

ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION
MINUTES
October 3, 2012

(Please note these minutes have yet to be approved)

Mike Holmes called the meeting to order at 7:05pm

Members Present: Anthony Mosa, Robert Russo, Mike Holmes, Cathy Bishop, Doug Senn (Arrived at 7:10) Ed Burleson (Arrived at 8:00)

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

Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Tony Mosa to accept the minutes from the September 5, 2012 regular meeting. Robert Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried

Public Comments

Joan Hill, representing the Ivoryton Village Gardeners, submitted a letter requesting the placement of a four foot stone bench in the Ivoryton Village Green in memory of Jane Fuller, a founding member of the Garden Club and longtime community volunteer. If their request is approved they would like the bench installed by winter. Rick Audet reviewed for the Commission, the Park Naming Rights Policy that was approved last year. Mr. Holmes requested that Mr. Audet send an email with the proposed bench description, the letter submitted by the Gardeners and email the Naming Policy to the entire Commission to be reviewed prior to the P&R Commission November meeting. Mike Holmes stated that his personal opinion was to waive the 1 year from time of death stipulation in the policy. Cathy Bishop asked to see drawings which the Gardeners supplied. Tony Mosa also felt that we may be able to waive the 1 year stipulation. Rick Audet also stated that an additional clause in the Naming Policy stated that the request was to be publicized for Board of Selectman and public review and comment. Doug Senn stated that he served on the subcommittee that developed the policy and the commission should fully review prior to any decisions. Mike Holmes asked the Gardeners to submit a more detailed biography of Ms. Fuller and proposed that the Commission waive the provision that requires a 1 year waiting period and the 60 day decision clause. The Ivoryton Village Gardeners who were present indicated that they would submit an updated letter of request with a more detailed biography of Ms. Fuller. The Commission will review all the information before any decision in regards to waiving any provisions of the Naming Policy.

Financial Updates

Financial Reports were reviewed by Rick Audet. *Motion was made by Doug Senn to accept the financial statements as presented. Cathy Bishop seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

Directors Report:

- Security camera in parks: the Director was asked to respond to Capital initiative of the Selectman's Office that was emailed to the Director. The P&R Director brought up the topic for discussion with the Commission as he wished for further input and guidance on the request. It was decided that a second camera at Hubbard Park, two cameras at Comstock Park (front and rear of park) would be requested. A camera at Grove Street Park may be considered as well

pending input from the BOS and Troopers Office as it is a shared campus / responsibility for oversight among these departments.

- The Director was invited by Selectman Joel Marzi to attend a meeting of the Essex Capital Projects review working group and discuss the capital projects of the Park and Recreation Commission. This meeting is scheduled for October 22 at 5:30pm.
- The Director informed the Commission that he spoke at a presentation co-hosted by Essex Land Trust and Essex Garden Club, titled Preserving Trees in Essex. The presentation was held at Essex Town Hall and included four speakers Augie Pampel, Adam Wheeler, Bob Nussbaum, and Rick Audet.
- A reminder of the STEAP grant for Town Hall campus, including tennis courts and playscape, has been submitted to the State. No decision on the grant application has come back to us.
- Planning 2013 Essex Great Outdoors Pursuit program is underway with Essex Land Trust.

October Park Reservations

- October 6 Essex Board of Trade Festifall / Scarecrow Festival / Main Street Park
- October 20 – RLRL 5K Trail Race and Pumpkin Run / Ivoryton Green
- October 27 – Pumpkin Festival / Ivoryton Green

Correspondence

- Correspondence letter from Wiegerts, 11 Grandview Terrace, on grant and tennis court shrubs
 - Correspondence email from Jane Piro re: Sunset Pond Rehab Project
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Program Manager's Report:

Ms. Barnes notified the Commission that the Region 4 School Administration is enforcing their policy that the Essex Park and Recreation Department may no longer distribute flyers, brochures or promotional materials of any kind through the school to the students. Options for the department include notification emails to the current member of the Park and Recreation's Rec Desk data base, mailing the brochures to all residents or mailing the brochures to only the Essex Elementary School Families as well as our usual promotional efforts. The Region 4 School does allow for promotional materials named above to be sent to the Superintendent's office for approval and then can be placed onto the school system website's Community Backpack page. At this time, the Park and Recreation Department is planning to mail its 2013 Winter/Spring brochures to EES families at a mailing cost of approximately \$455 to the Town. The feedback from most parents is that they are disappointed that they will no longer receive the brochure or any other notifications through the school. The opinion of the Department is that parents will be less informed on the recreational program opportunities for their children, registration numbers will be negatively affected and revenues will decrease as a result of this policy.

Secondly, the Program Manager reviewed for the Commission the plans and details for the 2013 Ivoryton Village Pumpkin Festival. The manager is very pleased with the plans in place now, all of the activities on the schedule, and the cooperation and involvement of Ivoryton Village Alliance in the event. A meeting with the local State Trooper is planned to discuss public safety and road closure. The Program Manager informed the Commission that she will need and rely on on-site volunteer help and assistance at the event from all Park and Recreation Commissioners.

Parks Update:

Rick Audet distributed a Park Update list, the Commission was instructed to review at home and any questions should be directed to Rick Audet. The Director informed the Commission that in addition to contracted mowing and turf management work, smaller maintenance tasks will be completed by part-time PW staff member under direction of the P&R Director in an attempt to make the parks be in the best possible condition at the end of the fall season.

Main Street

Fall aeration, overseeding, fertilization completed
Sculpture / Artwork on stump at rear of park ongoing
Adjusted gazebo lights sensor

Ivoryton Green

Fall aeration, overseeding, fertilization completed
Met with Tree Contractor to perform work – safety prune tree branches along roadside of park (trees) will be completed when ground is driest/firmer
Irrigation system inspection, rain sensor wire repair and tune up – 8/28/12
Added a quad outlet to the outlets in the irrigation box that will be constant hot.

Grove Street

Fall aeration, overseeding, fertilization
Identified a failing spruce tree for removal

Hubbard Field

Fall aeration, overseeding, fertilization completed
Tree Contractor safety pruned tree branches along park fence / snack shack to NW corner / completed
Infields weeds removed by turf mgmt. contractor
Parking lot crack repair completed
Batting cage surfacing project completed

Tennis Court

Court crack repair completed over the summer
Bushes and vines along fence trimming completed

Dickinson Park

Vendor aerated and overseeded turf
Gate has been cleaned and painted
Tree branch pruning needed
Bush at entry gate needs to be trimmed

Viney Hill

Lots of weed whacking and maintenance throughout park completed and still ongoing
Swimming Pond lines and bouys brought in and stored in shed
Swept out shed and organized supplies

Sunset

Sunset Pond rehab project – north side of pond significant brush and vegetation removed
Phase two of the project to commence early to mid-October.

Comstock

Fall aeration, overseeding, fertilization completed
Infields' weeds removed by turf mgmt. contractor
Babe Ruth field backstop fence work completed
New stone around little league dugouts installed

Clark's Pond

Facility Unsupervised sign was removed / director will replace (completed)

New Business: EES Tennis Courts:

The Park and Recreation Director initiated a discussion with the Commission regarding the closed tennis courts at Essex Elementary School and his desire to bring this project back to the attention of the Commission and begin to formulate a plan to address their condition. As recommended by Commissioner Jim Rawn a while ago, the Director wishes to create a joint effort between Park and Recreation, Essex Elementary School, and Essex Board of Education whereby we will collectively determine the best course of action to plan for a remediation of the courts and then approach the Board of Selectmen with this plan and seek their assistance in the best way to move forward and plan for its funding. The Director reviewed the estimated costs to replace/update the EES Elementary School Tennis Courts. Based on an estimate received for a similar project at Grove Street Park tennis courts, estimates of basic replacement cost are at \$72,000, which would entail reclaiming the court by pulverizing the asphalt in place and repaving, all new tennis equipment and painting lines. There are different approaches that may be reviewed as well in replacing the courts, all with different costs.

The courts are not in the Park and Recreation Budget, however in the past the Park and Recreation Department maintained the courts and their responsibility has "belonged" to Park and Recreation. Mike Holmes asked each Commissioner their thoughts. Bob Russ believes the courts are a valuable addition to the Physical Education Departments programming. Cathy Bishop's questions the Park and Recreation's department's maintenance of tennis courts located at the school. She believes that they should be maintained by the school including costs for such maintenance. Doug Senn stated that the courts are not accessible during school hours or during our summer camp program. It is one of the reasons we did not consider using the school location for the Essex Basketball Center courts. Mr. Senn also believes we have other priorities such as Clark's Pond. He believes that the school should have ultimate control of the courts. Tony Mosa questioned why the school has not fixed the courts if they want to utilize them as part of their curriculum. The commission believes we should meet with the school, and working with the board of education in partnership to determine the best course of action in regards to the course. There was a general agreement that Park and Recreation will not fund a park located within the school grounds, and that responsibility for the courts should be shifted to the school, however Park and Recreation will join and/or lead the effort necessary to replace and reopen the courts.

Old Business:

A. Clark's Pond Rehabilitation Initiative:

Bob Russo presented a brief update on the information he obtained in regards to a solution to improve the park and to kill the invasive species of plant that has invaded the pond. He believes dredging is the permanent solution with associated cost of \$300,000. He is still getting other costs to any other options that may be available. He believes we will significantly lose use of the pond if the

needs are not addressed. Doug Senn will schedule a "clean up day" for the park in the beginning of November.

B. 2013 Viney Hill Brook Park Lifeguards:

Tony Mosa stated that in light of the fact there is no state regulations require that the park be manned by lifeguards, and that our insurance carrier, CIRMA, also indicated that we are under no obligation to provide life guards. This combined with the lack of attendance. (Rick Audet stated the average visitor per day was 4.82 for the summer of 2012) We should cancel the contract to provide lifeguards at Viney Hill Brook Park for the summer of 2013 and ongoing.

Mike Holmes believes the monies spent on life guards will be of better use maintaining the park, including the beach area.

Motion was made by Doug Senn to discontinue the use of life guards at Viney Hill Brook Park. Cathy Bishop seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

C. Special Revenue Fund Cap Amount/Purchasing Guidelines Policy

Tabled

Commission Overview:

None

Public Comment

None

General Discussion

Tony Mosa acknowledged the great turnout for the Basketball Center Grand Opening.

Motion was made by Tony Mosa to adjourn at 8:30 pm. Doug Senn seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Barnes Essex Park and Recreation

Town of Essex									
Park and Recreation Commission									
General Fund Expenditures - Monthly Budget Report									
FY 12/13 Report Date: 10/3/2012									
Account	Original Budget	Actuals This Period	Actuals Year to Date	Available Budget	% Used	Notes			
501100 Full Time Payroll	53344		12,271.98	41,072.02	23				
501150 Part Time Payroll									
501250 Contracted/ Seasonal Payroll									
501250-102 Viney Hill Brook Lifeguards Payroll	8200		5972.81	2227.19	72.8				
5012500-103 Maintenance Payroll									
502150 Office Supplies	1600		167	1433	10.4				
502200 Telephone	1368		344.52	1023.48	25.2				
502350 Water	4800		3631.97	1168.03	75.7				
502550 Professional Dues & Subscriptions	540		95	445	17.6				
502650 Meetings and Entertainment	525		300	225	57.1				
502450 Advertising	2000		775	1225	38.8				
502700 Automobile Expense	1700		184.48	1515.52	10.9				
503300 Other / Consultants	1000		0	1000	0				
504480 Mowing	58,254		23934.29	34,319.71	41				
505500 Park Operation, Maintenance & Repairs									
505500-501 Clark's Pond	300		0	300	0				
505500-502 Comstock Fields	2250		225	2025	10				
505500-503 Dickinson's Park	100		0	100	0				
505500-504 Grove Street Park	6300		243.56	6056.44	3.9				
505500-505 Hubbard Park	3000		1,754.05	1245.95	58.5				
505500-506 Main Street Park	3800		0	3800	0				
505500-507 Sunset Pond	1100		600	500	54.5				
505500-508 Tennis Courts	3000		66.18	2933.82	2.2				
505500-509 Viney Hill Brook Park	9000		2721	6279	30.2				
505500-510 Ivoryton Park	2500		415	2085	16.6				
506300-604 Community Events	10,000		4556.75	5443.25	45.6				
Total Expenditures	\$ 174,681.00	\$ -	\$ 58,258.59	\$ 116,422.41	33				

It is requested that the following letter be read into the meeting minutes

October 1, 2012

Essex Park and Recreation Commission
Town of Essex
29 West Avenue
Essex, CT 06426

It has come to our attention that the Town has applied for a grant to substantially alter the area behind Town Hall, the Library and Grove Street. To learn more about the proposal, on September 24, a visit was made to the Park and Recreation Director's office to get more information. An article printed in the local paper indicated that changes to the lighting and fencing around the Grove Street Park tennis courts were being considered. Our concern was these changes might result in increased noise and light trespass into our property.

Mr. Audet was able to produce plans for improvements to the courts that did not include changes to the lighting or fencing. However, he indicated his desire to remove the shrubs along Grove Street because of a vine problem and replace them with a wind screen and two arborvitae trees. We strongly object to the removal of the mature shrubs planted along Grove Street along the tennis courts. These shrubs provide a natural sound and light barrier and should not be removed. We would encourage the maintenance of these shrubs by trimming and the pulling of the troublesome vines to alleviate the problem. A pair of arborvitae trees and a wind screen would not provide a sufficient amount of barrier for light and sound as does the present shrubbery. We want to bring to the commission's attention that light and sound barriers specifically made for outdoor tennis courts are available and would mitigate the situation as well, and should be considered as an alternative to shrub removal.

We would also like to thank the commission for moving the closing time of the tennis courts to 9:30. However, in these times of fiscal austerity, we are distressed to continually see the tennis court lights on in the day time when there is sufficient light, and left on when no one is using the courts at night. We are sure there is a solution to this on going problem, and ask the commission to address this obvious waste of tax payer's money. We strongly suspect that the offenders are not even Essex residents, and question why we are subsidizing their free play.

Sincerely,

The block contains two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Walter Wiegert' and the signature on the right is 'Regina Wiegert'. Both are written in a cursive, flowing style.

Walter and Regina Wiegert
11 Grandview Terrace
Essex, CT 06426

cc. Board of Selectman

Richard Audet

From: piro.sund@sbcglobal.net
Sent: Wednesday, September 05, 2012 4:17 PM
To: Norm Needleman
Cc: Richard Audet
Subject: sidewalks and Sunset Pond

Norm,

Kudos to you and Dave Caroline for putting in the new sidewalk at the corner of Grove St. and N. Main. Jeff and I walk a lot and I always hated having to step out into the street at that intersection. It's much safer for all of us now. Thank you!

Now for a complaint. You probably already know that the Essex Garden Club board was briefed recently on the plans for Sunset Pond because Jim Godsman has asked for a donation. The board was not pleased and turned down the request. After reading the informaton given by Jim, I then read more about the plans as presented by Rick Audet at the July, 2011 meeting of the inland wetlands committee.

The pond as it is now is a beautiful, natural vista and a great counterpoint to the historic architecture leading into the village. I never fail to admire it as I come up West Ave. and it's great to see ducks, egrets, and heron in it. Jim's suggestion that the horrible overly-groomed ponds in Deep River are something to aspire to is way off the mark. And it will be a shame to take out or move that willow tree that was just planted, especially as it was a donation from an individual (Susan Malan). Isn't it enough that kids can skate on it in the winter and fish at the dock in the summer?

I realize that the pond is owned by the Paul Foundation and they can do whatever they want with their land, but the request to Inland Wetlands was by Town Park and Rec and so I assume there is town involvement in this plan. Maybe they're out ahead of themselves and need more input from the community.

Thanks for listening.

Jane Piro

To: The Essex Park and Recreation Commission Chairperson

The Ivoryton Village Gardeners request permission to place a granite bench in the Ivoryton Park in memory of Jane T. Fuller who passed away in August 2012.

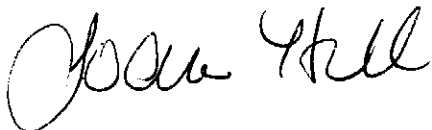
Jane lived in Ivoryton for 30 years and was an active member of our community. She was a founding member of The Ivoryton Village Gardeners and the Ivoryton Pumpkin Festival and an active member of the Ivoryton Playhouse. Jane provided housing for actors and actresses performing at the playhouse over the years. In addition, she was Membership Chairman of the Essex Historical Society as well as an honorary member of the V.F.W.. For many years she provided and sold American flags to the local public. In addition to being a longtime athletic coach at Valley Regional High School, she was also an active member of the Essex Congregational Church for thirty years.

Finally, the bench will measure 4 feet in length and on the seat will be inscribed, JANE T. FULLER. On the front face will be inscribed A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE IVORYTON VILLAGE GARDENERS. The bench would be anchored with two steel rods. The professional installation would be done by Shelly Brothers, Inc. of Guilford, CT.

Thank you for your consideration and we're hoping this request meets with your approval. If accepted, we look forward to the installation of the bench by this winter.

Joan Hill
Ivoryton Village Gardeners
18 West Hills Road
Ivoryton, CT 06442

October 4, 2012

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Joan Hill". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name and address.