

ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

October 1, 2014

(Please note these minutes have yet to be approved)

Bob Russo called the meeting to order at 7:02pm.

Members Present: Bob Russo, Ginny Willetts, Tony Mosa, Peter Sarner
Recreation Program Manager Mary Ellen Barnes was also present.

Approval of Minutes

Bob Russo requested the minutes be amended to include under Directors Reports * Private Instruction at tennis courts Commission requested Director, Rick Audet to investigate possible policy changes, updates, development or implementation in regards to private tennis instruction on the Town of Essex Tennis Courts.

Motion was made by Tony Mosa to accept the September 3, 2014 regular meeting minutes as amended Ginny Willetts seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Jim Rawn & Tom Clerkin arrived at 7:06

Public Comment-

Bruce Glowac representing the Essex Foundation reviewed Clarks Pond Project to date. Project is complete and they will be a ribbon cutting ceremony on Oct. 19 at 2pm. The Foundation has invited Ann Comstock, The Park and Recreation Commission & a few dignitaries. Mr. Glowac also presented the Historical marker for placement in the park and requests formal approval to place the plaque and recommendation for possible site placement. He also stated the Essex Foundation will purchase 2 picnic tables and that he has already met with P&R Director Rick Audet regarding the types of tables.

Jim Rawn would like to request a formal letter be sent from the Commission to the Essex Foundation thanking them for all their efforts in the Park. All Commission members agreed. Bob Russo will meet with Bruce Glowac in regards to placement of marker within the park.

Bob Russo will attend the ribbon cutting and present Ann Comstock with flowers from the Commission. Mary Ellen Barnes will send out a broadcast email re: the ribbon cutting ceremony.

Motion was made by Jim Rawn to accept the plaque as presented and to allow placement at Clark's Pond. Tony Mosa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried

Stacia Libby, Chairperson of the Ivoryton Grant Committee and Kevin Grindel, Project Manager for Anchor Engineering (the design firm for the project) presented the project details to date including a design layout. The focus of the project is to create a downtown district and pedestrian thoroughfare.

There are proposed updates that would include construction within the Ivoryton Green. Bob Russo wants to be sure that any alterations to the park that affect the irrigation system will be addressed and replaced. Jim Rawn stated that Park and Recreation should be sure to utilize this opportunity to make updates to the park for example correcting electrical issues and signage. Tom Clerkin asked if

they planned to bury power lines. Mr. Grindle stated that was not included in the project. Jim Rawn stated that CLP is very pro community. Stacia Libby said she would investigate options.

Mr. Sarner left the meeting at 7:50 pm.

Tony Mosa asked Ms. Libby what she would like the P&R Commission to do and she stated that she would like to get permission from the P&R Commission to proceed with the design and make updates to the park and presented in the design.

Motion was made by Tony Mosa to accept the concept plan for updated to Ivoryton Village Green as presented Tom Clerkin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried

Financial Updates

Bob Russo suggested that if there were questions re: the financials that we table the review and discussion as P&R Director Rick Audet was not present.

Jim Rawn stated that he would like the reports to include historical information and questioned the change in format of the General Fund Report format.

Motion was made by Jim Rawn to table the financial statements approval Tony Mosa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Director's Report

Commission discussed the **Private Instruction at Tennis Courts**, Bob Russo reviewed the history of usage by our youth tennis programs instructor, and that at the previous meeting the Commission instructed the Director to investigate creating a policy. Mr. Russo stated the Commission had instructed the Park and Recreation Director to investigate. Tony Mosa stated that we have been talking about this for years and the Commission let it slide and did not pursue compliance with the posted restriction for private lessons at the court. Jim Rawn stated that is it not acceptable that any individual teach private lessons on the tennis courts. Mr. Russo stated that Rick Audet contacted our youth tennis programs instructor and notified him that the Commission will be developing policy re: private lessons. Mr. Rawn stopped at the courts while fellow Commissioner John Bauman was playing and spoke to Mr. Gary Ribchinsky about the present policy of no private lessons on the courts, Mr. Rawn stated that the courts should be available and we as a Commission need to come up with a policy. Tony Mosa believed we should develop a policy that should be enforced. On behalf of P&R Director Audet, Program Manager Mary Ellen Barnes distributed a rough draft policy for the use of the courts for private lessons. The Commission reviewed the policy. Mr. Mosa believes that the Board of Selectman should review the policy as well. Jim Rawn wants to ensure we limit permits. Mr. Mosa wanted to commend Mr. Ribchinsky efforts made at the ribbon cutting ceremony. Tom Clerkin wanted to know if the fee proposed was standard and how would the policy be enforced and make that part of the permit process. Jim Rawn would like the Town Insurance Company – CIRMA to review and wants to make sure we have a written agreement with the coach.

The Commission discussed the proposed sponsorship plan and Bob Russo asked for all commissioners to plan to be involved in the project.

Program Managers Report:

Mary Ellen Barnes presented a summary of the Summer Program Survey. The results were all positive with very good feedback.

New Business –

- a. **Ivoryton Village Main Street Grant – see public comments**
- b. **Commission Meeting start times – Tabled**

Old Business –

- a. **SWOT Analysis – Tabled**
- b. **Main Street Park Embankment Project** – Bob Russo updated P&R Commission on status of project – Completed
- c. **Viney Hill Brook Awning Project** – Bob Russo updated the commission that the project is not yet completed but very close. Tom Clerkin want the P&R director to look into signage for thanks to Bogart Construction and VRHS design team. The P&R Director should also plan to do a press release when complete. Mr. Rawn stated that we need a development plan for the park to increase usage. Mr. Russo agreed and believes we need a professional to develop a long term plan for the park, evaluate the needs and give the P&R Commission some options. Tom Clerkin suggested contacting Rep. Miller. Jim Rawn suggested utilizing the conservation commission and perhaps CRPA email list.

Commission Overview:

Bob Russo stated that Mr. Rawn should not have confronted Mr. Ribchinsky on the courts, that his actions were improper. Mr. Russo stated that the P&R Commission has allowed Mr. Ribchinsky to hold Private lessons for several years with no repercussions. Rick Audet had already told Mr. Ribchinsky that the P&R Commission was reviewing the policy, and that P&R Director Audet was already working on developing a policy for the Commission to review. Bob Russo repeated that Mr. Rawn actions were inappropriate, and that commissioners should not make statements re: policies and comments without support by the commission and in total disregard of requests to not do so. Mr. Rawn stated that he told the commission at the September meeting that he would confront Mr. Ribchinsky if he saw him giving private lessons on the court and no one told him not too. Mr. Russo stated that Mr. Audet asked him not to. Mr. Clerkin stated that P&R Commission has experienced combativeness in the past. Mr. Mosa suggested the Chairman Russo to move along and encouraged member to attend the ceremony for Clark's Pond.

Public Comment – None

General Discussion-

Mr. Rawn stated that he requested that Mr. Russo obtain information re: the P&R Director and Program Managers employee performance reviews. He stated that the Commission is not in a position to manage staff nor prepare budgets properly without evaluations of performances and that general practices and proper procedure need to be established to ensure that they are signed off by the P&R Commission. He asked Mr. Russo to get that information because the P&R Directors salary is 30% of our General Fund budget and he feels that the Commission has the responsibility to review & evaluate his performance and has not been able to do so. He also would like updated job descriptions that include clarification of additional tasks outside the scope of the P&R Commission and to what budget is this payroll expense applied. Mr. Russo and Ms. Barnes stated that duties outside of the Park and Recreation Department are not expensed to the Park and Recreation General Fund Budget. Mr. Rawn also stated he wants to know the hours P&R Director Audet works for Park and Recreation and the number of hours he works outside of P&R.

Motion was made by Ginny Willetts to adjourn at 9:05pm. Tony Mosa seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Barnes
Essex Park and Recreation