, and a 2nd by D. Needleman, the meeting was adjourned at 6:02pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan K. McCann
Clerk

