

Lyme Recreation Commission
Meeting Minutes
10/27/08

DRAFT

6:00 PM Lyme Academy Building

In attendance:

Dina Cutting (chairperson)

Kathleen Henriques

Tom Yurkosky

Robert Couture

Peter Mulvihill (alternate for Charles Reagan, not attending)

Simon Carr (visiting Selectman)

Steve Small (Athletic Director)

In attendance from the public and townspeople:

John Chamberlain

LouAnn Conroy

Tom Morrissey

Julia Kono

Simon Carr begins with an introduction of the Lyme Committee Handbook. This document dated 9/2/08 is an outline of general procedures for all Town Commissions, Boards and Committee Members on how to comply with statute RSA 91-A and related "Right to Know" regulations. Lyme Select board recently adopted this Handbook and Simon Carr in the RC meeting directed the RC members to study the Handbook and to honor its guidelines regarding commission meetings and protocol for communication between members and the public.

Simon Carr and Dina Cutting reported next on their 10/13/08 meeting with Collis Adams at New Hampshire DES. Also in attendance at the meeting were Jim Kennedy and an unnamed associate of Collis Adams at DES. In that meeting there was an informal acknowledgment that a material portion of the playing field and beach area at Chase might include jurisdictional wetlands. This finding could require the RC to provide the State of New Hampshire with replacement wetlands if the ball field and beach are filled in. Collis Adams indicated that NH DES might be willing to entertain the designation of a portion of Lyme's property at Chaffee as substitute wetlands. This step would involve placing a permanent conservation easement on a portion of the Chaffee property that would have to be held by a third part (Upper Valley Land Trust for example). To undertake the planned renovation of the Chase ball field and beach, NH DES will require Lyme to submit a formal dredge and fill permit. This permit will be reviewed by NH DES and Fish & Game. Because Post Pond is a great pond, there is also the potential for Army Corps of Engineer involvement but this is unlikely since the area in question is not part of a dam, dike or levy. As part of this undertaking and permit preparation, Jim Kennedy will prepare an overall plan of restoration and mitigation for Chase.

The anticipated costs for these measures are as follows: approximately \$5,000 for an endowment of the trust which will hold the conservation easement on the Chaffee wetlands area to be set aside; \$3,000 for Jim Kennedy's fees to prepare the plan of restoration and mitigation of Chase (this will involve designating certain areas that will remain in Chase as bona fide wetlands not to be used for recreation or development); and \$10,000 in a Dredge and Fill Application fee payable to the State of New Hampshire.

Discussion followed with a general consensus around the notion that this alternative plan should involve the additional step for the RC of taking the beach and field project once again to the Town for a vote. The granting of the permanent conservation easement on a portion of Chaffee was agreed to warrant a Town vote by itself. Additional funding could also give rise to the need for a new warrant article, even if the additional funding were to be raised through private donations and not taxes. Finally it was agreed that if the RC proceeds on this course, the NH DES should be able to process the necessary D&F permit in time for an early fall 2009 construction timetable.

Tom Yurkosky then introduced the idea of pursuing a \$20,000 grant from NH RC&D Area Councils to provide for a portion of the cost of refurbishing the Chase beach and ball fields. RC&D provides matching grants to towns up to \$20,000 for recreational projects. This grant proposal, if pursued by the RC, would have to be completed by 1/16/09. A question was raised concerning whether the acceptance of a RC&D grant might require Lyme to open Chase to non residents with no restrictions. Tom agreed to lead the charge on the grant and bring answers back for the next RC meeting.

Tom Morrissey then presented an alternative strategy for improving the beach and the playing fields at Lyme. Tom began by making no secret about his preference to see the water level at Post Pond raised, presumably with a change to the Conservation Commission's water release policy. Tom suggested that Lyme put its current playing fields into NH State wetlands conservation and instead construct new playing fields on the uplands area of Chaffee across Trout Brook. Tom's suggestion for the problem posed to the beach from higher water calls for the construction of a perched beach. Tom believes that this suggestion would get support from NH DES.

RC members expressed concerns that this strategy might cost more due to the cost of additional parking, the cost of a bridge across Trout Brook, and the cost of constructing all new fields and a perched beach. There was also concern over whether the Conservation Commission would be open to such a suggestion and whether there was sufficient flat dry space in Chaffee to construct fields. Safety concerns over a perched beach were raised again. Finally there were concerns about continued dampness in the picnic area and the parking lot under a high water scenario. Peter Mulvihill volunteered to look into Tom Morrissey's suggestion before the next RC meeting on 11/24/08.

Steve Small then presented the financial and operating report for the 2008 soccer season. Steve reported that there were 142 participants and a near breakeven financial result (\$400 in the black

with Play Soccer added in). Steve also presented several years of financial results for all sports. It was observed that not all sports fully cover their own costs with fees. Basketball is the most challenged in that regard due to ref costs and the smaller size of the program relative to others. There was no decision made to change any of the fee levels at this time.

Steve and the RC then discussed the policy of accepting out of town players into the Lyme Rec programs and requesting other towns in turn sometimes accept Lyme players. All agreed with the policy of discouraging poaching and team stacking recruitment. Steve presently has a basketball player who wishes to play with Hanover. As this situation was determined not to be recruitment or poaching issue, the RC granted Steve discretion to deal with this circumstance.

The RC then submitted small (mostly editorial) and final comments to update its Policy Handbook.

The RC then briefly discussed the potential interaction between the approved water release policy for Chaffee enacted by the Conservation Commission this year and the potential granting of a permanent conservation easement on a portion of Chaffee wetlands to satisfy the State concerning jurisdictional wetlands being improved on the Town's ball field. It was agreed that it will be the intent to provide the conservation easement on a portion of Chaffee wetlands, subject to the already existing water release policy avoiding any confusion. It is believed that this stipulation will be acceptable to the State.

The RC then voted to approve the minutes of the [10/06/08] meeting.

The RC set its next meeting for 11/24/08 at 6:00 pm at the Academy Building.