

**ESSEX PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES**  
**November 6, 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, Cathy Bishop, Ed Burleson, Jim Rawn.

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

**Approval of Minutes**

*Motion was made by to amend the minutes to read "he has been in contact with members of Lions Club this past month" and accept the minutes from the October 2, 2013 regular meeting as amended. Bob Russo seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved. Motion carried.*

**Public Comments:**

Bruce Glowac, chairman from of the Essex Foundation updated the commission on the Clarks Pond Improvement Project. He reported that he met with the First Selectman and the Zoning Enforcement Officer in regards to the project. The project required a permit from Inland Wetland Commission and this permit was granted with recommendations. The first being, that the work must be completed by December 1, 2013, the waiver of fees was approved, and the commission review project plans. Mr. Glowac also reported that local contractor Gary Riggio has volunteered to provide equipment and manpower, and is due to begin work the week of November 11, 2013.

Rick Audet suggested in combination with the planned improvements we should look into improvement to the dock as well. Park and Recreation can take this on as part of the project. Mr. Glowac stated that the Essex Foundation may be willing to help fund the project and to explore estimates to improve the dock.

As far as signage, there will be a historical sign at the park in the same format as the other historical signs throughout the villages. Mike Holmes asked that we keep a consistent model that is utilized throughout the parks and landmarks in town.

Rick Audet will also take before and after pictures and submit a press release. The Commission stated its insistence that improvements to the dock, costs to refinish it, be paid for by Park and Recreation budget and not the Essex Foundation so as to not add additional costs to them.

**Financial Updates**

The General Fund Financial Report dated 11/1/2013 was reviewed by Rick Audet, all agreed there were no line items or expenses that stood out to date as being out of the ordinary and our general fund budget is on track a third of the way through the fiscal year. Mike Holmes stated that we should use funds from the Clark's Pond line item to pay for refinishing the dock. Rick Audet stated we will be able to do that and pay for our water treatment program as well.

The Special Revenue Fund Financial Report dated 11/1/2013 was presented and currently shows \$7934.70 net revenues.

A discussion of the 11/1/2013 Special Revenue Fund report ensued. Ed Burleson asked why the net program revenue was down compared to the same last year dated 11/1/2012. Rick Audet responded that part of the reason would be that some revenues, especially from online registrations are not yet posted would explain part of the reason. Rick Audet did note our expenses are down as well compared to the 11/1/12 report.

Further discussion on the Special Revenue budget report included examining why basketball league YTD revenue was down compared to last year. Bob Russo correctly noted that last year's revenues also included basketball camps and clinics which had been broken out into 2 individual lines in this year's budget and that fully explained the difference. Summer Camp expenses were discussed as they had increased from the past year. Mike Holmes recommended structuring the staff differently by not having an assistant Camp director position that would allow us to keep expenses down and also keep the camper to counselor ratios we currently enjoy.

Further discussion of program revenues and expenses were held. The Commission again expressed the need to include special events payroll monies into our general fund budget and lessen the expenses we realize for special events in our Special Revenue Fund budget. The Director stated he would see that this is in our budget request in our upcoming budget process. The Director also stated that due to payroll costs that he feels it will be very difficult to break even in our special revenue fund budget in our current fiscal year.

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

### **Director's Report**

The Director thank and commended Cathy Bishop for her efforts as the RLRL 5K Race director last month. Cathy informed the Commission that it would be her last year in directing this event. The director also thanked all of the Commissioners who helped at our Pumpkin Festival event.

Essex Elementary School tennis court repair costs being obtained. Park & Recreation Director has been quoted \$2650 for crack repair, with the option for Riteway system crack repair at \$9750. EES facility manager is securing fencing costs TBD.

Rockfall Grant Awards night is scheduled for November 14, 2013, the Rockfall Grant summary report to be turned in by March 1, 2014.

Re-branding and planning 2014 Great Outdoors Pursuit Program to Essex Outdoors, planned 5 events.

Neighbor of Hubbard Park called the office with a concern on a tree that abuts park property. Park & Recreation Director discussed with Tree Warden.

The Director reported that Hubbard Basketball Court fundraising account funds are being transferred from the bank to Town escrow due to account inactivity. They will remain in place and for the purposes of park and capital improvements to the court in the future.

### **Correspondance**

Lower Connecticut River Valley Regional Agricultural Council letter

### **November Park Permitted Events**

None

## **Parks Update**

### Main Street Park

Turf is in good condition towards the water and thin in heavily shaded area near gazebo in park. We will continue efforts to improve our turf conditions, mostly turf density.

- The Commission recommended that the Director work with our Tree Warden to prune and thin the canopy at Main Street Park to improve the amount of sunlight for our grass.

Painted 2 picnic tables

Fall clean-up ongoing.

Final mowing has been performed.

Moved bench at request of Garden Club.

Garden Club performed fall clean-up of the beds.

Irrigation System turned off.

### Dickinson Park

Fall clean-up to be performed by PW

### Hubbard Park

Turf inside baseball field in very good condition, turf outside baseball field was heavily seeded in the fall.

Trimmed euonymous bush along road side fence.

Fall turf care completed, fall clean-up ongoing, and final mowing completed.

Stored volleyball net

Work order turned in to cover scoreboard and take down batting cage netting

### Grove Street Park

Wear and tear to grounds due to construction, repairs scheduled for spring.

Will install bike rack at Grove Street Park for spring 2014.

Replacing ballast on hold, all power to court turned off

Fall turf care finished and final mowing performed.

Fall clean-up ongoing.

Stone wall embankment clean-up completed.

### Sunset Pond

Turf is in fair condition.

Fall clean-up to be performed.

- The Commission asked the Director to look into placing benches along the pond edge on the West Ave side of the property for our park visitors. The director stated he will get one or two in place for the spring.

### Ivoryton Green

Turf was in very good condition in mid-October, did see a lot of wear and tear due to special events.

Narrowed landscaped bed, seeded.

Fall turf care and final mowing completed.

Park fall clean-up ongoing.

### Comstock Park

Aeration and overseeding performed

Dugouts cleaned out / bases stored for winter

Turf in very good condition considering no irrigation and extremely dry Sept / Oct

#### Clark's Pond

Turf is in fair condition.

Fall clean-up to be performed by Public Works dept.

#### Viney Hill Brook Park

Turf is in fair to good condition.

Dog park fall clean up started.

Fall general weed whacking and clean up completed

Organic fertilization product application 4<sup>th</sup> of 4 applications completed.

Fall clean-up to be performed by Public Works dept.

#### **Program Managers Report:**

Rick Audet presented the Program Managers Report. The Pumpkin Festival was another great success this year, with a very large turnout of attendees. The wind made the lighting of the candles very difficult and the department will be using LED lights from now on, Cathy Bishop will assist us in their purchase. Rick discussed that he and Mary Ellen were disappointed that two after school programs, Mad Science and Out of the Box Art, were recently canceled due to low enrollment.

The Commission recommended to the Director that he approach the school principal and look to form a partnership with the school and discuss the possibility of co-hosting a Schools Out camp in April. They also asked the Director to put out a survey to EES parents to gauge their interest in such a program.

#### **New Business:**

The 2014 Park and Recreation Commission calendar of meetings proposed schedule was presented to the Commission and it was approved.

#### **Old Business:**

##### Main Street Park Embankment Project:

Rick Audet gave an update on this project. 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. The project will be completed in 2014. The project has an engineered plan, is fully funded, has local permit from IWWC, approval of Garden Club, has a contractor in place to perform the work, everything is set to go, again waiting for one form from CT DEEP.

##### 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.

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

Rick Audet updated the Commission on the status of this project. The playscape is scheduled for installation the week of November 11 and site prep has begun. On the tennis court, all the materials that did not pass our soils testing were removed and new materials were brought in that will be compacted for preparation of the subsurface. Rick Audet stated that the project will involve new

fencing for the court. The Commission directed Rick to inquire if portion of the project's contingency line can pay for the new fencing or help support it, Rick stated he would inquire on that with our First Selectman. The Commission stated its desire to hold off on any tennis court paving until the spring. The Commission discussed holding a ribbon cutting or some sort of celebratory event in December when the new playscape opens.

Essex Foundation – Clark's Pond Enhancement Project

See Public Comment above.

**Commission Overview:**

Mike Holmes announced his decision to not be re-appointed to the Commission for another 3 year term as the Chair or member. Mike stated his appreciation to our current commissioners and those he has worked with over the years. Mike also stated that the Commission is in a very stable and positive place and that the Commission should be proud of its accomplishments over the past number of years including: creating the department's Director position, monthly financial reports review process, bolstering sinking fund accounts, installing dugouts at Comstock, finishing the basketball center project, and projects at Main Street Park, Sunset Pond, and Clark's Pond.

The Commissioners thanked Mike for his service as well.

**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