

**PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION
EAST GRANBY, CONNECTICUT**

**MINUTES
October 5, 2023**

1. CALL TO ORDER

A regular meeting of the East Granby Parks & Recreation Commission was held Thursday, October 5, 2023, in the Town Hall Large Conference Room. Robert Ravens-Seger called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. Members also present were Nicole Sokolowski, Leona Bevins, Marc Dlugolenski, Carly McKenney, Karen Hines, and Morgan Bengel. Program Coordinator Alicia Van Neil was also present. Pat Gill and Christina Leadbeater were absent.

2. DISCUSSION WITH THE PUBLIC

None

3. APPROVE MINUTES

A motion was made by K Hines and seconded by M Dlugolenski to approve the August 3, 2023, minutes. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried. A motion was made by L Bevins and seconded by M Dlugolenski to approve the September 7, 2023, minutes. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

4. CORRESPONDENCE

A Van Neil shared that she received an email from a person interested in being a student representative, and one from Project Graduation 2024 requesting a donation.

5. PROGRAM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Program Coordinator A Van Neil stated the fall programs are going well. Flag football is up and running. Registration for the winter Basketball and Ski Sundown programs is open.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

N Sokolowski reported that the budget is on track. September hasn't closed yet.

7. OLD BUSINESS

A. Committee Reports

1. **Farmington Valley Heritage Trail** – R Ravens-Seeger stated that he did not walk the trail recently. A Van Neil reminded that the trails do not get plowed in the winter, nor should individuals take the initiative themselves.
 - a. **Emergency Management Markers**- No update

2. **Cowles Park** –
 - a. **Emergency Management Markers**- K Hines shared that she approved Tom Pavelchak’s trail marker prototypes and asked questions about sign material/design but hasn’t heard back from him.
 - b. **ADA Bike Trail Updates**- A Van Neil talked to the town engineer and learned the area needs to be surveyed. The surveyor that the town usually uses was unavailable, so a different surveyor supplied a quote to survey. That quote is higher than expected, so a second quote from the original surveyor has been requested.

3. **Granbrook Park** – M Bengel shared an update on the playground clean-up. Mulch is unable to be used due to potential flooding. The funding from the women’s club, as well as some funding from a resident will be used to purchase sand for some pathways. A Van Neil mentioned that P Gill shared with her the deteriorating railroad ties will be removed in the next month or so. A Van Neil shared that the recent flooding caused large potholes to form in the parking lot.
 - a. **Vote on funding for water system** – A Van Neil shared that the water system that feeds the fountain and splash pad has failed and needs to be replaced. DPW can do the work. The cost to replace is around \$18,000. Funding can come from the open space fund, which has \$30,500 in it.

Motion: A motion was made by M Bengel and seconded by R Ravens-Seeger to utilize a sum not to exceed \$20,000 from the Open Space Fund for replacing the water system at Granbrook Park. **All votes were in favor and the motion carried.**

- b. **Gate Closure/Attendant**- A Van Neil shared the security person that was hired ended on Labor Day. DPW and the PD open and close the gate now until next summer. The discussion about charging or not charging entrance fees is tabled until next meeting.
 - c. **Softball Field** – A Van Neil shared that she and P Gill need to work on the Wetlands application.

4. **East Granby Farms** – A Van Neil discussed with the group that Parks and Rec will be requesting money from the town Capital Funds to build a small playground and remove the existing deteriorating climbing tractor, as well as money for a 15-passenger van. These requests will be put forth at the November Board of Finance meeting. Anyone interested in helping to research playscapes can contact her. Three quotes are needed for submission.

A Van Neil shared that the water fountain needs to be replaced at East Granby Farms. DPW can do the work and gave an estimate of \$8000. A discussion was held about possible funding sources.

Motion: A motion was made by M Bengel and seconded by R Ravens-Seeger that a sum not to exceed \$8,000 be used from the Rec Center Budget to fix the water fountain at East Granby Farms. **All votes were in favor and the motion carried.**

- a. **Basketball Court Update-** The old basketball hoop will be removed, and the new hoop will be installed. A contractor is meeting M Dlugolenski tomorrow for a cost estimate.
- b. **STEAP Grant-** A Van Neil shared that the application has been approved!!! \$500,000 plus town support has been awarded. There is a meeting next week with a STEAP representative to discuss the process. A town meeting will be held for the public to accept the grant. A project committee will be formed of 5-7 members. This committee will oversee the entire project. Several board members submitted their names to be considered for committee members. The project will start within 90 days.
- c. **Ball Field Updates-** Discussion continued about cleaning up the bushes and brush around the backstop area of the baseball field. M Dlugolenski will discuss with Little League to see if there can be a volunteer clean-up day.

Motion: A motion was made by R Ravens-Seeger and seconded by L Bevins that a sum not to exceed \$2,600 be used from the Field Maintenance Budget to clean up the bushes and brush around the backstop area of the baseball field at East Granby Farms. **All votes were in favor and the motion carried.**

5. **Sports Programs/Coaching/Training/Policies** – Need to update the background check policy and training for the coaches. L Bevins shared information from surrounding towns: Granby, Suffield and Windsor Locks. Granby uses the same program East Granby does, Averity: Protect Youth Sports, as well as the PD runs background checks. The PD in Suffield gives a questionnaire to potential coaches and performs the background checks. Windsor Locks does background checks. If there is a temporary coach, they run that person through the sex offender website. M Dlugolenski shared that Windsor uses the program People Trail. The next step is to compare costs and functions of the different background check programs.

6. Program Committee –

- a. **Fall Concert-** Was held on Saturday 9/30 from 11-5. N Sokolowski shared that it was fun, but a bit slow because the weather was not great. Recommended changes to make the event better: have a shorter program, reduce the break between bands, bring in food trucks, have more vendors/crafters, shut down the road in the town center, and consider moving the location to East Granby Farms.

- b. **Halloween-** To be held at Newgate Prison on 10/28 from 4:30-7:00pm. Newgate Prison staff can accommodate 20 people every 10 minutes for a total of 300 tickets for the mine tours. Pre-registration for half of the tickets to the mine will be open 10/24-26. East Granby residents only. Residents with pre-registered tickets need to arrive 15 minutes before their selected time slot or their tickets will be released. The other half of the tickets will be available at the event at a table inside the gated area instead of at the welcome table. The middle school volunteer application will be available next week. An email will be sent to the groups that help at the event as well. A Van Neil asked M Bengel if the Prison could accommodate more tours after 7 if an after-event (movie or magician) takes place. M Bengel will get back to A Van Neil. Set-up starts around 3:30 pm.
- c. **Tree Lighting-** To be held on 12/1. Valley Student Theater agreed to push the start time of their show that evening to 7:00 to avoid community conflict.

B. Student Representatives – C McKenney heard from the high school guidance counselors that one student is interested in joining the Parks and Rec Commission. C McKenney made a questionnaire for the student to fill out but hasn't received it back from them. A Van Neil has received correspondence from another student and will send them the same questionnaire. A Van Neil mentioned it would be good to fill these slots in November as board member terms run from November to end of October.

C. Park Rules – M Bengel mentioned that the committee needs more time to compile them and will have a final draft for the next meeting.

8. NEW BUSINESS

A. Request for a donation from Project Graduation 2024 –

Motion: A motion was made by M Dlugolenski and seconded by N Sokolowski to donate \$400 to Project Graduation Class of 2024. **All votes were in favor and the motion carried.**

B. Board Member Terms – Two board members, N Sokolowski and C Leadbeater have terms ending at the end of the month. They need to decide if they would like to commit to another 4-year term and e-mail P Gill with their decision.

9. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by N Sokolowski and seconded by M Dlugolenski to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 pm. Votes in favor were unanimous. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,
Jennifer Kovaleski
Commission Clerk