

**ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**  
**May 2, 2012**

(Please note these minutes have yet to be approved)

Mike Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:05pm

Members Present: Anthony Mosa, James Rawn, Robert Russo, Mike Holmes, Jack Spangler, Ginny Willett, Tom Clerkin

Park and Recreation Director Rick Audet and Program Coordinator Mary Ellen Barnes were also present.

**Approval of Minutes**

*Motion was made by Robert Russo to accept the minutes from the April 4, 2012 regular meeting. Jack Spangler seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried*

**Financial Updates**

Financial Reports were reviewed by Rick Audet. Tom Clerkin requested that the reports include a monthly deposit total for the program revenue fund. *Motion was made by Tony Mosa to accept the financial statements as presented. Bob Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

**Old Business:**

**A: Essex Basketball Center:**

Rick Audet reviewed the status of the basketball court construction. There are some concerns in regards to the surface application. The Contract has agreed to address and correct these concerns. Tony Mosa also updated the Commission of the plantings, fencing and parking. Per several commission members, who attended Baseball Opening Day, there were no parking problems and everyone seems very pleased with the court's progress.

Mike Holmes asked if there was a "soft target" date for completion. Jim Rawn stated that he is direct contact with the owner of the court construction company and they are working together to rectify any concerns and get them addressed so the court can be opened shortly.

Jim Rawn also informed the commission that the Tree Warden and the Tree Company identified a tree that should be removed that lies between the Park and a Neighbor. The property owner was notified of the recommendation, however Mr. Rawn stated that they should also be contacted in writing via a letter approved by the Town attorney that the tree has been deemed unsafe and should be removed. Mike Holmes stated that he will work directly with Rick Audet to ensure that this situation is handled as soon as possible.

Mr. Rawn feels that this is an area that should be addressed, perhaps establishing a procedure that covers this scenario.

## **B. Hubbard Park Volleyball Court**

Bob Russo stated that he feels we should move the volleyball court to Viney Hill at this time.

Tony Mosa stated that the court may be under-utilized but we should not get rid of an amenity, we should promote it. He feels very strongly that the court should stay.

Jim Rawn questioned why this was being addressed? Mike Holmes feels that with the parking issues we should move the courts. Jim Rawn stated that a parking plan was established and it shows that there are more than enough parking spaces. He feels this is an easily accessible amenity for the community and if we remove it we will never be able to put it back.

Jack Spangler suggested that we create a beach volley ball court at Viney Brook Park in addition to the court at Hubbard. He feels we should keep what we have. Tom Clerkin feels that we should promote the court more and leave it where it is. Ginny Willett also agrees we should leave it where it is. Mike Holmes stated that he has never seen anyone there, using the court to play volleyball. He feels it should be removed and the area left as green space. He also feels that it does affect parking. Mike Holmes asked Rick Audet to research other park and recreation programs that utilize and outdoor court. Also would like him to find out what it would take to create a court at Viney Hill Brook Park.

## **Public Comment: - None**

## **Directors Report:**

### *Director's Report – May 2, 2012*

- May 22, 7pm, Essex Town Hall, RSVP by May 10 Town Clerk is hosting a FOI clinic – all commission members invited
- Thank you to Ginny & Bob for help at Egg Hunt event
- EGOP Arbor Day Event - thank you to Cathy Bishop & Bob Russo on their help with the planting of ornamental tree at Ivoryton Green
- YMCA lifeguards contract signed for 2012 season
- \$3825 from Capital and Sinking Funds for tennis court crack repairs at Grove Street Park has been approved at Town Meeting
- \$1000 for surfacing at Hubbard batting cage voted Town Meeting 5/2/12
- Park and Recreation shed ordered / deposit paid.
- Received a \$500 grant from the Rockfall Foundation for 2012 Essex Great Outdoors Pursuit program.
- Responded to FOI request re EBC donors list

EGOP Events -	May 5	Spring Bird Migrants Walk & Talk	Viney Hill Brook Park
	May11, 12	Fishing Clinic	Viney Hill Brook Park

### *May Park Reservations*

May 3	10am	Main Street Park	National Day of Prayer
May 11, 12		Main Street Park	May Market
May 20	12:30	Grove Street Park	EHS / Town Historian "History at the Park"

### *Correspondence*

Essex Land Trust – thank you letter for assistance in Arbor Day event

Email from Essex Little League Home Run Derby at Hubbard Park on Saturday June 16

Literacy Volunteers – thank you letter on March 31 Backwards Mile / 5K event

Report by neighbor of night time activity in parking lot at Viney Hill – reported to Trooper Paul Gills, CIRMA rep, emailed letter re Hubbard Basketball court

**Program Manager's Report:**

Mary Ellen Barnes reviewed the summer programs, discussed the meeting she had with the Essex Elementary School Nurse, who is the Student Assistant Coordinator. The purpose of the meeting was to identify the students in need that would benefit from a scholarship of a week at the Park and Recreation Day Camp. It was determined that over 50 children are eligible for the scholarship. Letters offering the scholarship were sent to each family. The Student Assistant Fund will be able to sponsor approximately 17 students. The Essex Garden Club also will sponsor 10 students. The Park and Recreation Department will utilize funds from the Program Revenue Fund and any other donations to sponsor any additional scholarships.

**Parks Update:**

Rick Audet distributed a Spring Park Update list, the Commission was instructed to review at home and any questions should be directed to Rick Audet.

Parks Update - Spring 2012 Parks Highlights

Main Street

- Discussing new stone walkway with Garden Club and Hortus
- Repaired damaged drip irrigation line

Ivoryton Green

- Planted a new ornamental tree in bed for Arbor Day
- Weeding and edging landscape bed
- Will contract with electrician to install new meter box

Essex Elementary

- Ball field prep completed

Grove Street

- Playground mulch installed
- Park walking trail maintenance work

Hubbard Field

- Trimmed tree branches along park fence
- Baseball field prep completed for spring 2012
- Parking lot spaces painted

Tennis Court

- Windscreen installed
- Mowing contractor weekly maintenance
- Will schedule crack repair in May

Dickinson Park

- Inspected park

#### Viney Hill

- Weed whacking
- Trail maintenance
- Clearing bank for better fishing access

#### Sunset

- Significant brush removal along south and west side by DPW

#### Comstock

- Baseball field prep completed for both fields
- Babe Ruth field backstop fence work scheduled
- Will install new stone around dugouts
  
- Clark's Pond
- Inspected park

#### **Commission Overview:**

The Commission welcomed Ginny Willett as an Alternate Commissioner.

#### **Public Comment**

None

#### **General Discussion**

James Rawn asked the Chairman, if he on behalf of the Commission wrote a letter to the Board of Selectman notifying them of comments/concerns made by local resident at our last meeting in regards to the sidewalk to Hubbard Park from Grove Street Park, in that it ends abruptly before reaching the intersection at North Main Street. Mike Holmes responded stating that he did give the First Selectman the information but will follow up in writing.

Mike Holmes addressed his concerns about the Lifeguard Staffing expense that is incurred at Viney Hill Brook Park. The budgetary line item for lifeguards is \$8,200.00. He feels we should investigate the actual responsibility of the town to provide life guards and what other towns are doing at their swimming holes. He instructed Rick Audet to find out what are the State's regulations are for life guard coverage.

*Motion was made by Tony Mosa to adjourn at 8:20 pm. Tom Clerkin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Barnes Essex Park and Recreation