

Haddam Park & Recreation Commission
Regular Meeting
Thursday, November 14, 2019
MINUTES
Approved as printed at the January 9, 2020 Regular Meeting

In attendance: Chairman Jason Loneragan, Commissioner Jennifer O’Neal, and newly appointed Commissioners Peter Christopher and David Law

Not in attendance: Commissioner Daniel Belanger

Staff in attendance: Barbara Galloway, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Commissioner O’Neal made the Motion that in Chairman Loneragan’s temporary absence, she would temporarily serve as acting chairman in order to begin the meeting. Commissioner Law seconded the Motion. The Motion was approved. Acting Chairman O’Neal called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

**The representatives of the two guest organizations in attendance, the group with the working name “Blue Green Way” and the Haunted House/Trunk or Treat developers, were recognized at the beginning of the meeting, prior to the main portion of the meeting agenda, to allow them to communicate with the commission and depart, if they wished.*

2. *Discussion of potential new trails projects with members of the group Blue-Green-Way

Three concerned and interested town residents, working under the group name Blue Green Way, were present to discuss their ideas to develop a “rails with trails” and beyond program that would hopefully branch into a larger economic and territorial development program locally. Residents Alan Aronow, Ginger LaBella, and Maurice Adams spoke to the commissioners about their overall plan and described the work that they had done and contacts they had made to-date in their short existence. The current goal is to create a large group of “Friends of the Rails with Trails group that can work with the CT DEEP and larger businesses in the area to develop the area for economic and recreational purposes. The commissioners expressed their interest in the basic plan and agreed that the project will take teamwork within the town and surrounding CT River towns to succeed. They made suggestions to the group about which other town agencies they should approach.

3. *Discussion of outcomes of and reactions to the Grim’s Haunted House event held October 25 and 26 and Trunk or Treat held October 26

Residents Chuck Cook and Mark Lundgren joined the commissioners to review the positive and negative aspects of the Haunted House event held on Friday, October 25 and Saturday, October 26 and the Trunk or Treat event held on Saturday, October 26th. A list of items to consider ahead of and for next year’s events was developed. Rearrangements of displays and the activities tent were suggested and considered which would allow for a larger space for entrance into the Haunted House. More effective advertising and signage as well as the relocation with higher visibility of the receptacle for donations (to Haddam Food Bank and Haddam Fuel Bank) will be needed. There was brief discussion for the consideration at a later time the idea of

charging a minimum donation fee for entry to the Haunted House next year. It was agreed that public participation had increased dramatically from the previous years and that the event was considered a success with many more residents and visitors attending and staying on site to socialize and interact. It was noted that the food truck there ran out of food before 8:00 with event due to be open until 9:00 PM. The hours may be adjusted next year.

4. Introduction of newly appointed Members

After his arrival at and taking over chairing of the meeting, Chairman Lonergan suggested that with two newly appointed commissioners in attendance, all of the commissioners should introduce and tell the group about themselves. Resident Peter Christopher, who has attended several recent meetings and has been researching a repair/renovation project for the commission as a private citizen, was recognized and welcomed as a newly appointed commissioner. Resident David Law introduced himself and was welcomed and recognized as a newly appointed commissioner.

5. Election of a new Vice Chairman and Secretary

Commissioner Christopher made the Motion seconded by Commissioner Law to nominate Commissioner Jennifer O’Neal for the position of Vice Chairman. The Motion was approved unanimously.

Vice Chairman O’Neal made the Motion seconded by Commissioner Law to nominate Commissioner Peter Christopher for the position of Secretary. The Motion was approved unanimously.

6. Approval of the Minutes of the September 12, 2019 and October 10, 2019 Regular Meetings

Commissioner Christopher made the Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O’Neal to approve as printed the September 12, 2019 Minutes. The Motion was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Christopher made the Motion seconded by Vice Chairman O’Neal to accept as printed the September 12, 2019 Minutes. The Motion was accepted unanimously.

7. General Review of current budget financial reports (10/2019)

The commissioners discussed the distributed financial reports, “Adjustments to Budgeted Expenditures – General Fund, October 2019”, dated 11/06/2019 and “Adjustments to Budgeted Expenditures – Capital Non-Recurring, October 2019”, dated 11/06/2019. They determined that they are currently on budget.

8. Unfinished Business

a. *Haddam Elementary School property – any updated information*

The Haddam Elementary School property was discussed again considering the property’s proximity to the Blue Green Way’s plan and to solving many special problems the town is experiencing for meeting space, athletic events venues, and recreational endeavors. Chairman Lonergan will contact Town Planner Bill Warner about meeting with this commission regarding property purposes and their ideas for future usage of the building and the property as well as about their ideas/plans for the General Fund and Capital Non-Recurring Fund Budgets for 2020-2021.

- b. *Status of activities at Great Hills Fields and Brickyard property*
Chairman Lonergan noted that he will call and order the pick-up of the port-o-let at the Brickyard field.

Commissioner Christopher informed the commissioners that he is still attempting to obtain a third bid for the fence and field work needed at the Brickyard. He will try to get the last bid from one of the additional companies he has contacted within the next month or so.

- c. *Discussion/Approval of the 2020 Meeting schedule draft distributed at the September Meeting*

The commissioners reviewed the draft version of the 2020 Meetings Schedule. Vice Chairman O'Neal noted that April 9 is during Spring Break week. Chairman Lonergan noted that he may be away for the week of the August 13 Meeting. There may possibly be a conflict for the in June 11 Meeting if there are snow days this winter with Tuesday, June 9 scheduled to be the last day of school. The commissioners discussed these possible issues, but approved the 2020 Meetings Schedule as printed.

9. New Business

- a. *Future Capital Planning – any new thoughts*

Chairman Lonergan suggested that the commissioners make a list of the projects they would like to consider for funding in the next several years. The individual lists will be discussed and meshed into a single commission list at a future meeting. Hoped for uses of town properties including Great Hills and Brickyard ball fields and the Haddam Elementary School property should also be discussed at a meeting with the town planner in the near future. These issues should also be discussed in conjunction with the commission's 2020-21 Budget plan.

- b. *Additions of any new ideas for the park-related and recreation-related activities to the Commission ongoing list*

Beyond the activities discussed by the Blue Green Way earlier in the meeting, the commissioners should individually prepare lists for additional park- and recreation-related activities. They

- c. *Haddam-Killingworth Recreation Authority members update*

The commissioners updated their membership on the Haddam-Killingworth Recreation Authority. **The members to serve the Haddam-Killingworth Recreation Authority through June 30, 2020 are Jason Lonergan, Dan Belanger, Jennifer O'Neal, and Peter Christopher.** These names will be sent to the Haddam Board of Selectmen for approval at a meeting in the near future.

- d. *Possibility of Haddam Park & Recreation Commission Facebook page*

Vice Chairman O'Neal suggested starting a Commission Facebook page that can be linked to the Town website so the commission can begin to show photos of and information regarding town athletic fields, trails, etc. The commissioners all thought that was a good idea. Chairman Lonergan will ask

at the TOB to see if this can be done. Vice Chairman O'Neal offered to create it if the Facebook page is acceptable by the Town.

10. Correspondence

Chairman Lonergan noted that the only mail received this month was a bill for the port-o-lets at the ballfields. He has to contact the company to have the port-o-let at Brickyard picked up and stored for the winter months, although the one will remain for winter usage at the Great Hills site.

11. Adjournment

Vice Chairman O'Neal made the Motion seconded by Commissioner Law to adjourn the Meeting. The Motion was approved unanimously. The Meeting was adjourned at 10:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara D. Galloway
Recording Clerk