

ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
April 3, 2013

(Please note these minutes have yet to be approved)

Chairman Mike Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.

Members Present: Mike Holmes, Cathy Bishop, Thomas Clerkin, Tony Mosa, John Bauman, Bob Russo, Jim Rawn. Doug Senn arrived at 7:30.

Park and Recreation Director Rick Audet & Program Manager Mary Ellen Barnes was also present.

Approval of Minutes

It was the consensus of the Commission Members who were present for the March 6, 2013 that the minutes should have stated

Motion was made by Jim Rawn that when the Commission Chair or any members of the Commission meet with Town Officials regarding an issue that has direct impact on the Park and Recreation Department or Commission, that he or she then report back to the commission and share what was discussed. Cathy Bishop seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Motion was made by Tony Mosa to accept the March 6, 2013 minutes as amended. Bob Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried

Public Comments: Essex Citizens for Clean Energy – BigBelly Solar Recycling System

Stacy Abbott attended the meeting as a member of the Essex Citizens for Clean Energy. Ms. Abbott stated that her reason for attending was that her group is able to purchase through a grant from the State a Big Belly Solar waste and recycling container and that they need the Commission's help in finding a location to put the unit, perhaps in one of our parks. Ms. Abbott has come back to the Commission with more information and the answers to the questions posed by the Park and Recreation Director. Mr. Russo asked if our trash pickup vendor could empty this receptacle. Rick Audet will check with the vendor. Mr. Rawn is concerned that the receptacle needs to be place in a location with high visibility. Mike Holmes stated the receptacle could be placed within the soon-to-be updated Town Hall Campus. John Bauman wanted to ensure that the opening was not so large as to encourage drive by dumping. Tony Mosa wanted to ensure that there would be no additional costs for residents. Ms. Abbott state no.

Motion was made by Bob Russo to ask the First Selectman to consider adding the Solar Waste and Recycling container to the designs of the improvement project at the Town Hall Campus. Jim Rawn seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried

Financial Updates

General Fund Financial Reports were reviewed by Rick Audet. He stated that he met with Ivoryton Plumbing, the CT Water Co. representative and our irrigation company owner at Main Street Park to test the irrigation system main line. The test showed no leaks in the main line. No irrigation system zone lines were tested at that time, it was decided they would be tested when the system is open and tuned on April 11. Jim Rawn stated that we can deduce that the bathrooms are not affecting the water bill and it is not the main line. It was asked by the Commission that Rick Audet test or replace the meter through CT Water. Mike Holmes wanted to confirm that we did not turn on the sprinkler system. Mr. Audet stated that they have not been turned on. Mr. Holmes requested the water meter be certified.

Jim Rawn asked about expenses related to the Blizzard and the damage done at Main Street Park, Rick Audet stated that the expenses have been submitted to CIRMA and we are keeping a spreadsheet which tracks the expenses.

Mary Ellen Barnes reviewed the Program Revenue Fund with a general discussion of year to date revenues and expenses for each program as well as the Special Revenue Fund totals year to date.

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

Directors Report:

- Submitted damage claims for parks to CIRMA through Selectman's Office
- Valley Regional's Community Service Day – June 7
- Response from CIRMA on signage re lifeguards at viney hill brook
- Processing Park Use requests and permits for 2013
- Essex Great Outdoors Pursuit – Arbor Day event 9:30am April 27
- 2013 Turf Mgmt & Mowing Contracts Signed
- Meeting with Essex Little League board at Hubbard / securing field use requirements from ELL and Babe Ruth
- Spring / Summer brochure is out

Program Managers Report:

Mary Ellen Barnes handed out a Family Fishing Clinic Flier

Ms. Barnes stated that she attended Kindergarten Registration/Info Night at EES. Had a display Board, spoke to incoming parents, and touched base with Principal/Assistant Principal.

She also reviewed the status of the Summer Camperships there are 58 eligible students which doesn't include any incoming Kindergarteners or residents who may not be students at EES. We have sponsorship commitment of at least 10 from Essex Garden Club. The Student Assistant Fund committed at least 15. Park and Recreation is committed to fulfilling all requests for Scholarship. Last year's request total was 33 out of 52 students who were eligible.

Spring & Summer Program Registration is underway, there good response thus far. Mary Ellen Barnes feels that not being able to send flyers home through Deep River & Chester will definitely

impact our Summer Program Registration for those programs held at VRHs & JWJH – Basketball/Track/Tennis/Lacrosse.

She is trying to come up with alternative ways to get the information to those communities. Sent email to the DR P&R/CHSTR P&R, email to DES & CES PTO, Information is on Region 4 web site under community announcements. Press Releases, mass emails.

Parks Report:

Main Street Park

Tree company removing pine tree

PW removed downed cedar tree and dogwood limbs and pine tree limb

Water fountain being turned on by plumber, small repairs needed

Seasonal water is on

Irrigation open and tune scheduled for April 11

PW work order for spring clean up

Dickinson Park

Basic spring clean-up to be performed

Hubbard Park

Walk through of site with professional field care

Met Hinding Tennis Company at basketball court re cracks / crack repair will require court closure for 2 days / 3 types of crack repair: caulk and paint, buff and paint on Riteway system, Cut out, inject, fabric ie new Riteway system (all under warranty from court build)

Bathroom upgrades including new toilet paper and hand soap dispensers

Right bathroom toilet replaced due to leaking tank

Left bathroom toilet to have a gasket replaced

Batting cage repaired

Field prep work scheduled

Grove Street Park

Safety pruning / tree care work performed by tree contractor

Spring clean up of park completed by Professional Field Care

Landscaping work on west side of tennis court fence has started

Tennis nets and court equipment have been installed

Playground seahorse rocker repaired

Sunset Pond

Grading of embankment scheduled to be performed as soon as conditions permit

PW to maintain grounds and mowing

Ivoryton Green

Water is turned on by plumber

New Welcome to Ivoryton sign installed / Welcome sign lighting on order

Removed damaged limbs from dogwood

Installed upgraded flagpole lighting

Damage to bike rack due to front loader during storm / able to salvage and reset the bike rack

Damage to irrigation head and line due to plow / Jordanbrook will repair

Irrigation control box lid was removed by prybar intentionally it appears/ machine screws and locknuts will be used in its repair

Ivoryton Green asphalt path removed, area to be seeded in spring / future project connect a path to gazebo

Comstock Park

Performed a walk through of baseball fields with Professional Field Care

Field prep work to commence soon

Baseball practices started April 1

Clark's Pond

Work order for driveway maintenance

Before pictures of aquatic veg taken

Will paint picnic table and park sign posts

Viney Hill Brook Park

Walked baseball fields with Professional Field Care and agreed upon course of action to bring fields online this spring

Viney Hill Brook Park dog park benches order – use ones from Grove

New Business:

A. Essex Citizens for Clean Energy – BigBelly Solar Recycling System

Moved to Public Comments above.

Old Business:

A. Main Street Park Embankment Project

B. 2013 Lions Club Project: Viney Hill Brook Park Awning

C. Special Revenue Fund Cap Amount /Purchasing Guidelines Policy

D. Signs in Town Parks

E. Civic Campus STEAP Grant: Grove Street Park Playground & Tennis Court

Main Street Park Embankment Project:

The project as explained to the Commission in prior months requires an engineered plan to proceed. The status of the funds to commission that plan has yet to go before a Town Meeting for Approval.

2013 Lions Club Awning Project at Viney Hill Brook Park:

Tom Clerkin summarized the status of the project on behalf of the project subcommittee. The plans for the awning have been altered so that it is 36 feet in length. The awning plans call for it to be situated on a concrete pad. The subcommittee has received a quote for the concrete slab. The subcommittee is working closely with the Lions Club and Bogaert Construction on plans and costs for construction. The subcommittee is considering altering the design to make the Awning more esthetically appealing, but keeping it with in the same blueprint. Cathy

Bishop stated that they are considering a metal roof and looking at the price differences between a metal roof and asphalt shingles

Motion was made by Jim Rawn to accept the quote for the concrete pad as presented and that monies be paid from the Viney Hill Brook Park Special Fundraising Account. Tom Clerkin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Special Revenue Fund Cap Amount / Purchasing Guidelines Policy

Motion was made by Doug Senn to accept the Special Revenue Fund Cap Amount/Purchasing Guidelines Policy as presented. Tom Clerkin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried. The Director will forward this draft policy to the First Selectman for BOS and then BOF review.

Signs in Town Parks

Mike Holmes began the conversation stating that our options are to create a formal policy or leave the as is, which is no policy or guidelines exist for placing signage in the parks. Tony stated that we will probably be lobbied to keep it as is and criticized if we create a policy. Cathy Bishop feels that by creating a policy we may cause an “uproar” but having guidelines would be a good idea. Doug Senn asked if there are town ordinances already in place. Bob Russo feels that creating a policy would be a useful tool. Tom Clerkin believes the guidelines must be reasonable. Jim Rawn believes that Ivoryton Green and Main Street Park should not be used for advertising. Mike Holmes asked Rick Audet to see what other communities are doing and to present a rough framework of a policy. Doug Senn stated that we should investigate Region 4 school policy on signage and mirror that.

Civic Campus STEAP Grant: Grove Street Park Playground & Tennis Court

Rick Audet updated the Commission on the status of this project. He stated that he feels that we should maximize our sources of money for the new playground to see if we can add to the monies that we allotted by the STEAP Grant. Mr. Audet believes that this playground should be a top notch, signature playground and to do that we may need more funds than what the STEAP Grant will provide. Bob Russo and Tom Clerkin both inquired as to the amount of additional funds we made need. Mike Holmes stated that without a quote we cannot have this discussion and that Rick Audet will have a soft quote for the Commission next month.

Commission Overview:

Jim Rawn stated that on February 7, 2013 he met with the First Selectman regarding some concerns he had in regards the Park and Recreation Department and Commission. Mr. Rawn stated that the First Selectman is working on some reorganizational issues and human resource policies and procedures that may impact our department.

Jim Rawn also stated that it is the Commission’s responsibility to establish compensation for our department, and that any changes to the responsibility of the employees of the department are presented to our commission. Our Commission is here by statute and it is the obligation of the commission to establish the role of the staff and the commission itself. Mr. Rawn stated that Chairman Mike Holmes was aware of the proposed changes to our department. Mr. Holmes stated that he was not aware of any changes to the Park and Recreation Department. Mr. Mosa stated that he feels strongly that having such discussions outside of Commission Meetings may be perceived as attempts to pursue an agenda and that full disclosures of such discussions protects the integrity of the

Commission. Mike Holmes stated that he will ask the First Selectman if there are any changes to the Park and Recreation Department and will notify the Commission of his response. Mr. Rawn believes that the First Selectman should address the entire Commission. Mr. Holmes will ask the First Selectman to attend a Commission meeting.

Public Comment:

None

General Discussion:

None

Motion was made by Doug Senn to adjourn at 8:56pm. Bob Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Ellen Barnes
Essex Park and Recreation