

(Approved 12/13/18)

WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, Oct. 11, 7:00 p.m.

**Basement Conference Room, Town Hall,
45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT**

MINUTES

PRESENT: Chair Mary Heffernon, Vice Chair John Lathrop, Dianne Saunders, Dianne Lendler, Mike Miller, Tom Pietras, Carl Arsenault, Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner, and from the public: Mike Brodinsky and David Bedel

NOT PRESENT: Jeff Borne

Chair Heffernon called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, Sept. 13, 2018

The Minutes are to be amended to reflect the unanimous vote taken to approve \$400.00 for the plants for Fresh Meadows planting project with Choate students to occur on Oct. 12.

Chair Heffernon called for approval of the Minutes, as amended.

MOTION: Mike Miller, second, John Lathrop

VOTE: Unanimous

B. Discussion - Review of Minutes

Chair Heffernon indicated that, in the future, Recording Secretary Cindy Kleist will email Draft Minutes to Lynn Wulff, Program Planning Secretary, who will put them on a thumb drive and send them to Ms. O'Hare who will review them and red-line any edits and use spell-check and then the Draft will be emailed back to Ms. Kleist. All agreed the Minutes do not need to be as detailed.

2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

A. Tyler Mill Preserve

1. May 15 Storm damage - Forestry services – contract award

Chair Heffernon, Ms. Saunders, and Ms. O'Hare indicated they attended the bid opening of the forestry bid and there was only one bid submitted, Ferruci & Walicki, LLC. Commissioner Saunders reported that she and Jamie Gillis, forestry student and Steward, and Commissioner Borne had marked defoliated trees and that she told Eric Hansen,

Ferrucci & Walicki, who will be awarded the bid. His bid amount was \$8,500.00. Loggers are anticipated to start in December if the bids are completed in November. Mr. Hansen will help prepare the specifications for the Town bid document. *Ms. O'Hare indicated Mr. Hansen needs to submit a one-page outline of his plan, the tally, and ongoing reports so that work progress can be documented and she will follow up. Ms. O'Hare will obtain a determination regarding damaged tree removal work around wetland areas to be considered as maintenance activities.*

2. Stewards of Tyler Mill – report, D. Saunders & D. Lendler

Commissioner Saunders handed-in the Stewards Report and stated that work is preliminarily on removing damaged hanging trees and branches, trespass remains a big issues and also the removal of barricades and signage, illegal use of dirt bikes and ATVs,. She reported to Police Chief Wright about two horseback riders who removed caution tape and rode through the tree-damage area by the Tyler Mill Bridge and were met by the police later at Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park. Commissioner Saunders reported 140 incidents that she knows of since Preserve closure. Chair Heffernon reported she had given Mayor Dickinson photographs taken by Commissioner Saunders of the horseback riders and also of a car driven by the son of a policeman who was driving in a closed area.

B. Fresh Meadows

1. CT Recreational Trails Program Project

a. Completion status

Ms. O'Hare reported the trails project grant work contract that ended Oct. 23 was completed. Tiffany Shipman, Assistant Town Engineer had reviewed the work for adequacy and completion and indicated it was complete. The two trail sections – one area too steep and the other the cross-slope was too steep) had been rectified by the Contractor as requested along with other minor issues that have been taken care of.

b. Glacial erratic signage

Ms. O'Hare reported she had met in the field with the sign vendor who affixed the informational sign to the wooden post that had been installed previously by the Contractor near the glacial erratic on the spur trail there.

c. Maintenance program – trailside mowing & stone dust restoration

Ms. O'Hare reported no progress on the bid proposal for a three-year contract for trails area maintenance as originally proposed by Sal Amadeo, Purchasing Dept. Director. Ms. O'Hare was directed to explore use of Open Space Resources Management Fund for this expense, to explore possible added bid task of mowing of the fields, to include in such a bid stone dust material restoration work for trail beds as may be needed, and to specify use of brush-hog equipment verses lawn mower equipment.. *Ms. O'Hare is to follow-up.*

d. Signage fortification and replacement of one broken sign

Chair Heffernon reported on one broken new trail sign asked Ms. O'Hare to follow-up on replacement signage for the vandalized sign.

C. Beseck Meadow

Ms. O'Hare indicated the Law Dept. is writing a letter to the Durham property owner with the bamboo growing onto Town land, as requested. *Ms. O'Hare to follow-up.*

D. Beseck Mountain

1. Footbridge issue (5/24/18)
2. Barrier on edge of Wisk-Key Wind Road (4/13/18)

Ms. O'Hare reported no action to report yet. *Ms. O'Hare to follow-up.*

E. Ferguson Woods

1. Eradication of Japanese knotweed

Chair Heffernon reported she placed an old pool cover on the cut knotweed to suppress it. She indicated Gary Ferguson does still do clipping of trail edges.

2. Site walk, Sat., Nov. 10, 9:00 a.m. – (Randolph Steinem, DEEP Geologist, re: geological findings)

Ms. O'Hare reported the field walk is "on" with a rain date of Sun, Nov. 11 at 9:00 a.m., and we will meet at end of Dibble Edge cul de sac off Durham Rd. She has extended an invite to the Mayor. *She will call all to cancel in event of rain.*

F. Lufbery Park - Site walk, Sat., Nov. 10, rain date, Nov. 11, after Ferguson Woods walk (above)

The above geology walk will continue at Lufbery Park.

G. Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Rd., consideration to change from wildlife conservation property to lease property (see under FLPP below)

(Taken up below.)

H. Other Properties

(Not taken up.)

3. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM

A. Field 18A, 995C East Center St./Tamarac Swamp Rd.

1. Proposed Request For Qualifications – status
2. Lease area boundary fence repair
3. Eversource Energy - Resiliency Clearing Program work

Regarding the three items, Ms. O'Hare reported that the RFQ will need to go out soon and she will meet with Farmland Lease Committee in this regard, no site investigation yet on the downed fence section, and she received a call from Eversource that they were to conduct field maintenance work next week. She informed the lessee/farmer.

B. Lease renewals – status

Ms. O'Hare reported that the Law Dept., who is taking care of the lease renewals, indicated that all lessees requested to consider renewal for another five years agreed to renew.

C. Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Rd., wildlife conservation property - consideration for lease

Ms. O'Hare read recommendations from report faxed over by Diane Blais, NRCS, on productive use of field. Commissioner Saunders indicated the VoAg will assist with obtaining soil samples for testing and a full soil report is needed. *She will follow-up on soil testing. She will ask Andy Bozzuto if he would have any possible interest in haying this field as it would be "organic".*

D. Farmland Committee

1. Proposed bid for Field 8B, Northford Rd.

Ms. O'Hare indicated that Field 8B will be bid soon and is the only hayfield up for bid.

2. Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Rd., lease proposal

Commissioner Saunders reported no progress on the proposal to lease this acreage as a hayfield as recommended by NRCS. Ms. O'Hare indicated that the parcel would need to be taken out of the Properties Maintained for Conservation Program and placed into the Farmland Lease Properties Program.

4. OTHER TOPICS

A. Choate students, Fresh Meadows, Cheshire Rd. - Environmental sustainability project, Oct. 12, report

Chair Heffernon reported that Nick Kern had delivered to the work area five yards of top soil donated by Mr. Kern and Jim Vitali, which is a big help for the event which begins at 9:45 a.m., Friday. Commissioner Saunders purchased the plants and mulch and has marked out the plant installation locations. Ms. O'Hare recommended installation of flagged stakes to protect the plants from future mowing.

5. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE

A. Dayton Pond dam project – status, staff

Chair Heffernon and Ms. O'Hare both indicated they had visited the site which is a Town project to restore the dam

B. Rockfall Foundation, newsletter Fall 2018 – displayed

C. CACIWC Annual Environmental Conference, "Managing For A Changing Climate", Red Lion Hotel, Cromwell, CT, Nov. 17, 2018, (*Register online on or before Oct. 12 for member discount*)

D. DEEP magazine, Connecticut Wildlife – displayed

E. Rockfall Foundation – event reminders, Sept. 17

F. CFPA newsletter, Rock, Root & Trail, Sept. 2018

G. CFPA magazine, CT Woodlands, Fall 2018

H. CFPA annual dues membership

Chair Heffernon asked if the Commission would agree to fund the CFPA dues membership. The Commissioners agreed.

I. CT Farmland Trust, appeal, Oct. 2018

Chair Heffernon indicated she investigated the Commission-donated tree planted at the Volunteer Fire Dept., North Farms Road, after a report of that the tree had a wound and ants. *She will seek professional advice on health of the tree in this regard. Commissioner Miller will help install a plaque at this tree.*

Chair Heffernon requested Ms. O'Hare to obtain from Law Dept. information concerning any state or local regulations or ordinances regarding the use of metal detecting equipment on public lands. *Ms. O'Hare will follow-up.*

Commissioner Saunders indicated there a DEEP State Foresters Seminar on Oak Mortality, Oct. 27 at Goodwin Forest. Oak tree defoliation is wreaking havoc with breakage across 300,000 acres in eastern CT she said. *Commissioner Saunders will collect samples of gypsy moth eggs from black oaks in Tyler Mill Preserve for a study being conducted by CT Agricultural Experiment Station.*

6. NEXT MEETING – Nov. 8, 2018

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Heffernon adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin O'Hare
Acting Recording Secretary