

1 **APPROVED MINUTES**

2 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

3 **Regular Meeting**

4 **Thursday, February 8, 2018 -7:00 p.m.**

5 **Basement Conference Room, Town Hall**

6 **45 South Main Street, Wallingford, CT**

7 **MINUTES**

8 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon, arrived at 7:14 p.m.; Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioners Carl  
9 Arsenault; Dianne Lendler; Dianne Saunders; Tom Pietras; Mark Miller; Jeff Borne; Erin O'Hare,  
10 Environmental Planner; Public: David Bedell.

11 **NOT PRESENT:** Commissioner Mark Ceneri.

12 Vice-Chair Lathrop, acting as Chair, called the Meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

13 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

14 **A. Minutes,** Regular Meeting, Jan. 11, 2018, 7:00 p.m.

15 Bottom of page 4, Item 4A should be "lessee's work has not been done" not "be" done.

16 **Motion: A motion by Commissioner Borne, seconded by Commissioner Lendler to approve the**  
17 **Regular Meeting Minutes of January 11, 2018 as amended.**

18 **Vote: unanimous**

19 Acting-Chair Lathrop took the meeting in the following order

20 **3. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

21 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

22 1. Kiosk & replacement signage

23 Commissioner Saunders said the kiosk was built but there were issues with the construction. Commissioner  
24 Saunders noted the specifications were not followed. She said the kiosk is the right overall size and the  
25 roof overhang is correct, but the specified amount of rafters were not installed; the doors are the incorrect  
26 size so the map doesn't fit inside; the specified lag bolts were not put in. Commissioner Saunders said the  
27 wood used also wasn't the specified wood. Commissioner Saunders said there were also issues with the  
28 construction, noting she didn't believe the Contractor used enough of the concrete, stating she could  
29 slightly move the kiosk.

30 Commissioner Saunders said Public Works Director John Gawlak told her to make a list of what "could be  
31 lived with". She said she went to see the Building Official and was told there was no building permit which

1 resulted in no inspection. Commissioner Saunders showed photos of the workmanship. She said three of  
2 the eight rafters had split because of the use of incorrect sized nails instead of screws and were not pre-  
3 drilled. She also noted the rafters are supposed to end at the top of the ridge board but are up above the  
4 ridge board and there are nails that missed their mark and aren't holding anything up. She said nails  
5 instead of screws were used. She noted the lag bolts have already started to rust. She said Mr. Gawlak is  
6 holding back \$1,000 out of the \$3,000 cost. Commissioner Saunders said she is waiting for Mr. Gawlak to  
7 make a determination.

8 **2.Bylaws – Possible Revision**

9 Commissioner Saunders suggested term limits for officers so more people can take on leadership roles.  
10 Commissioner Borne said he believed one of the issues is that people don't want to step up to take a  
11 leadership role and if there are term limits, there may not be any leaders. Commissioner Lendler said he  
12 agree that term limits are a good thing and noted there are people who don't have the knowledge base  
13 and aren't as active in the community and would have to be helped along.

14 The Commission agreed to keep the By-Laws as is.

15 Ms. O'Hare referenced a comment by Corporation Counsel Janis Small in 2009 regarding a quorum vote,  
16 questioning why a majority vote would require attendance of five members as opposed to the majority of  
17 those in attendance. Chair Heffernon requested comments on possible revisions.

18 The Commission agreed to keep the By-Laws as is.

19

20 Chair Heffernon continued with:

21 **A. Tyler Mill Preserve**

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

23 Commissioner Saunders went over her report. She said there was a lot of ice in January but noted the  
24 Stewards did manage to do some work. She said trails that were cleared in December were found to have  
25 a lot of trees down in January. She said newly downed trees were cleared from the Yellow southwest trail,  
26 and two trees and invasive vines were cleared from the Mustard Trail. She noted an additional tree fell on  
27 the Purple Trail and the Mustard Trail. Commissioner Saunders said chainsaw work needs to be done on  
28 the Mustard and Purple Trails.

29 Commissioner Saunders noted that hunting season ends February 28<sup>th</sup> and the "No Hunting" sign at the  
30 Barrett property has remained; an illegal hunting with vehicle trespass took place on Jan. 29<sup>th</sup> in the field  
31 east of the Muddy River at Northford Road; Commissioner Saunders reported the Stewards recovered  
32 personal belongings presumably from Oliver Tech and Lincoln Tech students which included tools, clothing,  
33 a school laptop, backpack and books, which were turned over to the Police Dept.

34 Commissioner Lendler noted the Annual Stewards of Tyler Mill party took place on Saturday with 14  
35 Stewards in attendance. She noted there is a new Steward and also showed a photo of gall from a plant.  
36 Commissioner Saunders noted the photo on her Stewards report of the typical high water levels after a

1 serious rain event. She said the water comes up to the tip of the island at the Tyler Mill Bridge. She noted  
2 the water level was the highest in 2009 when the water went across the island. She also noted that she  
3 ordered the early successional information for the kiosk.

4 Mr. Bedell spoke about a tire dump.

5 *Commissioner Saunders will follow-up about the illegal tire dump located on private property.*

6 Commissioners Arsenault and Borne suggested writing a letter to the property owner asking permission to  
7 allow the Commission to remove the tires.

8 *Commissioner Saunders will make contact with the property owner.*

9 3. Tyler Mill Preserve Management Planning Committee

10 a. Jan. 29 meeting-report

11 Commissioner Saunders said the Committee met and discussed the possibility of finding sources for  
12 money. She noted there is a Foundation that would cover municipalities for these types of projects. She  
13 said this Foundation takes applications in March and award in October. She said this year is too soon to get  
14 an application together. She said Wallingford meets the criteria for an award. Commissioner Saunders said  
15 other sources are being considered, but the strategy would be that for this coming FY 2018/2019, to work  
16 with a consultant, Michael Klemens to get the Commission, Water Division, Public Works and Parks and  
17 Recreation, to all work together on the Management Plan. She said this work would be done in the next  
18 Fiscal Year using the Commission's regular budget and this could be the match for the Federal grant which  
19 she hoped would be available the next Fiscal Year.

20 b. Feb. 21, 9 a.m. – next meeting

21 c. Dayton Pond dam – staff

22 Ms. O'Hare said reconstruction of the Dayton Pond dam required by DEEP has been put out to bid and will  
23 be re-built. She showed the Commission a map of the area and noted the Town owns the land around the  
24 southern part of Dayton Pond below the dam and owns the pond to the edge.

25 d. Implementation – not discussed.

26 4. Chipmunk study – status

27 Ms. O'Hare said Dennis Richardson, professor at Quinnipiac University, contacted her and reported he  
28 didn't kill any chipmunks at Tyler Mill Preserve as part of his chipmunk study. She noted his permit expired  
29 in December.

30 5. Lone wolf tree on Interpretive Trail

31 Commissioner Saunders said she contacted Claire Rutledge of the CT Agricultural Experiment Station who  
32 sent her the information on how to control the Emerald Ash Borer problem with this tree. Commissioner  
33 Saunders said there were three methods of treatment: injection, basal bark herbicide drench and spray.  
34 Commissioner Saunders said she asked Ms. Rutledge if there was someone who could look at the tree and  
35 determine if the tree was worth saving and obtain a price. She said she hasn't heard back from Ms.

1 Rutledge. Chair Heffernon asked if these treatments would cure the Ash Borer problem or contain it for a  
2 time period. Commissioner Saunders said the treatment would cure the tree but the treatments would  
3 have to be kept up. She said she looked at the tree in November and will do a re-look when the ice is off  
4 the trails. Commissioner Saunders said the other trees along Tyler Mill Rd. and at the dam site are infected  
5 with the Ash Borer and were all yellow to the bottom of the tree which occurred from November to  
6 present. She said she will try to contact Ms. Rutledge on Friday and will also look on-line for other people.  
7 Commissioner Saunders said from the bridge to Northford Road, 25 ash trees on the road are infected and  
8 are hazardous. She said she suggested a Contractor be hired who will take the wood after the ash trees  
9 are taken down.

10 *Commissioner Saunders will follow-up.*

11 **B. Fresh Meadows**

12 1. CT Recreational Trails Program Project – status

13 Ms. O'Hare said she did a site visit and noted the trails were mushy but didn't see any washouts. She  
14 noted there were people using the trail. Vice-Chair Lathrop mentioned that Ms. O'Hare had previously  
15 mentioned that the slope of the trail from the parking lot to the pond was too steep. Ms. O'Hare said this  
16 will be corrected. Chair Heffernon said she spoke to Karen Pyskaty of the Garden Club regarding the  
17 possibility of donating their plants for the Butterfly Meadow.

18 2. Rules & Regulation sign – not discussed

19 **C. Ferguson Woods – cottontails**

20 Chair Heffernon said she spoke to the man who resides near Ferguson Woods regarding the New England  
21 Cottontails who told her he hasn't found any scat because of the snow.

22 **D. Lufbery Park – alteration activity remediation**

23 Chair Heffernon said she, and Vice-Chair Lathrop met with the person at Lufbery Park involved with the  
24 Frisbee Golf and looked at the trees. She said the person assured them this situation will be taken care of  
25 soon.

26 **E. Marcus Cooke Park – tree removal**

27 Chair Heffernon said the tree had been cut down.

28 **F. Property monitoring**

29 Chair Heffernon said she made a notebook with sections for each of the properties so when the reports are  
30 done they can be in one place and be accessible. She gave Commissioners Lendler and Saunders a copy of  
31 her suggestions to change on the Draft Monitoring Report, which included adding "trail head and boundary  
32 signs are intact". She said she also added safety hazards and off-highway vehicle use, potential hazardous  
33 waste issues and digging or other disturbances. Commissioner Lendler said it was decided to do half the  
34 monitoring list in April and the rest of the list in May. The Commissioners will do the reports in April, May  
35 and June with Commissioners Borne, Arsenault and Chair Heffernon reporting in April; Vice-Chair Lathrop,

1 Commissioners Miller, Saunders, reporting in May and Commissioners Lendler, Ceneri, Pietras and  
2 Ms.O'Hare reporting in June. Reports will then be made in September, October and November.

3 Ms. O'Hare said she went to Doolittle Park on Thursday and reported a 50 ft. black willow tree was  
4 encased in ice. She said she also observed 10 Mallard ducks in the river.

5 **G. Other properties**

6 Commissioner Borne asked if the Commission was set for the Quinnipiac students for the "Big Event"  
7 noting that when he inspected the Galko property, it might benefit from having the students pick up of the  
8 stones that have been thrown up along the side of the trails. Chair Heffernon noted the Commission  
9 decided to have the Quinnipiac students do blazing at Marcus Cooke Park. She said the Galko property  
10 could be a project for the Boy Scouts or the Commission.

11 **4. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

12 **A. Field 4A, Whirlwind Hill Rd. & 19A, Scard Rd – maintenance**

13 Commissioner Saunders reported the Lessee has still not done the maintenance for Fields 4A and 19A.

14 **B. Field 6D, off Cooke Rd.- property boundary**

15 Commissioner Saunders said there are boundary marking pins at Northford Road and pink flags and pink  
16 spray paint at the corner. She showed photos and noted the open space marker was removed by a  
17 resident. *Ms. O'Hare will follow-up on Public Works and marker post installations.*

18 **C. Field 8B, Northford Rd. –bale removal & field edge maintenance**

19 Commissioner Saunders said the bales were removed some time ago, but no field maintenance has been  
20 done.

21 **D. Field 18A, 995C East Center St./Tamarac Swamp Rd. –proposed Request for**  
22 **Qualifications**

23 Ms. O'Hare said Field 18A, Request for Qualifications, is awaiting State approval.

24 **E. Fields 7E & 7F – signage to deter trespass**

25 Commissioner Saunders reported that Mr. Gawlak circulated a memo regarding signage to deter trespass,  
26 to the various Town Departments and to the Police Department. She said she hasn't received a response.

27 **F. Mowing of three areas**

28 Commissioner Saunder said she hasn't seen any mowing.

29 **G. Farmland Committee- monitoring reports**

30 Commissioner Saunders said she completed her monitoring report and noted that Field 1B, N. Branford  
31 Road, was mowed.

1 **5. PUBLIC OUTREACH**

2 **A. Quinnipiac University, "Big Event", April 7**

3 Chair Heffernon said the Commission decided last month to do have the students do the blazing at Marcus  
4 Cooke Park. She said some of the Commissioners will have to go out to the Park in March to re-flag the  
5 trees and asked for volunteers. Commissioner Arsenaault reported he found another trail not marked and  
6 not blazed. Commissioner Saunders reported that on the Yellow Trail, which goes out to Woodhouse Rd.,  
7 #96 and #97, there was something amiss with the blazes. She said there is no yellow paint available, but  
8 said she does have yellow paint and can use this to correct the blazes. Chair Heffernon said she might  
9 have yellow paint and will get back to Commissioner Saunders.

10 **B. CT Trails Day, June 2 & 3**

11 Chair Heffernon spoke about the possibility of introducing people to a new trail on the other side of Town  
12 on Trails Day. She said she believed this was a good idea. She asked for most of the Commission to be in  
13 attendance. The Commission agreed to attend. Commissioner Saunders suggested getting help from the  
14 Senior Center and Parks & Recreation to do flyers for the neighborhoods, Ashlar and Gaylord Hospital.  
15 Commissioner Borne suggesting extending an invitation to the Galko family.

16 Ms. O'Hare noted the Town could make this an official ribbon cutting ceremony for the new trail project.  
17 Chair Heffernon said the date is June 2 at 10 a.m. with a rain date of Sunday, June 3. *Chair Heffernon will*  
18 *sign up the Commission and contact Mayor Dickinson.*

19 **C. Possible programs**

20 Chair Heffernon said she picked up a flyer about wildlife presentations and workshops. She said Humane  
21 Society Wildlife Ecologist Laura Simon does program resolving deer issues and coyote problems. Chair  
22 Heffernon said Ms. Simon charges \$250, and available workshop dates are through March and April. She  
23 spoke about possibly scheduling a workshop in April. Chair Heffernon said she thought about asking the  
24 Senior Center or the Library to host the workshop. *Ms. O'Hare will follow-up on speakers for the programs*

25 Ms. O'Hare spoke about a "Creating a Bird-Friendly Habitat" program and a forest bathing program.

26 **6. BUDGET FY 17-18** –proposed use of funds (chainsaw training, renovation of Fields 7E & 7F, Northford  
27 Rd.)

28 Ms. O'Hare said the budget is due February 23. The Commission discussed the draft project items. Ms.  
29 O'Hare spoke about chainsaw training, noting this item should be included in the FY 17/18 budget. Chair  
30 Heffernon suggested spending \$450 on chainsaw training. Commissioner Saunders said the chainsaw  
31 training done by Bill Girard, would cost \$150 per person with three people needing training and the trees  
32 cut would have to be under six inches in diameter.

33 **Motion: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner Lendler to spend \$450**  
34 **on chainsaw training conducted by Bill Girard for Commissioners Ceneri, Miller and Pietras.**  
35 **The motion passed unanimously.**

1 Some items on a list Ms. O'Hare distributed for possible uses of the \$6,000 to complete include removal of  
2 young cottonwoods that have colonized back field at Fresh Meadow west of Cheshire Road and renovation  
3 of the field by installation of warm-season grass seed; eastern cedar and other native plant species  
4 installations at various locations to enhance the recently installed trails system at Fresh Meadow. Chair  
5 Heffernon said possible treatment to save the "Lone Wolf" ash tree on the Interpretive Trail should be a  
6 priority for this year's budget money. She also suggested plantings for butterflies and other pollinators in  
7 the Butterfly Meadow.

8 Another suggestion was the renovation of approximately a 100 ft. section of the Yellow Trail located  
9 approximately 40 ft. from the trailhead at Vietnam Veterans Memorial Park southern parking area which  
10 erodes because of seeping groundwater on slope.

11 *Ms. O'Hare will look into prices and discuss this with Town Engineer Rob Baltramaitis.*

12 Commissioner Saunders suggested field renovation of two fallow farm fields that garner no bids because of  
13 poor soil conditions and wetness; Fields 7E and 7F, off Northford Road and removal of invasive mugwort  
14 including re-seeding with pollinator-friendly seed mix. Chair Heffernon suggested spending \$2,000 at Fresh  
15 Meadows to plant eastern cedar and other native plant species installation at various locations to enhance  
16 the recently installed trails system. Commissioner Borne suggested removal of a Japanese knotweed patch  
17 (approximately 40 ft. x 40 ft.) occurring to the southeast of the hidden small pond located northeast of the  
18 Rosick Road cul-de-sac located in the Tennessee Gas easement area.

19 *Ms. O'Hare will contact Tennessee Gas Company regarding this issue. Ms. O'Hare will come up with prices  
20 for the March meeting.*

21 **6. PROPOSED BUDGET - FY 18-19 – "Professional Services" items.**

22 Ms. O'Hare discussed spending the \$6,000 for a facilitator regarding the FY 2018-2019 for the Tyler Mill  
23 Preserve Management Plan. Commissioner Saunders said the management would begin in July and must  
24 be completed by December. Ms. O'Hare said she will present the FY 18-19 budget to the Mayor Dickinson  
25 on March 1, 2018.

26 **Motion: A motion by Vice-Chair Lathrop second by Commissioner Miller to spend for FY 18/19  
27 for purchased services and natural resources for Tyler Mill Preserve management plan at a  
28 cost of \$6,000. The motion passed unanimously.**

29 **8. OTHER TOPICS**

30 Chair Heffernon spoke about an agricultural open house on February 15 from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the  
31 Collins Room. Discussion will revolve around organic flower gardening, organic food, etc., which will be  
32 presented by Alan Eddy.

33 Chair Heffernon asked about additions to the Annual Report. Commissioner Saunders said she had one  
34 addition: under Tyler Mill Preserve, sixth bullet, she said the primary purpose of the Stewards of Tyler Mill  
35 is trail maintenance. Commissioner Lendler suggested the Annual Report should state the Farmland Lease

1 Committee continues to work hard. Commissioner Saunders suggested stating the Farmland Lease  
2 Committee works hard monitoring 400 acres.

3 Ms. O'Hare said the Northford Road bridge work is on indefinite hold. She spoke about a presentation on  
4 April 10 with Patrick Comins with the Audubon Society at the Wallingford Public Library. She said the  
5 second week of May, there will be a talk on Walden Pond and in March there will be a talk on protecting  
6 seeds.

7 Ms. O'Hare spoke about the leasing of the Town landfill property to Wallingford Renewable Energy, LLC.  
8 She said the solar array project involves 158 acres and includes the MIRA property which is the State  
9 property below the landfill.

10 *Ms. O'Hare will make comments to the CT Siting Council on this issue.*

11 Ms. O'Hare also spoke about the response to plowing by Public Works Director Henry McCully. She said Mr.  
12 McCully sent a copy of his 2010 letter to the Recreation Dept. to her stating that Public Works doesn't plow  
13 any part of the Park's parking lot.

14 Commissioner Saunders submitted expenses.

## 15 **9. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**

16 **A. Open Space & Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program** – application deadline 2/2/18  
17 – not discussed.

18 **B. Community Lake** – Parks & Recreation Dept. – IWWC application – proposed tree cutting. Ms.  
19 O'Hare said this item has been tabled to the March Inland Wetlands meeting.

20 **C. North American Wetlands Conservation Act Small Grants Program** – matching grant  
21 program for projects involving restoration/enhancement and/or establishment of wetlands and associated  
22 upland habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds; deadline 10/19/18 – not  
23 discussed.

24 **D. CFPA magazine, *Roots, Rocks, Trails*, Jan. 2018**

25 **E. Letter to Commission** from Lee D. Hoffman Esq. Pullman & Comley, LLC, received 1/17/18,  
26 regarding filing by Wallingford Renewable Energy, LLC, with CT Siting Council re: Request for Declaratory  
27 Ruling relative to location and construction of three solar photovoltaic systems on three contiguous  
28 parcels; Town landfill site and two Material Innovation & Recycling Authority parcels. Comment deadline  
29 Feb. 12 – discussed under "Other Topics".

30 **F. Fertilizer plant proposal, 155 East Street**

31 Ms. O'Hare said this item will be on both the IWWC and Planning & Zoning Commission agendas in March.  
32 *Chair Heffernon will send out reminders to the Commission.*

33 **G. CT Land Conservation Council, Conference, Wesleyan University, Mar. 17** – brochure  
34 distributed by Chair Heffernon.

1           **H. CT Legislation monitoring** - memorandum forwarded from Mayor's Office received 2/2/18 –

2 Ms. O'Hare received the memo from Mayor Dickinson's office.

3   **10. Next Meeting** - March 8 2018

4   **ADJOURNMENT**

5 Commissioner Borne made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 9:53 p.m. Commissioner Lathrop seconded  
6 the motion which passed unanimously.

7

8 Respectfully submitted,

9 Cynthia A. Kleist

10 Recording Secretary

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