

1 **APPROVED MINUTES**

2 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

3 **REGULAR MEETING**

4 **Thursday, June 14, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.**

5 **Basement Conference Room, Town Hall**

6 **45 South Main Street**

7 **Wallingford, CT**

8 **MINUTES**

9
10 **PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioners Dianne Saunders; Dianne Lendler; Jeff
11 Borne; Carl Arsenault; Mike Miller; Mark Ceneri; Tom Pietras; Erin O’Hare, Environmental Planner; Cynthia Kleist,
12 Recording Secretary.

13 Chair Heffernon called the Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

14 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

15 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, May 10, 2018, 7:00 p.m.**

16 On page 2, line 17, should read “Moorhead” not “Morehead”.; page 3, line 23, should read “some trees” down at
17 Ferguson Woods; page 3, line 9, add Commissioner Lendler to the site walk; page 4, line 24, take out “Open Space
18 Users Group will draft the language”; page 5, line 31, put in “Mike Miller reported the fire”; page 6, line 12, should
19 be a separate bullet and has nothing to do with Item 18A; page 6, line 14 is the “Warren Williams” property.

20 **Motion to approve the amended Minutes made by Commissioner Borne and seconded by Vice-Chair Lathrop.**

21 **Vote: Unanimous**

22 **B. Minutes, Special Meeting, May 22, 2018, 5:00 p.m.**

23 On page 3, line 28, Vice-Chair Lathrop will spot and saw; page 2, line 3, should read “tops” of hemlocks; page 2, line
24 5 should read “huge trees down on the Green Trail”; line 6 should read “hauled out by truck”; line 18 should read
25 “Red North Trail”; page 3 lines 14 & 15 should read “John Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director and Steve Palermo
26 Foreman, Public Works”.

27 **Motion to approve the amended Minutes made by Commissioner Ceneri and seconded by Commissioner Lendler.**

28 **Vote: Unanimous**

29 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

30 **A. Property monitoring reports**

1 Commissioner Borne reported on Fresh Meadows at Cheshire Road (Galko property), monitored on June 6. He said
2 there were no dangerous limbs or widow makers or hazards over the tree. He noted a very large walnut tree was
3 down near the main parking lot. Commissioner Borne reported on overgrowth along the trails reaching out to a
4 crossing trail and parking areas. He said vegetation is quickly crowding the trail edges. Commissioner Borne said the
5 trail head boundary signage is in good shape. He said phragmite issues are ongoing especially just east of the west
6 parking lot in the swale area that goes down to the pond. Commissioner Borne said there is garlic mustard and a lot
7 of mugwort along the new paved trail. He said the only vandalism he said was worth reporting was graffiti on the
8 Erratic Boulder. He said there was no unauthorized cutting or digging and no encroachment by property owners, He
9 said regarding safety hazards, there was a wash-out on the south side of the paved trail, approximately 200 ft. from
10 the western most parking lot. He said this wash-out is starting to undercut the asphalt and suggested this be
11 repaired by the Contractor as soon as possible. He noted there is Tree of Heaven on the knoll as previously reported
12 by Commissioner Arsenault.

13 Commissioner Borne said the trees staked by the Commission a few years ago for Public Works to plant took well.
14 He said Ken Ryan's memorial Tupelo tree is doing well. Commissioner Borne reported plants are popping out of the
15 stone dust trail in the Butterfly Meadow. He said this should be kept up for the first year and should keep the stone
16 and paved trails mowed at least three feet from the side of the pavement to keep encroachment away and so
17 walkers on the trails won't get ticks. He suggested investing some of the budget money on an appropriate machine.

18 **B. Tyler Mill Preserve**

19 1. Kiosk & replacement signage

20 Commissioner Saunders reported the kiosk was not done and said the Contractor installed a few brackets, took the
21 doors off and stained them. She said the right-sized doors have to be re-installed. She noted Ms. O'Hare is working
22 on the sign.

23 2. May 15 Storm damage

- 24 a. Preserve closure
- 25 b. Survey of downed/damaged trees – D. Saunders
- 26 c. Tree removal activities and plan

27 Commissioner Saunders sent out her report. She said the north section of Tyler Mill Preserve is looking good but
28 noted the ridge has not been touched. She said there is one leaner on the Green Trail to be evaluated and noted
29 there are still trees falling off the ridge and pointed out two trees came down towards the road. She said the Purple
30 Trail has been evaluated and is impassible and can't get all the way through the Pink Trail because some of it is
31 impassible. Commissioner Saunders recommended closing the north half of the Purple Trail indefinitely.
32 Commissioner Saunders spoke about fire risk noting it is very dry. She said the State Foresters were at Tyler Mill on
33 Thursday. She said "Facility Closed" signs were installed, but noted people are still driving through but are being told
34 to leave. Chair Heffernon reported Lufbery Park and Marcus Cooke Park are open. Commissioner Saunders said the
35 Police were going to suggest to the Traffic Dept. that a barrier be installed.

36 Commissioner Saunders said horseback riders are taking down the tape on the trails and riding. She said she emailed
37 the woman who is the head of the CT Trail Rides Association. Commissioner Lendler suggested in consideration of
38 the monumental works being done, there will need to be a consultation of people coming in, i.e., a biologist and
39 botanist. She said these people would be accompanied at all times by Stewards and these people should be able to

1 come in without permission. *Chair Heffernon will send an email to John Gawlak, Parks and Recreation Commission*
2 *Director.*

3 Commissioner Saunders said until we get Commissioner Arsenault, Mr. Gawlak gave chainsaw approval through July.
4 She said the worst hazards are done. She said work is being done on the central section of the Green Trail and on
5 Friday the other half of the Green Trail will be cleared. Chair Heffernon noted the north is all completed.

6 Commissioner Saunders said the ridge is not done. She went over the map of the damage and had sent out a photo.

7 Commissioner Saunders said two State DEEP Foresters, Dick Raymond, Larry Rousseau and Commissioner Arsenault
8 came out to the site. She said they started at Moss Rock and went across to the Blue Trail. She said the main area of
9 concern is the road. She noted Maltby Road is impassible and noted the bad trees are still falling; two huge trees
10 came down by the trailhead at Tamarac Swamp Road; and two trees came off the ridge head. Commissioner
11 Saunders said there was a work party with regular clearing and chain sawing at Tyler Mill Rd. She said the DEEP
12 Foresters will send a report and it will include eliminating safety hazards. She said they stated the work will take two
13 months to complete. Commissioner Saunders said they will do the roads and not the trails. Ms. O'Hare said the DEP
14 Foresters also pointed out the trees that should come down that weren't damaged by the storm.

15 Chair Heffernon gave Commissioner Saunders the Young Foresters Initiative Grant contact sheet. Commissioner
16 Arsenault said whatever has to be done needs to be done soon. Commissioner Saunders showed a short video on
17 her laptop of the Forester explaining why the trees had to come down. Ms. O'Hare noted that in this Tyler Mill area,
18 60 % to 70% of the forest was lost. She said the Foresters recommended hiring a Professional Forester to write
19 about the species, the diameter of volume and what is available for logging work. She said this work would be
20 before the fall and he would oversee the work. Chair Heffernon said time was of the essence. *Ms. Saunders will give*
21 *the Forester letter to Chair Heffernon when she receives it.*

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

23 Discussed above. Ms. O'Hare said she and Chair Heffernon attended a meeting with Mayor Dickinson to discuss the
24 storm damage. Ms. O'Hare said the Mayor was given all the information about the fields in Tyler Mill Preserve, along
25 with Commissioner Saunders reporting regarding the number of downed trees, and hay bales damage assessment
26 on the farmer' fields.

27 4. Tyler Mill Preserve Management Planning Committee

28 Commissioner Saunders said the Management Plan will be different because of the storm. She said the Plan is
29 needed now more than ever because we have discreet materials to work with and know where the openings are.
30 She said none of the openings were at special habitats so there can be adjustments. She noted the river is full of
31 material. Commissioner Saunders said she took out Ms. O'Hare's letter and read it and said it was perfect. She said
32 the Preserve needs to be storm ready. Chair Heffernon said when things settle down, the Tyler Mill Preserve
33 Management Planning Committee will meet.

34 5. Lone wolf tree on Interpretive Trail – report, D. Saunders

35 Commissioner Saunders reported the lone wolf tree on the Interpretive Trail did not leaf out.

36 C. Fresh Meadows

1 1. CT Recreational Trails Program Project

2 a. Completion status

3 Chair Heffernon distributed a cartoon and an article in the local paper. Ms. O'Hare said there are problems between
4 the Contractor and the Engineering Dept. overseeing the Contractor which has caused a delay. She said the
5 Engineering Dept. will go out with a punch list shortly to go over everything the Contractor still has to complete,
6 noting the removal of the silt fence was the number one item. She said part of the punch list involves the mistake
7 made on the slope from the parking lot to the pond trail, noting it was too steep. Ms. O'Hare said there is
8 approximately \$40,000 left under the contract that is owned the Contractor. She said the contract the Town has
9 with DEEP has to be completed by Oct. 24, 2018. Chair Heffernon also spoke about the Tamarac symbol.

10 b. June 2 CT Trails Day & Celebration event – report

11 Ms. O'Hare said that she, Commissioners Miller, Saunders, Lendler, Chair Heffernon, Joan Stave and Susan from the
12 Program Planning Office along with Town Council member and State Rep. Craig Fishbein along with Dave Gelo Parks
13 and Recreation Commission Chair attended the Trails Day Celebration. The event was very well attended. Chair
14 Heffernon said Ms. O'Hare led a nature walk, there was a turtle laying eggs by the trail and noted there was one
15 person in attendance in a wheelchair.

16 c. Glacial erratic signage

17 Ms. O'Hare showed the sign that was used for the June 2 Trails Day Event. She said the people loved the sign. The
18 Commission discussed where the sign should be installed. Ms. O'Hare said the sign will be put on stakes around the
19 erratic boulder. She noted the Contractor had the sign located in a different area on the map.

20 **D. Beseck Meadow**

21 1. Bamboo (4/13/18)

22 2. Tree removal

23 Commissioner Saunders said she didn't know whether the bamboo was removed or the tree was removed by the
24 lessee, Mr. Bozzuto. She said no other property has been touched yet for hay. *Ms. O'Hare will ask the lessee why
25 the hay fields haven't been mowed.*

26 **E. Beseck Mountain**

27 1. Footbridge issue (5/24/18)

28 Ms. O'Hare said there was no update.

29 2. Barrier on edge of Wisk-Key Wind Road (4/13/18)

30 Ms. O'Hare said there was nothing new to report.

31 **F. Ferguson Woods**

32 1. Storm damage

33 Chair Heffernon showed a map of where all the trees are down in the area where the weed whacking was done.

1 2. Dumping of tree parts

2 Chair Heffernon said trees that came down in the neighbor's yard are now in the Ferguson Woods. She asked Ms.
3 O'Hare to write a letter to the neighbors requesting the downed trees be put back onto their property.

4 **G. Marcus Cooke Park**

5 Chair Heffernon said she, Commissioner Miller and Vice-Chair Lathrop cleared Marcus Cooke Park this past weekend
6 and the Park is now open according to the Town's website.

7 **H. Open Space Signage – Tamarack decal**

8 Chair Heffernon said there are two Open Space decals at Fresh Meadows which are peeled off. She said Parks &
9 Recreation have paid a person to reinstall the decals shortly.

10 **I. Other properties**

11 Nothing to report.

12 **3.FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

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

14 1. Proposed Request for Qualifications

15 Commissioner Saunders said there was nothing to report.

16 3. Boundary fence repair

17 Ms. O'Hare said she has contacted farmer Colleen Auger regarding the boundary fence repair. Ms. O'Hare said Ms.
18 Auger said she can look at the fence which is only partially damaged. Commissioner Lendler said Ms. Auger told her
19 it is not necessary to have the fence and it can be removed. Commissioner Saunders said it was suggested the posts
20 remain but the wire could be removed which the cows were eating. She said this is one big field and the Town only
21 marked what Warren Williams still owned. Commissioner Saunders said the outside is the farmer's fences. Ms.
22 O'Hare said Ms. Auger told her she is fine with the entire fence and did not discuss taking down the fence. Ms.
23 *O'Hare will go to view the fence on Friday.*

24 Ms. O'Hare said Eversource contacted her to inform her they would be spraying and requested her presence at
25 where they will be spraying on Field 18A, 995C East Center Street.

26 **C. Mowing of three areas**

27 Ms. O'Hare said there was nothing to report. She noted that the Commission has to decide about continued mowing
28 of the field at 1245 Whirlwind Hill Road.

29 **D. May 15 Storm damage to fields**

30 Discussed above.

1 **E. Farmland Committee**

2 Discussed above.

3 **4. SANDPLAINS**

4 Ms. O’Hare reported the June 11 PZC hearing never happened because the Developer said they are not ready. She
5 said the Developer planned on answering every question as requested by the Planning & Zoning Commission. Ms.
6 O’Hare said the mitigation plan also isn’t ready which involves saving some sand barren and recreating other sand
7 barren areas. Ms. O’Hare said the Developer also withdrew the sub-division plan because it ran out of time, but paid
8 the money to re-submit but no plan was submitted because Ms. O’Hare said the plan is being changed.

9 **5. 190 NEW CHESHIRE ROAD – conservation easement**

10 Chair Heffernon said the conservation easement in the works for five years finally came to fruition and the Town
11 Council approved it. Ms. O’Hare showed a map of the easement.

12 **6. USE OF BUDGET FUNDS FY 17-18**

13 Ms. O’Hare noted there is approximately \$200 left in the office supplies budget. *Commissioner Saunders will submit*
14 *her invoices as soon as possible.*

15 Ms. O’Hare said there is \$5,400 for Purchase Service Natural Resources. She said last August, Todd Mervosh was
16 paid \$290 for work done for knotweed work at Tyler Mill Preserve and in April, \$300 was paid for Gerard
17 Hardwoods for chainsaw work which leaves \$5,400 in the account. The Commission discussed various ideas to use
18 the budget money, i.e., purchasing sunflowers, hiring a Contractor to operate a brush hog machine to keep weeds
19 off the trails, purchasing weed whacker, purchasing two metal benches, purchasing a black gum tree and using the
20 money for reimbursement for chainsaw training. Ms. O’Hare noted that if it is a service work, it must be done by
21 June 30th and three quotes would be needed. Under Office Supply Account the Commission suggested purchasing 1
22 weedwhacker, 1 hedge trimmer, 2 benches and spare batteries. *Commissioner Saunders will send the quotes to Ms.*
23 *O’Hare. Ms. O’Hare will issue a Request for Quote for field mowing.*

24 **7. USE OF BUDGET FUNDS FY 18-19 – Tabled to the July 12, 2018 meeting.**

25 **8. OTHER TOPICS**

26 Chair Heffernon spoke about the flyer in the electric bill regarding the Economic Development Commission. Chair
27 Heffernon said she received a “Thank You” note from the student who did the butterfly study.

28 **9. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**

29 **A. Great Park Pursuit, Wharton Brook State Park, May 12, - M. Heffernon**

30 Chair Heffernon said this was a very interesting DEEP-sponsored event to get children outside. Chair Heffernon said
31 she, along with Commissioner Miller and his wife, and Commissioner Saunders attended. Chair Heffernon said there
32 were over 500 people who attended this event and a lot of information was handed out.

33 **B. CFPA newsletter, CT Woodlands, Summer, 2018**

1 Ms. O’Hare distributed the newsletter.

2 **C. CT Farmland Trust Newsletter, News, Spring, 2018**

3 **D. Presentation to Town Council, June 12, 2018 – report, M. Heffernon**

4 Chair Heffernon said the presentation went well. She said she received a nice email from Town Councilor
5 Christopher Shortell. Chair Heffernon said she met with a representative at Choate Rosemary Hall who is in charge
6 of a new initiative with the students who have to do community service. She said this initiative is called
7 Sustainability and the Environment. Chair Heffernon said Choate will send these students out on October 12. She
8 said it appears these students will do any projects we want. She said the summer group will be available from the
9 end of June to July 7 and then from August 10 to August 21st. Ms. O’Hare said she received an email regarding a
10 Trails Webinar, “Leveraging People and Places, Trails as Economic Development”.

11 Commissioner Borne said that on Monday there will be a presentation on the trap rock ridges at the Wallingford
12 Library. Chair Heffernon noted under the 2017-18 budget, a porta-potty could be considered a service item.
13 Commissioner Borne discussed the idea of a porta-potty noting the one that was in place just for the CT. Trails Day
14 and wondered if it could be permanent. O’Hare said this porta-potty could possibly be purchased in the 2018-2019
15 budget. Commissioner Borne suggested signs that stated “Video Surveillance in Use” be installed at Fresh Meadows
16 in the new parking lot where there are landscaping plans and the porta-potty, to deter vandalism. Chair Heffernon
17 wondered if this was allowable.

18 **10. NEXT MEETING – July 12, 2018**

19 **11. ADJOURNMENT**

20 Commissioner Ceneri made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 p.m. Vice-Chair Lathrop seconded the motion
21 which passed unanimously.

22

23 Respectfully submitted,

24 Cynthia A. Kleist

25 Recording Secretary