

TOWN OF ESSEX
29 West Avenue
Essex, CT 06426

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION

SPECIAL MEETING

Monday, January 30, 2012

6:00 pm / Essex Town Hall Meeting Room A

(Please note these minutes have yet to be approved)

Mike Holmes called the meeting to order at 6:03pm

Members Present: Anthony Mosa, James Rawn, Robert Russo, Mike Holmes, Cathy Bishop, Jack Spangler, Tom Clerkin (arrived at 6:15pm).

Park and Recreation Director Rick Audet was also present.

1. Park and Recreation Commission Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Operating Budget Original Request

The Park and Recreation Director reminded the Commission of the budget process, budget workshop schedule, and that we have submitted three budget requests: Operating, Special Revenue, Capital/Sinking Fund.

The Commission expressed its appreciation of changes the First Selectman made to the budget workshop process by sending to the Commission his budget request in advance of the workshop, and the other measures he has taken to make it an overall open and transparent process.

A lengthy discussion ensued of the Operating (General Government) Budget as proposed by Park and Recreation and amended by the First Selectman. The Park and Recreation Commission proposed a budget of \$176,681, and the First Selectman sent back his request at the amount of \$169,751. Using a 5 year history of the Park and Recreation Operating (General Government) budget, the Commission noted that in the Parks Expenses section of the budget, the amount was \$76,520 in Fiscal Year 07-08 and over a 5 year span the amount is now \$77,350 in our current fiscal year budget, reflecting an increase of \$830 in 5 years.

It was further noted that while the Town is taking appropriate steps currently to formulate and better plan funding for Town Capital Projects, that the Town has not appropriately funded Park and Recreation Capital Projects to date. Furthermore, Park and Recreation has a number of Capital Projects that are immediate areas of concern with one set of tennis courts currently closed, a second set of tennis courts with serious surfacing issues, and a playscape that is coming to the end of its useful life.

The Commission further discussed the relationship between our Capital Project needs and our Operating Budget, that in light of these Capital Projects not being funded that it places a greater burden on our Operating Budget, thus justifying the Commission's request for the Operating Budget to be increased \$12,254.

The Commission directed the Park and Recreation Director to attend the BOS Budget workshop and present its findings above and create two documents to summarize the current budgetary situation. The Director was further directed to request to the BOS that our Operating Budget request be restored to the level initially proposed by the Park and Recreation Commission.

2. Park and Recreation Commission Fiscal Year 2012-2013 Capital / Sinking Fund Budget Original Request

The Park and Recreation Commissioners engaged in discussion on our Capital and Sinking Fund Budget request. It was agreed that the First Selectman's request of a \$30,000 appropriation for the FY 12-13 Capital and Sinking Fund budget was a step in the right direction, however we will continue to have pressing Capital Projects concerns that will continue to not be fully funded and that we need to work with the Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance towards achieving such funding.

Motion was made by Anthony Mosa to adjourn at 7:06 pm. Robert Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Audet
Essex Park and Recreation