

ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
June 6, 2012

(Please note these minutes have yet to be approved)

Acting Chairman Tony Mosa called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

Members Present: Anthony Mosa, James Rawn (arrived at 7:05pm), Robert Russo, Ginny Willett, Tom Clerkin, Doug Senn, Cathy Bishop,

First Selectman, Norm Needleman, 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 May 2, 2012 regular meeting. Doug Senn seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried

Financial Updates

Financial Reports were reviewed by Rick Audet. Mr. Audet indicated that this was the last Financial Report of the fiscal year, however fiscal year-end reports for both general fund and special revenue will be presented at the September meeting. Mr. Clerkin asked if there was any additional information regarding of the State Requirements / Statutes for Life Guards at Viney Hill Brook Park. Mr. Mosa believes that there is not. He believes that as long as there is posting you would not have to staff guards. Jim Rawn stated that it is not our requirement to have 2 guards on site; it is in our contract with the YMCA to have 2 guards on duty and a generally accepted best practice. The 2012-2013 budgets include funds for 2 guards. Jim Rawn asked Mr. Audet to contact CIRMA to verify the necessity of lifeguards at Viney Hill Brook Park. Mr. Needleman recommended that no changes be made to the lifeguard schedule for this season as the contract is already in place, the expense has been approved and we have already posted the information in our bulletins. He did state that it was very important to review the status of maintaining lifeguards at Viney Hill Brook Park moving forward and was glad that we are looking at it closely.

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

Public Comments:

Maxine Allen was in attendance as part of a Valley Regional High School Civics Project.

New Business:

Mr. Needleman asked the Commission to review the status of the Special Revenue Fund. He stated that since the conception of the Special Revenue Fund, the Board of Finance has discretion as to the balance of that fund and determine the appropriateness of the projected fund balance. He suggests that the Park and Recreation Commission assign a cap to the fund, and propose that the overages be transferred into the Capital Improvement Funds designated for Park and Recreation, directed to the first selectman for review of the Board of Selectman. He then would present this proposal to the Board of Finance. Mr. Needleman also notified the Commission that no capital expenditures should come out the Special Revenue Fund. Mr. Rawn feels that the Commission should commit to

establishing a point at which the funds should be transferred into a capital reserve fund, however he would like a final proposal to be submitted at our the Park and Recreation Commission's next scheduled meeting. Bob Russo suggested that we could suggest a number for this fiscal year and that the number be allowed to fluctuate for future years. As a show of "Good Faith" he suggested \$45,000.00 be the threshold for fiscal year 2011-2012.

Motion was made by Robert Russo to present to the Board of Selectman a Park and Recreation Commission proposal to transfer funds from the Special Revenue Fund that exceed a balance of \$45,000.00 for fiscal year 2011-2012, moving it to the Park and Recreation Capital and Sinking Funds. Park and Recreation Commission will also establish a protocol for utilizing Special Revenue funds for capital improvement that includes approval from the Board of Selectman. Cathy Bishop seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

New Business Continued:

Mr. Needleman updated the Commission on the efforts to update the Employee Manual including the hiring practices of all new hires including Park and Recreation Summer Staff. Mr. Needleman stated that the Board of Selectman approves all new hires and that a protocol is being established to include Park and Recreation.

Mr. Needleman also informed the Commission of the Towns application of a STEAP Grant. The grant may allow improvements to the Town Hall Parking Lot, Grove Street Park Playground, & Tennis Courts.

Old Business:

Essex Basketball Center:

Mr. Rawn stated that the last item of concern is the tree removal as discussed in the previous meeting. He feels that is now the Board of Selectman's responsibility to follow up with the property owner and with our Town's Insurance Carrier. Mr. Needleman stated that his office will take care of the situation. Mr. Rawn also stated that the FOI request was responded to.

Mr. Rawn also stated that he would like a protocol establish for Camera usage at the EBC, Rick Audet will present a proposed plan for use at the next regular Commission meeting. Mr. Rawn would also like to recognize Jack Lima for his support of the security camera installation.

Mr. Rawn also stated that there will be a ribbon cutting in September and that, once all monies have been received and expended related to the project, there should be approximately \$1,400.00 in a reserve fund for any capital expense in association with the new basketball court. Tony Mosa stated that the donor board is being constructions and should be in place for the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Doug Senn commented how much the residents are enjoying the EBC.

Directors Report:

- STEAP grant for Town Hall campus – including tennis courts and playscape
- Had a standardized tree letter approved by town attorney
- Letter to the Editor thanking Paul Dona
- Field use coordination between 2 baseball groups and lacrosse has gone smoothly this year
- Town of Essex award for Sustained Efforts in Risk Management
- \$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 and approved at Town Meeting 5/2/12
- Renewed contract for Viney Hill Brook Park phragmites remediation
- Park and Recreation shed installed
- Received inlands/wetlands permit for next phase of work at Sunset Pond

June Park Reservations

- June 1 – Main Street Park Wedding
- June 6 – Essex Pre-School Ice Cream and Sing-a-Long
- June 10 – Main Street Park Community Music School Concert
- June 15, 22, 29 – Main Street Park Farmers Market
- June 16 – Ivoryton House and Garden Tour / Ivoryton Green and neighborhoods
- June 16 – Hubbard Park – ELL Home Run Derby and Family Fun Day
- June 23 – Grove Street Park Race for Chris

Correspondence

- Certified letter sent to owner of tree adjacent to new basketball court
- Ken – US Department of Agriculture / to place Longhorned Asian Beetle trap in viney hill
- Land Trust – neighbor concerns at Canfield Woods on trail in proximity to their property
- Letter from United Way – Born Learning Trail
- Correspondence from CIRMA on basketball court assessment

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 30 children have accepted the week long camp scholarship. 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. The members of the park and recreation commission will also sponsor a child for 1 week of camp. Mrs. Barnes also updated the Commission as to the Fourth of July Parade and asked if a Commission Member would like volunteer and represent Park and Recreation at the parade. Doug Senn volunteered.

Parks Update:

Main Street

Upcoming new stone walkway in path near gazebo

Repaired damaged drip irrigation line

Turf is in good shape, more clover than last year

Tree Warden is coordinating with a local artist to turn the stump at rear of park into a sculpture

Tree near sidewalk needs to be pruned/ limbed up

Ivoryton Green

Turf has made a strong recovery from damage after last year's Pumpkin Fest. Some broadleaf weeds and grasses present due to not spraying in spring, focused on seeding and fertilizing.

Turf Mgmt vendor will spray and fertilize within a week

Weeding and edging landscape bed this week by mowing vendor

Evidence of moles noted

Essex Elementary

None

Grove Street

Park walking trail maintenance work completed
Trees limbed up near playground
Turf is in good condition, playscape in good condition including surfacing
Need to paint donor board columns

Hubbard Field

Trimmed tree branches along park fence
Baseball turf in good condition, very few weeds if any present, good recovery from April 2011
Turf area outside baseball field will be a focus with turf mgmt. vendor now and in fall
Parking lot spaces painted, basketball court open
Batting cage surfacing project – summer 2012

Tennis Court

Crack repair quote signed and scheduled for June
Bushes and vines along fence trimming completed

Dickinson Park

Picnic table needs to be painted

Viney Hill

Lots of weed whacking and maintenance throughout park completed and still ongoing
Installed new mulch onto lower parking lot islands
Trail maintenance ongoing
Cleared portions of pond bank for better fishing access
Turf along slope surrounding beach in good condition
Swing set and surfacing in good condition

Sunset

Significant brush removal along south and west side by DPW completed

Comstock

Turf is in good condition
Babe Ruth field backstop fence work completed
Will install new stone around dugouts

Clark's Pond

Picnic table needs to be sanded, painted
Turf area in good condition
Low spot in driveway needs to be filled by PW
Lots of vegetation in water
Dock in fair condition / appropriate signage is posted

Public Comment

None

General Discussion

None

Motion was made by Doug Senn to adjourn at 8:35 pm. Tom Clerkin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ellen Barnes Essex Park and Recreation