East Haddam Recreation Commission
Special Meeting Minutes
June 6, 2022

Attending: D. Carbo; B. Free; T. Goodie; C. Grillo; M. Roberts; F. Tremblay
Absent: T. Pisciotti; M. Davis; P. Laffan
Guests: D. Grunert, M. Grunert; I. Haines; S. Hathaway; S. Young; S. Wheeler

1. **Call to Order** - Mr. Grillo called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

2. **Approval of Agenda**

The meeting followed a standard order of business; therefore, no approval of the agenda was required.

3. **Approval of Minutes**

The Commissioners reviewed the minutes of the February 2, 2022 meeting.

MOTION MADE BY MS. FREE, SECONDED BY MR. CARBO, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2, 2022 MEETING AS WRITTEN. UNANIMOUS AYE.

4. **Committee Reports**

- **Music on the River (MOR)** - Ms. Roberts reported that the Music On The River committee has signed contracts with all of the bands for the 2022 season, that a new website is up, and the schedule was posted in the East Haddam News.

  Ms. Conroy previewed the new Music on the River website and reported the they have received approximately $10,000.00 in donations to date.

- **Disc Golf** – There was no new update on disc golf. In response to a question, Ms. Conroy advised that work has not yet begun on the new holes.

5. **Director's Report**

A. **Winter/Spring Programs Review** – Ms. Conroy reviewed the following programs:

- The youth and 18+ basketball programs were a success.
- Dodgeball is going well with good participation.
- Registration for the Abrakadoodle program is full and it will be repeated in the fall.
- There were 22 participants in the Boating class.
- Soccer camp went well and the spring soccer program has started.

B. **Planning for Summer**

Ms. Conroy reported the following spring program plans:

- The Noises Sports Academy Camp is scheduled for the first two weeks of summer break and registrations for most of the sports have already met last year's numbers.

- There will be six weeks of Day Camp. Due to bus limitations/expense, registration was capped at 100 participants and is full. There are significant wait lists so, after she receives the bus schedules, she may add another bus if the expense can be justified.
- Skyhawks golf and tennis camps are scheduled.
- There are also several other smaller topic-driven camps scheduled for the summer

Ms. Conroy further reported that two new positions have been added to the summer camp program: a Music & Theatre director and a para-professional.

C. **Budget**

Ms. Conroy reported that the Town's FY2022-2023 budget passed referendum and it includes funding for a 20-hour Assistant Recreation Director. She believes that their request to add climbing structures at Nicols playground and the Town Beach were also approved.

She advised that their CSDE 2022 Summer Enrichment Grant Program Overview grant application had not been approved.

6. **Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business discussed at the meeting.

7. New Business

A. **New Programs**

Ms. Conroy reported that Yoga is back in-person one day per week and she is trying to schedule more open gym time on Tuesdays and Thursdays for the 13-18 year old age group.

B. **Facilities Update**

Ms. Conroy provide the following facilities update:

- The tennis/pickleball courts are finished and she has purchased a hitting board to be installed for single player practice. In response to a question from Mr. Grillo, she presented a picture of a sign that will be posted at the courts with the rules of use, including how participants should rotate play time.
- Ballek's repaired the walkway at Nicols field.
- Several exercise pipes were installed at the Dog Park.
- New mulch was added to the playgrounds at Nicols Field and the Town Beach.
- New swings were installed at the Town Beach playground.
- Shade umbrellas were added at the Skate Park.

D. **Open Space Representative**

Ms. Conroy advised that Mr. Goodie had volunteered to be the Rec Commission's Open Space representative at the Conservation Commission meetings.

MOTION MADE BY MR. GRILLO, SECONDED BY MS. ROBERTS, TO APPOINT TRAVIS GOODIE AS THE RECREATION COMMISSION'S OPEN SPACE REPRESENTATIVE ON THE EAST HADDAM CONSERVATION COMMISSION. MR. TRAVIS ABSTAINED FROM THE VOTE AND IT PASSED BY A MAJORITY OF AYES.

E. **Non-Resident Fee for Town Beach**

Ms. Conroy advised that non-resident use of the Town Beach has increased over the past several years and some of the visitors have not been respectful of the beach rules and common courtesies. She stated that trash is left for others to pick-up, personal items have been stolen, loud inappropriate music is being played, and some visitors are using charcoal grills and docking boats in restricted areas.

Ms. Conroy noted that there is a CT Supreme Court ruling prohibiting municipalities from banning non-resident use of public parks and beaches. She stated that many towns have addressed similar problems, while still complying with the ruling, by instituting parking restrictions and fees. She provided an overview of the policies of a number of surrounding cities and towns.

There was a general discussion regarding the best approach for East Haddam and the consensus was to impose a daily parking fee. The Commissioners discussed how the new policy would be implemented and how violations would be addressed. Mr. Grillo expressed his strong concern about putting a young person in charge of collecting fees and monitoring compliance with the new policy.

MOTION MADE BY MR. GOODIE, SECONDED BY MR. CARBO, TO INSTITUTE A $40.00 NON-RESIDENT DAILY PARKING FEE AT THE EAST HADDAM TOWN BEACH, EFFECTIVE JUNE 20, 2022. MR. GRILLO VOTED NAY AND THE MOTION PASSED BY A MAJORITY OF AYES.

In response to a request by Mr. Grillo, Ms. Conroy agreed to send the board members a copy of the draft non-resident parking fee policy, including how violations will be addressed.

8. Adjournment

THERE BEING NO ADDITIONAL BUSINESS TO DISCUSS, MR. GRILLO MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MR. TREMBLAY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. UNANIMOUS AYE.

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
/s/ Sharon R. Wheeler
Recording Secretary