

**ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**  
**April 5, 2012**

(Please note these minutes have yet to be approved)

Mike Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:00pm at Hubbard Park

Members Present: Anthony Mosa, James Rawn, Robert Russo, Mike Holmes, Jack Spangler, Ed Burleson

Park and Recreation Director Rick Audet and Program Coordinator Mary Ellen Barnes and Guest, Ginny Willetts were also present.

**Attendance:**

Ginny Willetts, who recently met with the appointment committee in order to become an alternate Park and Recreation Commission member, introduced herself. She has been involved in Park and Recreation Program as a coach and parent for three years. She is interested in joining the Commission as a way to give back to her community. She is the parent of two young children, a retired teacher who has also worked as an Athletic Director, Coach and Principal.

**Old Business**

Essex Basketball Center (EBC): Rick Audet provided on site updates to the Basketball Center Project. Rick Audet discussed the project schedule, fencing, court surfacing, equipment and amenities, parking, and security.

*Motion was made by Tony Mosa to adjourn at 7:20 pm. Jim Rawn seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried. Meeting was again called to order at 7:30pm at the Town Hall Meeting Room A*

**Approval of Minutes**

*Motion was made by Jack Spangler to approve the special minutes from the Feb. 13, 2012. Bob Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried*

*Motion was made by Jack Spangler to approve the minutes from the regular meeting March 7, 2012. Tony Mosa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

**Financial Updates**

Financial Reports were reviewed by Rick Audet. An area of notation was the mowing line item, there is an anticipated deficit due to the emergency expenditures caused by Tropical Storm Irene last fall. The Town has applied to FEMA and Insurer to be reimbursed. At this time no update was available as to the status of the reimbursement. Jim Rawn suggested that the Treasurer's Department be notified of the above as a courtesy.

*Motion was made by Jim Rawn to accept the financial statements as presented. Tony Mosa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

### **Director's Report**

- A. Public Hearing 4/4/2012 – Small Cities grant application for ADA compliant Grove Street Park Playground.
- B. Arbor Day Event – 4/28/12. 9am at Cross Lots / 10:15am at Ivoryton Green.
- C. Baseball Field Use Applications – Little League, Babe Ruth, Lacrosse.
- D. P&R Shed Town Hall – 15 day appeal process, ZBA variance was granted.

### **Program Manager's Report:**

Mary Ellen Barnes updated the Commission that she has met with the new Essex Elementary School's Nurse, Susan Deens to discuss the Essex Elementary School Student Assistance Program that provides scholarships for the Summer Day Camp to resident children. Eligibility is based on the reduced/fee lunch program. If a child is on this program they will be offered 1 week of camp. Other children may also be eligible but that will be determined on a case by case evaluation by Mrs. Barnes and Mrs. Deens. Presently there are approximately 50 children eligible. The Essex Garden Club has once again generously offered to sponsor 10 campers to attend the Mad About Science Week. The school program typically sponsors many of the remaining requests, with Park and Recreation and any other scholarship fund donations covering the remainder of requests. Letter will go out to eligible children this week with a response requested by May 1, 2012.

### **Parks Report – February 1, 2012**

<u>Main Street</u>	Irrigation turned on, open and tune system. Water fountain turned on. Garden Club will perform spring clean-up.
<u>Dickinson</u>	Garden Club will perform spring clean-up.
<u>Hubbard Park</u>	Irrigation turned on, open and tune system. Professional Field Care scheduled to prep field week of April 16.
<u>Sunset</u>	DPW cleared brush from pond bank 4/3, 4/4
<u>Grove Street Park</u>	\$3825 sinking fund request for crack repair Certified playground mulch to be delivered April 9, PW to install.
<u>Comstock Park</u>	Professional Field Care scheduled to prep field week of April 16.
<u>Ivoryton Green</u>	Irrigation turned on, open and tune system. Obtaining quote on replacing meter box assembly
<u>Viney Hill</u>	Gate is open daily for season. PT staff will clear 200 feet of bank space for better fishing access.
<u>Clark's Pond</u>	Work order submitted to fill low spots in driveway.
<u>EES Baseball Field</u>	Professional Field Care scheduled to prep field week of April 16.

Greenscape performed assessment of the fields and parks on March 24:

Hubbard Field looks very good. Nice and green for this time of year. Areas that were aerated and seeded in the fall came in good. There were a couple of thin areas but not too bad. Center and right field areas filled in well from the seeding and all areas will benefit from spring aeration.

Municipal Park looks OK - a lot better than last year at this time in the spring. Areas that were aerated and seeded in the fall filled in fairly well. Some high traffic areas are down to dirt and will probably never do well. Maybe it would be better to give up on the areas that are heavily used by the public and put pavers or some other type of footpath in instead. The heavy shade areas around the trees are still thin and it will be difficult to have thick turf grow here. These shade areas were seeded twice last year and we still have not seen very good results.

Grove Street Park looks good. Areas that were aerated and seeded in the fall of 2011 filled in well. Looks great compared to the start of the year last spring. Not too many thin bare areas despite the shade. I think some trees and branches were lost here in Hurricane Irene. Perhaps that is letting in more sunlight and helping the turf.

Ivoryton Park has lots of thin areas and damage from 2011. As we previously discussed, we will be seeding here after the irrigation is turned on so we can find the irrigation heads to avoid damaging them with the seeding machines.

Comstock Park looks good. It is very thick and healthy for this time of year and should take off after it is fertilized. Areas that we aerated and seeded in the fall have filled in very well. There were no large bare areas like we had last spring at this time and there were no broadleaf weeds.

#### **New Business:**

Mike Holmes presented a possible formation of a Scholarship Subcommittee to investigate the possibility of the Park and Recreation Commission providing a scholarship to a Valley Regional High School Student using funds from its Special Revenue Account. Mr. Holmes asked Commission members to consider the proposal and return at next month's meeting to establish a subcommittee.

James Rawn requested that the Chairman, on behalf of the Commission write a letter to the Board of Selectman notifying them of comments/concerns made by local resident at our last meeting in regards to the pedestrian pathway to the park from Grove Street.

James Rawn also stated that he was concerned about several email correspondences by local residents to the First Selectman. The resident's inquiries were regarding Park and Recreation. As far as he was aware, the emails were not forwarded to the Park and Recreation Commission for response. Mr. Rawn believes that such inquiries should be forwarded to the Park and Recreation Department to be responded to by the Park and Recreation Director, Chairman or Commission as needed. This would establish a clear line of communication for residents in regards to any and all of the Park and Recreation Commission's areas of oversight.

**Commission Overview:**

Rick Audet would like to thank our Commissioners, Jim Rawn, Bob Russo and Tony Mosa for their assistants with the Essex go Bragh Parade and Festival. Mr. Mosa stated that he thought the event was a great success.

**Public Comment:**

No Public Comments

**General Discussion:**

None

*Motion was made by Tony Mosa to adjourn at 8:50pm Bob Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Ellen Barnes  
Essex Park and Recreation