

Killingworth Park and Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
October 21, 2024
Emergency Operations Center, Killingworth, CT

1.Call to Order: Jim called the meeting to order at 7:33pm. Present: Jim Duffield (Chair), Glenn Johnson, Bill Burley, Donna Clark, Chris Smalley, Chris Swiss. Absent: Jeremy Burr

2.Approval of the Minutes: *Glenn made a motion to approve the September 10, 2024 meeting minutes, Chris Swiss seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

3.Visitors: Richard Otto, LaQueta Jamieson, Eric Couture, Gwen Celmer, Greg Wind, Ethan Drain

4.Public Comment:

Greg Wind, on behalf of the Lion's Club, came to thank the Commission for its work on the Sheldon Park playground. He singled out Jim for his leadership, Chris Smalley for his donation of mulch and equipment and Bill Burley for equipment and labor on the project. Lions Chair, Eric Nunes and Eric Couture have asked Greg to work as liaison between the Lions Club and the Commission to focus on issues in an efficient manner; the Commission agreed. Jim and Greg discussed some missed emails and how to correct miscommunications. Repair of benches at the softball field, swing chain replacements were discussed.

Members of the Library Board were present to address concerns regarding potential pickleball courts adjacent to the library as addressed in the September meeting. Richard Otto discussed the development of Eric Auer Park and pointed out the possibility of expansion there to address future needs such as tennis or pickleball courts. He pointed out that expansion there was considered for the area to the east of the parking lot. There was a discussion about the space in regard to wetlands, woods, hiking trails and disk golf. Otto asked the Commission to consider Auer Park for the courts.

There was a discussion concerning future library expansion plans near the proposed pickleball court site. The discussion included wetlands and possibility of expansion.

Gwen Celmer spoke to noise levels associated with pickleball; she played a recording of pickleball and verbally mimicked the noise to demonstrate potential effects the sound may have within the library. There was extensive debate and discussion regarding potential noise issues both inside the library building and outside in the courtyard. The Commission reiterated its planning in noise reduction in plantings and sound deadening fence screening.

The Library members again questioned the Commission's procedure in deciding on the Rocco site for the pickleball project. The Commission cited cost, space and input from the user group.

Otto questioned whether the Municipal improvements form is being used as the project evolves and Eric Couture verified. The Wetland Commission has approved the site and the project is being appropriately tracked. Otto mentioned that the proposed site is, at times, used as a landing site for Life Star in the event of an emergency.

Otto asked the Commission to step away from the site as a location for the courts and/or take a fresh look at the project.

5. Bills, Applications and Communication:

Bills

1. Anthony Carri, Sheldon gatekeeping, Sept. \$300.00
2. Kristen LaVoila, Auer gatekeeping, Aug. \$310.00, Sept. \$300.00
3. Langer, #2, #3, \$2263.88 x2
4. Drainscapes, #1, 2, 3, \$3,136.68 x2, \$3,411.68 (head repair)
5. Sweitzer, Sheldon \$177.02
 Auer \$177.02
 Rocco \$119.90
 Bethke \$67.20
6. Eversource, Auer \$49.17
 Sheldon \$130.04
7. TruGreen, fertilize, \$840.40
8. Cleanstar Restrooms, Sept., Sheldon \$205.00
 Auer \$450.72
 Rocco \$95.00
 Oct., Sheldon \$205.00
 Auer \$365.00
 Rocco \$95.00

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

Applications

1. Horseshoe group, Sheldon, 9/28-10/12

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

6. Treasurer's Report: Chris Swiss reported \$14,654.73 spent, 13.2%

7. Old Business

Pickleball Courts Project:

- location of courts, Library concerns
- wetland approval
- parking at Rocco, Historical Society
- discussed Sheldon Park location, scale back to tree courts to reduce cost, will send plan to Eric
- funds need to be committed by 12/31/2024
- discussed using CT State bid list
- planning for a site walk
- Jim will call a Special Meeting for next Monday, 10/28 for reconsideration.

Sheldon:

- irrigation pump is repaired.
- discussed softball bleachers repair/replace
- HKHS woodshop helping to rebuild dugouts (helmet boxes)
- Chris Swiss, on behalf of HKLL, asks to replace the shed behind the upper field backstop with a two level storage shed/ announcer space, 16ft high. Discussed involving the Building Department, and the need to explore legal requirements regarding maintenance and safety.

Eric Auer Park:

-Ethan Drain proposed seeding and aeration for portions of fields, \$5,200.00 + \$700.00, \$1,750.00 for fertilizer

***Bill made a motion to proceed with this work, Chris Smalley seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

-Pavillion, in order to complete the project, looking at breaking down the work and splitting up the costs in site work, concrete and actual structure. Breakout each component with 2-3 bids. Project is currently over budget. Discussed potential of eventual Director of Public Works to act as a General Contractor on the project.

-Baseball field project: Ignatowski Excavation is in breach of contract. His bid was \$406,390 for the Baseball/Multipurpose Field, Phase II at Auer Park. A bond was not submitted by Ignatowski. Discussed possible litigation, will consult with town counsel. Discussed potential to bid original plan again.

-2025 Meeting Schedule

-Chris Swiss, on behalf of HKLL, makes a pitch for collaborative effort toward lights for the baseball field at Rocco, Sheldon. HKLL poised to incur some of the proposed \$150K cost. Discussed expanding Rocco outfield to also serve as a multipurpose field.

***Jim made a motion to adjourn at 10:01pm.**