

Killingworth Parks and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
September, 10, 2024
Emergency Operations Center, Killingworth, CT

1.Call to Order: Jim called the meeting to order at 7:30pm. Present: Jim Duffield (Chair), Glenn Johnson, Jeremy Burr, Bill Burley, Chris Smalley, Chris Swiss and Donna Clark

2.Approval of the Minutes: *Glenn made a motion to approve the August 12, 2024 meeting minutes, Chris Smalley seconded the motion and it passed with one abstention.

3.Visitors: Holly Perry, Ben Sodergren, Gwenne Celmer, Jan O’Sullivan, Jim McDonald, Lucinda Hogarty, Colin Steele, Greg Wind

4.Public Comment

Holly Perry, Board President of Killingworth Library spoke to concerns they have regarding construction of pickleball courts on Recycle Way and Rt. 81. The Library Board was not consulted as an interested party during the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission review and approval of the site. The Library Board feels overlooked and without full input in the process. They also have concerns regarding potential noise levels during library operating hours, the potential of carry over parking by players in the library parking lot and the presence of courts interfering with library expansion. Ben Sodergren spoke of decibel levels being a concern for both indoor and outdoor library programs. Other visitors questioned the viability of other sites in town including Sheldon and Eric Auer Parks.

A discussion followed with the members relaying the thought process of the Commission in choosing a site for the courts. There was an acknowledgement that the Library Board had not been included in previous discussions regarding construction. The Commission made clear that the plan includes tree planting as a buffer and will include sound dampening fence covers to reduce noise in all bid requirements as well as a review of acoustic patterns at the site. There was a discussion regarding possible library expansion and parking as related to adjacent wetlands. There was a discussion regarding moving the site slightly north, further from the library.

Library Board member, Gwenne Celmer, expressed that she sees no scenario in which the Library and the pickleball courts could coexist at the proposed site. Jim will continue the discussion with Holly Perry in the future. The visitors expressed their desire to attend future Parks and Recreation Commission meetings.

Colin Steele, HK Youth Lacrosse and the CT Wolves, discussed a field request to be submitted for fields 1 and 3 at Eric Auer Park on Saturdays 2-6pm. This will require shifting of use on both soccer and football fields involving field 3. The field will be lined beyond existing, and will use a portable goal crease to lessen damage. All equipment will be removed/returned after use. Colin acknowledges potential issues in rescheduling games and will work with other user groups accordingly.

Colin also presented a \$8,500 + labor donation from his employer, The CT Regional Water Authority, to level and expand the practice field at Eric Auer in November. Colin as well as board member Chris Smalley will participate in the project. Colin also commented on the pickleball/library discussion emphasizing the importance of both library programs and recreation options and the need to work together to find common ground.

Greg Wind, Director Killingworth Lions Club commented on the Sheldon Park playground. He introduced himself and discussed the Lions Club role in donating and maintaining playground equipment. In addressing recent community questions of safety and liability, Greg presented his detailed assessment of the donated equipment. The playground currently requires up to 190 cubic yards (4 inch depth) of playground mulch. Greg also proposed replacing the swing chains, replacing a missing swing, removing a stump, and cleaning equipment. All donated pieces are in good condition with no repairs required but would benefit from periodic inspection, cleaning, rust removal and paint. The Lions Club will continue to collaborate with the town to clean and refurbish equipment with a \$750.00 budget. Greg also weighed in on the pickleball/library discussion in recommending looking at Beechwood as a pickleball site. The Commission recognized Greg's work and encouraged him to continue to attend meetings.

The discussion continued with Jim submitting that the Barrel unit and the eyelet for the swing chain have been replaced. Volunteers have cleaned equipment, pulled weeds, removed garbage, trimmed branches and worked to secure the boundary wall. Jim has asked Eric for assistance in removing the broken and unrepairable piece of equipment and to repair the firetruck piece. There was discussion regarding order and delivery of wood chips.

4.Bills, Applications and Communications:

Applications:

- 1.HKSoccer, 8/11-11/10, fields 2,3,4 Auer, everyday
- 2.HKLL, 8/26-11/1, Rocco, every evening, weekends, baseball and softball
- 3.HKYFA, 8/1-11/1, field 1 and practice field 5-8pm, Sunday, 9/8-10/16 all day
- 4.HKYLA, 9/14, 9/21, 9/28, 10/5, 10/19, fields 1,3 (modified), 4-6pm, Sat
- 5.CT Wolves, club lacrosse, 9/28, 10/5, 10/12, 10/19, fields 1,3 (modified) 2-4pm, practice only

***Chris Smalley made a motion to approve the applications, Bill seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Bills:

1. Langer, mowing, \$2,263.88, 1/12
- 2.Anthony Carri, Sheldon gatekeeping, July \$310.00, August \$310.00
- 3.TruGreen, fertilizing, all parks, \$840.40
- 4.Sweitzer, \$177.02 Sheldon
\$119.90 Rocco

\$177.02 Auer
\$67.20 Bethke
5. Eversource, \$134.94 Sheldon
\$357.99 Auer
6. Clean Restrooms, \$95.00 Rocco
\$205.00 Sheldon
\$225.50 Auer

***Bill made a motion to pay the bills as read, Chris Swiss seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

5. Treasurer's Report: 8.8% spent

6. Old Business

- Sweitzer contract
- field usage changes, \$75/hr?
- Wetlands should have notified the Library of the application and approval of courts.

Sheldon:

- Pavillion repair, ongoing search for contractor
- Playground inspection

***Chris Swiss made a motion to spend \$6,000.00 for wood chips for Sheldon Park playground, Jeremy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

- Irrigation pump replacement by Jim will be completed soon

Rocco:

- continued work and upgrades by HKLL.

Bethke:

- will turn field in the spring

Eric Auer:

- Pavillion, discussed separating work, concrete and building, to attract contractors. Simplify project for less cost, (truss like Sheldon) and likelihood of completion. Will send out to bid again.
- Field Project, still no work per contract, legal action to be taken, force performance through bond.

- AED devices to be supplied for all parks by the Ambulance Association with appropriate security cases and instructions for four digit code for access.

***Bill made a motion to adjourn at 9:44pm**

Respectfully submitted, Donna Clark

