

ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 2, 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, Thomas Clerkin, Tony Mosa, Bob Russo, Ginny Willets, Jim Rawn (arrived at 7:03.)

Park and Recreation Director Rick Audet was also present.

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Tom Clerkin to accept the minutes from the September 11, 2013 regular meeting. Bob Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Public Comments:

None.

Financial Updates

The General Fund Financial Report dated 10/1/2013 was reviewed by Rick Audet, all agreed there were no line items or expenses that stood out to date and our general fund budget is on track a quarter of the way through the fiscal year.

The Special Revenue Fund Financial Report dated 10/1/2013 was presented and currently shows \$4607.51 net revenues.

Rick Audet presented a revised Special Revenue Fund fiscal year 12/13 close report, amending last month's report, showing the Summer Camp Scholarship line now correctly listed at \$4427. All totals were correct last month and did not change.

A discussion of the Special Revenue FY 12/13 closing report ensued. As the report shows, we realized a loss of \$4465.53 in the last fiscal year. Jim Rawn stated that we need a better understanding of the numbers from a historical perspective. Jim Rawn also stated that he did not approve the Special Revenue FY 12/13 Closing Report last month. Jim Rawn stated that it is worth noting that this fund had contributions from the Town in prior fiscal years. Bob Russo noted that we have used our special revenue funds for a couple of more capital type items that impacted the bottom line of special revenue fund in the past 2 fiscal years and we need to take that into account when examining the 5 year history.

Jim Rawn and Mike Holmes stated that we need to plan in our next budget preparation process for payroll funds to be placed in the general fund account to cover the hours that the Program Manager devotes to Community events. Jim Rawn stated that he does not wish to raise program fees and place the burden on our residents to support our special revenue budget. Jim Rawn stated that we should now begin to sort out the numbers for our budget preparation that we will use going forward to justify our asking for an increase in the general fund part time payroll line item expense. Ginny Willets stated that this was a positive discussion on the special revenue fund.

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

Directors Report:

- Essex Elementary School tennis court costs being obtained.

Rick Audet updated the Commission on the Essex Elementary School tennis courts and the renewed efforts to undertake the project to perform the work necessary to open the courts. Rick Audet met with Hinding Tennis to get a quote on surfacing repairs and Tom Fitzgerald of EES is to meet with a fencing contractor to attain fencing repair costs. The total costs will be presented to Town and School system administrators for their approval and the Town or School will either choose to fund the repairs or not. The Commissioners engaged in a discussion on how the courts are closed for public use during school hours and summer camp hours and whether or not we should commit resources to a facility that is not allowed to be used by the public for much of the year. Rick Audet stated that there is a history whereby although the tennis court is on school grounds the school feels it is up to the Town or Park and Rec to maintain and fund.

- Adult Basketball program time conflict until Nov 20

Rick Audet mentioned that Adult Basketball program will begin at 8pm instead of 7:30pm as advertised, through November 20.

- Rockfall Grant Summary Due

Rick Audet will be submitting the Rockfall Foundation Final Grant report for our 2013 grant soon.

- Re-branding and planning 2014 Great Outdoors Pursuit Program

Rick Audet has met with representatives of the Land Trust and is re-working the program and its branding. There will be a geo-caching activity planned for 2014 as well.

Correspondence

None

October Park Permitted Events

Oct 5, 12	Ivoryton Green	Farmers Market
October 19	Ivoryton Green	Run Local Read Local 5K / Pumpkin Run
October 26	Ivoryton Green	Ivoryton Village Pumpkin Festival

Program Managers Report:

Rick Audet presented the Program Managers Report. There are a number of programs that are running and doing very well including archery, basketball, tennis, and field hockey clinics among others. Rick Audet reported that boys lacrosse did not run in September due to insufficient registrations. The Commission discussed the local youth sports organizations versus the offerings of Park and Recreation. Tony Mosa stated that there has been a fundamental shift in youth sports participation and the decision many parents make to follow more year-round one-sport activity and more intense offerings for their kids. Jim Rawn stated that he wants to explore the issue further and the upcoming impact it will have on our offerings and our revenues. Rick Audet stated that Mary Ellen has planning and preparations well underway for the Pumpkin Festival in October and we look forward to the event.

Parks Report:

Main Street Park

Painting picnic tables

Black walnut tree clean up

Mowing ongoing

Dickinson Park

No report

Hubbard Park

Adding fence extension to basketball court perimeter (one quote obtained, awaiting second)

Second security camera installed

Fall turf care and mowing ongoing

Grove Street Park

Replacing ballast on hold, all power to court turned off

Fall turf care and mowing ongoing

Stone wall embankment clean up started

Sunset Pond

No report

Ivoryton Green

Narrowed landscaped bed, seeded, watering ongoing

Fall turf care and mowing ongoing

Comstock Park

Fall turf care and mowing ongoing

Clark's Pond

Second water treatment completed

Viney Hill Brook Park

Stowed lines and buoys

General weed whacking and clean up completed

Met with dog park agility feature volunteer from Lions Club

New Business:

Mike Holmes reported that as the Chair of Park and Recreation Commission, he was invited aboard a boating excursion by Susan Malan, the trip hosted by Jerry Roberts, formerly of CT River Museum, currently researching and writing a book on the raid on Essex Harbor during the war of 1812. The purpose of the boat trip was to present to key stakeholders in the community the efforts that will be undertaken next April to recognize the 200 year anniversary of this event. Mike Holmes stated to the hosts of the event that Park and Recreation could potentially lend support by hosting a kayaking excursion from Main Street Park and/or linking their information to our website as two possibilities.

Old Business:

Main Street Park Embankment Project:

Rick Audet gave an update on this project. The project has gone out to bid; bids are due Friday, October 11 at 12noon. Rick Audet and our project engineer Joe Wren of Indigo Land Design led a site walk and project overview with the Harbor Master and Essex Garden Club in attendance. Both groups asked a lot of good questions and were satisfied on the approach we are taking on the project and enthusiastic in its progress. Bob Russo of the Park and Recreation Commission is slated to attend the IWWC meeting on Tuesday, October 8. We are awaiting CT DEEP to issue to us a Notice of

Violation which will allow us to do work in the state jurisdiction area; we will need this in hand before our contractor may begin work. We are hopeful some of the project work will begin this fall, and most likely to be finished in the spring.

2013 Lions Club Awning Project at Viney Hill Brook Park:

Tom Clerkin summarized the status of the project stating that it is still slated for completion by the end of November; he had not spoken to members of Lions Club in past month.

Signs in Town Parks

Mike Holmes began the conversation stating that he met and spoke with Norman Needleman, First Selectman on this issue a couple weeks ago and they discussed all options. Norm's preference is that we do not create a policy and we continue to manage it as we have been moving forward. Mike Holmes stated his opinion is that we manage by exception and we pull unapproved signs from parks as necessary but overall we continue to manage the issue as we have the past 5 plus years. Tony Mosa asked Park and Recreation Director Rick Audet which option would be the most time consuming to manage. Rick Audet stated creating a new policy would be the most time consuming. Jim Rawn reminded the commission there is third option which would be to not let any signs be placed in any parks for any reason. Ginny Willets stated that she has no problems with the signs in the parks as we have seen them the past few years and does not think it's an issue. Jim Rawn stated he feels we should not have signs in any parks. He continued to state that we can leave the system as is and ask Rick to follow the intent of the draft policy he created as a guideline to manage the issue and enforce accordingly. Tom Clerkin stated that signs should have a timeframe by which they are allowed to be put up, and there should be a rule to take the sign down immediately following an event. Mike Holmes stated his feeling we should keep our system the way it is and allow Rick to enforce as necessary on behalf of the Commission, and to keep the timeframes for signs to be up minimal. Jim Rawn stated we should make a motion to do as Mike Holmes recommended that shows we have put in guidelines and will allow Rick Audet to enforce as best he can, and to operate as we have in past few years, we will follow this historical course of action and follow our own guidelines. A motion was not made. The Commission finalized the matter with a general agreement to follow our past practices and keep the lengths of time signage is up to a minimum.

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

Rick Audet updated the Commission on the status of this project. The contract was signed by Xenelis Construction for work to begin. A member of the State Department of Economic Development was present at the meeting as well and state approval for the contract and all progress and procedures to date were met. The parking lot and tennis court is due to be grinded starting Monday October 7. Playscape demo will also begin at this time. Playscape is scheduled to be installed by end of November. Tennis court work will be completed this fall, except for painting and striping of court which must be done next April or May. Jim Rawn asked how the tennis court drainage was designed with no borings or testing of current conditions performed, and asked if Xenelis will do borings and testing to ensure drainage will be proper as designed. Jim Rawn also asked if local contractors had a chance at obtaining the contracts in this project, and we should work with local firms whenever possible. Jim Rawn asked about the costs of the playground installer.

Essex Foundation – Clark's Pond Enhancement Project

No report or update at this time furthering what had been presented at the September meeting. Rick Audet stated that he heard they were going before IWWC on Tuesday, October 8.

Commission Overview:

Town Clerk Fran Nolin emailed Park and Recreation Director to ask those Commissioners whose term expires in December to confirm their interest or not in being reappointed.

Thomas Clerkin – yes

Mike Holmes – not sure yet

James Rawn - yes

Edward Burleson – not present at meeting.

Appointments go to the Annual Town Meeting on November 18th. Jim Rawn stated we should approach the nominating committees and consciously recruit a new commissioner who would be a good addition to our board.

Public Comment:

None

General Discussion:

None

Motion was made by Tony Mosa to adjourn at 9:01pm. Tom Clerkin seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Audet

Essex Park and Recreation