



TOWN OF ESSEX  
**Park and Recreation Commission**

29 West Avenue • Essex, Connecticut 06426  
Telephone (860) 767-4340 x110 • FAX (860) 767-8509

**Regular Members**

*Robert Russo, Chairman*  
*Anthony Mosa*  
*Douglas Senn*  
*Virginia Willetts*  
*John Bean*  
**Alternates**  
*Daniel Needleman*  
*Brette Fitton*

**Unapproved**

**MINUTES - Tuesday, March 6, 2018 - Regular Meeting**

**1. Call to Order and Attendance**

The regular meeting of the Essex Park & Recreation Commission was conducted on Tuesday, March 6, 2018 in Conference Room B, of the Essex Town Hall.

**Attending Members:**

Robert Russo  
Anthony Mosa  
John Bean  
Daniel Needleman, seated for D Senn  
Brette Fitton, seated for V Willetts

**Absent Members:**

Doug Senn  
Virginia Willetts

**Staff:**

Mary Ellen Barnes, Park & Recreation Director  
Stella Beaudoin, Administrative Clerk

R Russo called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**2. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public present.

**3. Commission Overview**

R Russo introduced Daniel Needleman and Brette Fitton, newly appointed alternate members to the Park and Rec Commission.

B Fitton stated that she is an attorney who lives and practices in the Town of Essex and stated that her family has benefitted enormously from the Park and Rec programs.



D Needleman stated that he is employed by Tower Labs and has lived in Essex for a good deal of his life, and he currently resides in-town with his wife and children.

T Mosa, R Russo, J Bean and M. Barnes introduced themselves and provided the new members with a brief overview and the mission of the Park and Recreation Commission.

#### **4. Approval of January 9, 2018 Meeting Minutes**

**MOTION** made by A Mosa to approve the January 9, 2018 meeting Minutes as presented;

**SECONDED;** D Needleman; **Voting In Favor:** R Russo, A Mosa, J Bean, B Fitton, D Needleman;

**Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 5/0/0.

#### **5. Financial Reports**

**General Fund and Program Revenue Fund** – M. Barnes provided an overview of the Program Revenue Fund and explained the distinction of expenditures and income for the benefit of the new members in attendance. M Barnes reported a zero increase in the July 1, 2018 fiscal year budget noting that there are no requests for an increase in budget line items from the General Fund, Program Revenue Fund and the Commission Budget for 2018-19 Fiscal Year Budget.

M Barnes noted that there has been a consistent increase in the number of participants in the Park and Rec programs and she reported that a new Park and Rec Cheerleading program started today for which there are seventeen participants.

#### **7. Director's Report / Parks & Program**

M Barnes reported on the following activity:

##### **Park Events**

- **Essex go Bragh** - M. Barnes reported that this event will occur on March 10, 2017 and announced that the Grand Marshal will be Mr. Alan Miller.
- **Egg Hunt Grove Street Park** – March 31, 2018. M Barnes provided a brief explanation of the egg hunt and indicated that the volunteers are to be there between 8:30 and 9:00 a.m.
- **Baseball Fields Opening** – April 1, 2018; contingent on conditions,
- **Tennis Courts Opening** – April 1, 2018; contingent on completion of repairs. M Barnes stated that the tennis court maintenance will cost around \$6000 this season and the April 1 opening will be contingent on the weather and the completion of the repairs. M Barnes reported that it will be necessary to repaint the tennis courts and the cost to do so will be around \$20,000.
- **Wedding Main Street Park** - April 21, 2018.



- **Opening Day Baseball Parade** – Hubbard Field – All Ball Fields; April 28, 2018.
- **Essex Garden Club Set Up & Sale** – Main Street Park; May 8-14, 2018.
- **Shade Bake** – CT River Museum; June 2, 2018.

**Spring/Summer 2018 Programming:**

M Barnes reported that registration is currently being accepted for all spring and summer programming; Running Rams, Tennis, Archery, Cooking and 7 weeks of Summer Camp with some new and exciting themes and field trips. The new Cheer program started today with 17 participants and Adult Yoga will make a comeback beginning on Monday, March 12, 2018.

**Essex go Bragh – Task Assignments:**

M Barnes stated that there over 30 units and this is the largest response of participants, to date. M Barnes reported that Alan Miller is thrilled to be this year’s Grand Marshal and Lucy Leo, who is a local resident and very active within the community will lead the antique cars in the parade. M Barnes stated that she will email members with their respective assignments.

**Parks Update:**

**Dickinson Park**

- No update.

**Main Street Park**

- No update.

**Grove & Tennis Courts**

- Update discussed under New Business.

**Sunset Pond**

- No Update.

**Ivoryton Green**

- No Update.

**Comstock Park**

- No Update.

**Clark’s Pond**

- No Update.



### **Viney Hill Brook Park**

The gate to the lower parking will open for the season approximately April 1, 2018 depending on weather conditions.

### **Hubbard Park**

The basketball court will undergo maintenance and repair of cracks and re-painting this spring.

## **6. New Business**

### **a. Tobacco Free Policy Overview and Vote of Support**

M Barnes stated that she serves on the Tri Town Substance Abuse Commission who supports a mission on healthy lifestyles and limiting substance abuse. To that end, M. Barnes stated that a first step would be to safeguard the parks with the incorporation of a tobacco and smoke free policy. M Barnes stated that she is seeking the formation of policy which will require the prohibition on all forms of smoking devices within the Essex parks.

T Mosa stated that he liked the idea of a tobacco and smoke-free policy and questioned if there is an alcohol-free policy within the Essex parks system. M Barnes stated that there is not an alcohol-free policy within the Town Parks. However, alcohol is prohibited on the ball fields.

M Barnes distributed a draft of definitions and similar policies implemented in a few of the surrounding towns and she stated that the enforcement of a tobacco-free policy would be a Park and Recreation guideline.

T Mosa questioned the implementation of the disallowance of chewing tobacco noting that the enforcement of such might be difficult. T Mosa stated that he does however support the no-tobacco policy in general.

M Barnes requested authorization from the Commission to present this tobacco-free concept to the Board of Selectmen.

**MOTION** made by A Mosa to authorize M. Barnes to provide the Tobacco Free policy within the Town parks, to the Board of Selectmen, and seek direction and feedback of the same; **SECONDED:** D Needleman; **Voting In Favor:** R Russo, A Mosa, J Bean, B Fitton, D Needleman; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 5/0/0.

### **b. Capital Improvements. Grove Street Park Pathway – Review and Vote to Approve Funding.**

M Barnes reported on the Grove Street Park pathway and she stated that the original thought was to lay-down crushed stone on the pathway. M. Barnes stated that she researched the options for surface materials and in doing so, she discovered that it might be feasible to pave the path rather



than placing and replacing the crushed stone material. M Barnes stated that the crushed stone surface requires attention to weed control and the replenishment of crushed stone, annually. M Barnes stated that paving the pathway would resolve the overall maintenance issue, and also allow accessibility to wheel chair, stroller, bike riders, and roller skaters, etc.

**MOTION** made by B Fitton to authorize M. Barnes to speak with the Board of Selectman and request the expenditure, not to exceed \$25,000 for improvements to the Grove Street Park pathway; **SECONDED:** D Needleman; **Voting In Favor:** R Russo, A Mosa, J Bean, B Fitton, D Needleman; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 5/0/0.

#### **9. Old Business**

There was no old business.

#### **10. Public Comment**

There was no further discussion.

#### **11. General Discussion**

R Russo reported that he will begin walking the parks to assess conditions, commencing in the Spring and offered members the opportunity to do the same. R Russo stated that he will email members to determine if there is an interest in accompaniment.

J Bean stated that his son just completed the Leggo Engineering program and he praised the facilitator for his passion and his ability to work in harmony with the parents and the participants.

#### **10. Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by A Mosa to adjourn at 8:10pm to the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be conducted on Tuesday, June 5, 2018, Essex Town Hall, Conference Room B; **SECONDED:** B Fitton; **Voting In Favor:** R Russo, A Mosa, J Bean, B Fitton, D Needleman; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 5/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin  
Recording Secretary

