East Haddam Recreation Commission

Regular Meeting Minutes
June 15, 2026

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Recreation Commission was called to order by the Chair, Mr. Grillo, at 7:03 PM at the Municipal Office Complex.

Attendance

Members Present: Chick Grillo, Barbara Free, Christine King, Travis Goodie, Fern Tremblay
Members Absent: Patrick Laffan, Margy Roberts, Jamie Kehlenback, Barry Thiele
Also Present: Lisa Conroy

2. Approval of Agenda

A motion was made by Ms. Free to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Ms. King, and unanimously approved.

3. Approval of Minutes – Meeting of April 20

A motion was made by Ms. King to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Ms. Free and unanimously approved.

4. Committee Report

Music on the River – Ms. Conroy noted it starts July 13th. This year's shirt design is from Elyse Taylor, one of the many students who submitted a design. She wins a free t-shirt, $125, will have her name printed in the pamphlets and will be announced at all concerts. Ms. Conroy is working out colors to print the shirts. Regarding fundraising – we are about $1000 short of where we were at the start of the concerts last year.
Disc Golf had a tournament, but Ms. Conroy does not have any other information.

5. Director's Report
   a. Spring Review

      Soccer finished last Saturday, and it went very well. Coaches created a keepsake for the kids, which the parents all appreciated.
      Adult programs have been strong. Volleyball has been struggling but there are more people coming to join that. The high school kids may not join this year due to a new rule change allowing coaches to work with their high school athletes during the summer.
      Ms. Conroy showed the monthly flyer that gets published every month. There is still feedback received that communications on adult programming is not well published.
      Ms. Conroy reviewed kids programs, which had strong attendance across about 5 programs.

   b. Summer Preview

Ms. Conroy reviewed the 18+ basketball, and noted attendance is very strong. College kids are also coming home and will join that program.
Pickleball in July – Wednesday and Thursday mornings will stay but there will be no Mondays due to camp and Music on the River. Wednesday and Friday evenings plus Sunday mornings are staying. There are very consistent crews. Outdoor pickleball courts are having some pick up games.
Noises Sports Academy – she reviewed the numbers across the programs, which are very strong, although softball will be cancelled due to lower numbers.
Cheer camp will be run separately, and it has strong enrollment. She outlined that continuing that into the fall is hard due to gym time and the need for a program supervisor to manage access. She is working through the logistics to see if it can happen.
Ms. Conroy outlined swim lessons are being offered at the Town Beach this summer. The business owner is an East Haddam resident. The lesson is between 12-2 and kids are grouped by age and ability. There are already 9 kids registered. Given that swimming is a life skill, Ms. Conroy felt it was really important to offer.
Sky Hawks for Ages 2-6 almost has enough kids to run right now.
Girls Basketball Open Gym was just finalized. Gym time is an issue given the Middle School gym is not available this summer. It will be held at the Elementary School gym, which is why it is more expensive given the need to have a program supervisor.
Summer Day Camp – there is an awesome staff coming back. It is Ms. Conroy's dream year with the counselors and staff that have come back! Camp starts June 29. Attendance thus far:

- Week 1 – 93
- Week 2 – 109
- Week 3 – 117
- Week 4 – 122
- Week 5 – 125
- Week 6 – 100
- Week 7 – 125

Field trips are not full yet but have strong enrollment. Nomads is an indoor adventure park and is usually a field trip, but it is closed for renovations this year.
Staff/camper ratios at the beach is about 1 counselor to 5 students. Ms. Conroy walked through how the staff ratios are handled given questions by the Committee members. Discussion ensued related to parental chaperoning; Ms. Conroy walked through how that works.
After care averages about 30 kids per day.

c. Budget Update

Ms. Conroy outlined that she is trying to do this differently keeping her own tabulation of the balances left, so that she can track what still remains given timing of updates within the system. She is trying to use every dime!
For facilities, she expects a refund on the rope installation for the Town Beach as tax was mistakenly charged. There is about $1700 left.
For supplies, $90 is left.
For dues and fees, there is about $180 left after paying CRPA membership. Lifeguard recertifications will use this fund for payment. There are 2 new lifeguards, who will be reimbursed at the end of the summer, after their employment ends.

We have $8379 available for beach wages. The beach was closed for 2 full days and 2 ½ days this spring, so there should be enough to cover all wages over this summer.
The Transfer Fund comes out of the operating budget, which starts at $9500 and pays for new programs and other items not covered under other funds. A new table needs to be purchased at Nichols Field. There is also research into getting a Gaga Pit.
Special Funds has $0.33 left.
She has plans for the remaining funds – mulch delivered, etc. so that every penny is spent!
We have sold 10 day passes and 3 or 4 season passes to the Town Beach in May, an increase from last year.
Mr. Grillo noted the CPR class was excellent and feels very confident in the counselors' training.

6. Unfinished Business

No unfinished business to report on.

7. New Business

a. Donations

There was a $500 anonymous donation. That will go towards camp. $500 worth of new games has been purchased. The Haslem Foundation has donated $1410, enough to cover the two kayak visits and the water slide.
The Pickleball Instructor volunteered for the kids Pickleball Camp and is not taking a dime.

b. Facility Updates

Ms. Conroy noted the valves in the beach bathrooms have to be replaced. Mr. Goodie asked her to look into auto flushers to reduce damage. The buoy sunk and had to be replaced. Ms. Conroy will find out what they do with the old buoy. Mr. Goodie asked if there is a way to fix that.
Lots of mulch has been placed on the playgrounds. The inspections went really well.
The portable bathroom at the Dog Park had some fencing that had to be addressed, which Park and Rec supports as the beach goers can use them as well when the beach restrooms are locked.
More sand was brought into the beach as well.
Some trees had to be taken down at Nichols Field for safety, with at least one more to be removed. There are stumps there, they will all be ground down. Ms. Conroy asked for feedback on if the trees should be replaced; feedback noted that it is better to either plant a shrub or leave it open without a replacement tree.
There is a Tree Warden who can monitor the trees on town properties.
There is an EightMile River watershed meeting; it is the first day of camp, so Ms. Conroy cannot go. Mr. Grillo and Mr. Goodie will be joining.
She provided pictures of the proposed Gaga pit, that they want to put at the Town Beach between the swings and the bird's nest. It is $4666.10 and there are funds in the budget to pay for it. It is a very popular activity for kids. There is no installation cost and there is already mulch there. The Town Crew can assemble it.

A motion by Mr. Goodie to purchase the Gaga Pit. Seconded by Mr. Tremblay and unanimously approved.

8. Adjournment

Next meeting is August 31st at 7pm. The meeting adjourned at 7:52pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon A. Goyette
Recording Secretary