

1 **APPROVED MINUTES**

2 **WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

3 **REGULAR MEETING**

4 **Thursday, July 12, 2018 – 7:00 p.m.**

5 **Basement Conference Room, Town Hall**

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

7 **MINUTES**

8  
9 **PRESENT:** Vice-Chair John Lathrop; Commissioners Dianne Saunders; Dianne Lendler; Carl Arsenault;  
10 Mike Miller; Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner; Cynthia Kleist Recording Secretary

11 **NOT PRESENT:** Chair Mary Heffernon; Commissioners Jeff Borne; Tom Pietras

12 The Meeting was called to order at 7:19 p.m.

13 **1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

14 **A. Minutes, Regular Meeting, June 14, 2018**

15 Page 3, line 3, should read: "until we get Commissioner Arsenault"; page 6, line 16, should be "Gerard  
16 Hardwoods".

17 **Motion: Commissioner Miller made a motion to approve the June 14, 2018 Meeting Minutes as**  
18 **amended. Commissioner Lendler seconded the motion.**

19 **Vote: Unanimous**

20 **2. PROPERTY MANAGEMENT**

21 **A. Property monitoring sites; reassignment**

22 Ms. O'Hare noted that Commissioner Ceneri resigned and was in charge of monitoring Marcus Cooke Park.  
23 Commissioner Arsenault requested he be reassigned Marcus Cooke Park and be taken off the Galko  
24 property.

25 **B. Tyler Mill Preserve**

26 1. Kiosk & replacement signage

27 Commissioner Saunders reported the Contractor made the corrections at the Northford Rd. entrance kiosk.  
28 She noted the kiosk is not in use yet, awaiting the sign, and the Preserve is closed. Commissioner  
29 Saunders said she didn't get the keys to the kiosk or the extra stain. She said she sent an email to John  
30 Gawlak, Parks & Recreation Director, and gave her more backboard.

31 2. May 15 Storm damage – see Stewards of Tyler Mill (below)

1 a. Preserve closure compliance

2 Commissioner Saunders said closure compliance until today was perfect; she noted there were 101  
3 complaints before the Police erected the barriers on June 16 and three right after that. She said the Police  
4 gave warnings and one individual got a ticket and the trespassing stopped. Commissioner Saunders said  
5 that on July 12, (today), the Police removed the barriers without any warning that they were going to be  
6 removed. Commissioner Saunders noted we are not taking any responsibility for people getting hurt or  
7 keeping people out of Tyler Mill Preserve. *Vice-Chair Lathrop asked Ms. O'Hare to call Mr. Gawlak informing*  
8 *him that the barriers were removed.*

9 b. Tree removal status & plan

- 10 1. DEEP Forestry Division report re: 6/14/18 site investigation  
11 2. Mayoral meeting

12 Commissioner Saunders said she sent out the DEEP report and said the walk with Mayor Dickinson is  
13 scheduled for next Friday on Maltby Lane. Ms. O'Hare said the walk will take place at 9 a.m. Ms. O'Hare  
14 reported on the Mayoral meeting which took place July 2, at 1:30 p.m. Ms. O'Hare said she, Chair  
15 Heffernon, Mr. Gawlak, Kurt Treiber, Town Risk Manager and Mayor Dickinson attended. She said a  
16 summary of the report made by the Commission was presented. Ms. O'Hare said it was decided to have  
17 professionals clear downed trees at the Tyler Mill Preserve and regarding possible hazards in the woods to  
18 put up signs stating "Must Stay On Trails" as suggested by Risk Manager Kurt Treiber.

19 The Commission discussed what to do with the wood that is cut. It was decided to leave the wood in  
20 staging areas. Ms. O'Hare said there was discussion about checking for fire hazards on the large brush  
21 piles that will remain.

22 Commissioner Saunders said there will be three staging areas for the foresters and there will be two  
23 options with the brush; the first option would be have the loggers get money for the harvest and with an  
24 RFP (Request for Proposal), hire a forester and they will get the loggers. She said they should prioritize the  
25 work so they don't go past the breakeven point.

26 Commissioner Saunders said wood is drying out and more trees are falling. She said Public Works cut some  
27 trees. Commissioner Saunders said the idea was to get in there soon and don't cut any more trees until the  
28 foresters arrive. She said the foresters will mark the trees. The Commission wanted to review the marked  
29 trees. Commissioner Saunders said the trees need to be taken out where they can be taken care of  
30 otherwise there will be a mess. She noted an alternative would be to take out the good wood with a  
31 harvester and clean the area. She said there is a lot of trash left which couldn't be moved without  
32 machinery.

33 Commissioner Saunders noted the Purple and Green Trails need to have debris removed. She said the  
34 north part of the Green Trail is also full of invasives and needs to be pushed into piles and bladed off.  
35 Commissioner Saunders said she asked Peter Picone, of DEEP, for recommendations on the type of  
36 machinery to use. She noted the Purple Trail has to be cleared and this would be part of the RFP.  
37 Commissioner Saunders noted the point of using professionals is to get the clean-up paid for. She said that  
38 with an RFP there are options; the Town would not have to put out money and could use incentives and

1 creativity to make it pay for itself. She said it was worth it to clean up the multiflora rose and bittersweet  
2 which she said will spread like wildfire. Commissioner Saunders pointed out these invasives are all over the  
3 Green Trail. She said the professionals would take care of the areas the Commissioners can't reach. She  
4 said the Green and Purple Trails are full of hazards that need to be made safe with the professionals.  
5 Commissioner Saunders said another option is to use the Young Forest Initiative and partner with the non-  
6 profit CFPA. She said this is worth thinking about. Commissioner Saunders said they would be paid \$1,480  
7 an acre to remove the biggest trees and pay for invasive treatment for three years to take out the biggest  
8 damaged trees. She said the earliest time to get the funding would not take place until the winter.

9 3. Mayoral Site Investigation, July 20, 2018, 9 a.m.

10 Vice-Chair Lathrop asked about the July 20<sup>th</sup> walk with Mayor Dickinson and if this could be the deciding  
11 factor. Commissioner Saunders said she would have a simple plan to present to the Mayor. Commissioner  
12 Saunders said the mayor should hear about safety and noted The Young Forestry Initiative will attend the  
13 walk with the Mayor along with Dick Raymond, Risk Manager Kurt Treiber, Commissioner Saunders, Chair  
14 Heffernon and Ms. O'Hare. Commissioner Saunders said the Mayor should be shown the hazards.  
15 Commissioner Saunders said she will go to the site the day before to pick out the hazards, i.e. the 40 ft.  
16 widowmaker. She pointed out the Mayor will be shown that the safety and scope of the work will take  
17 huge equipment.

18 1. DEEP Wildlife Division & "Young Forest Initiative" site investigation, 7/5/18  
19 and DEEP report

20 Ms. O'Hare said on July 5, she, Peter Picone, DEEP, Lisa Wahle and Joshua Miller from the Young Forest  
21 Initiative went to the site investigation with Ms. O'Hare, Pete Rasza, Commissioner Saunders, Lendler

22 2. Mayoral site investigation, July 20, 2018, 9 a.m.

23 4. Stewards of Tyler Mill - report, D. Saunders and D. Lendler

24 Commissioner Saunders and Commissioner Lendler noted in their Stewards report, that a corner has been  
25 turned in regards to the May 15, 2018 microburst storm damage at Tyler Mill Preserve; Their report noted  
26 that most of the typical damage on the trails have been cleared and work is starting on the remaining  
27 hazards with Commissioner Arsenaault; work will also begin on Bertini Park; the main swath of damage has  
28 been let for professionals and CT DEEP foresters and biologists have visited and made recommendations;  
29 trails are beginning to be swept (cut back overgrowth); the increased sunlight from the downed trees has  
30 spurred excessive growth of plants along trail edges.; The Water Division mowed the easement at the  
31 Northford Road entrance (little meadow); Commissioner Saunders and Lendler noted several trespass  
32 issues; trespassing with a chainsaw; trucks, ATV's, dumping and disposing of wild animals. They noted the  
33 Police issued a few warnings.

34 5. Tyler Mill Preserve Management Planning Committee – status – not discussed.

## 35 **C.FRESH MEADOWS**

36 1. CT Recreational Trails Grant Project

1 a. Completion status

2 Ms. O'Hare said this has not been completed, but the Contractor corrected problems in the trail area and  
3 put up signs but not the bench which will be ordered; the ramp was repaired between Schoolhouse and  
4 Cheshire Roads. She said the Engineering Dept. will go to the site to examine what has been done.

5 b. Glacial erratic signage

6 Ms. O'Hare said the sign has not been ordered.

7 c. Maintenance program – trailside mowing & stone dust restoration – not discussed but on  
8 the agenda to be discussed at a future date. Commissioner Lendler said a neighbor mowed by the bench  
9 on the Cuneo property. Commissioner Arsenault reported someone mowed onto one of the fields towards  
10 the Cuneo property near the bird boxes. Ms. O'Hare said this area was supposed to be mowed by a  
11 Contractor.

12 d. Mowing contract – report, staff

13 Ms. O'Hare said she contacted 13 farmers regarding mowing and got three farmers to respond to the  
14 mowing contract and Kern Enterprises was awarded the mowing contract. Ms. O'Hare said the cost was  
15 \$2,200 to mow Field 4C on the top of Whirlwind Hill Rd.; Field 7E and Field 7F on Northford Rd was \$750  
16 for both; Fresh Meadows (13 acres) was \$2,100. Ms. O'Hare said she used the money and was happy the  
17 mowing was done, but this was not sustainable. *Commissioner Saunders said she will check Field 4C.*

18 **D. Beseck Meadow**

19 1. Bamboo (4/13/18)

20 Ms. O'Hare said she has not recently visited the site.

21 3. Tree removal

22 Commissioner Saunders said the farmer is supposed to remove the tree. *Commissioner Miller will check to*  
23 *see if the tree was removed and will check on the bamboo to see how high it has grown and how*  
24 *expansive it is, and if the Town of Wallingford sign has been moved to the other side of the driveway.*

25 **E. Beseck Mountain**

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

27 Ms. O'Hare said she sent a memo to the Engineering Dept. on May 24. She said she hasn't received a  
28 response. She noted the footbridge may be on Town property and may be on wetlands.

29 2. Barrier on Wisk-Key-Wind Road (4/14/18)

30 Ms. O'Hare said she sent a memo regarding ATV's off the cul-de-sac on Wisk-Key –Wind Road on April 14,  
31 2018. She said the Commission voted to put up poles to attempt to stop this activity. *Ms. O'Hare will follow*  
32 *up.*

1 **F. Ferguson Woods**

2 1. Storm damage & closure

3 Vice-Chair Lathrop said all the other trails are cleared except for one clump that needed to be cleaned up,  
4 but people can walk around in the woods. He said there are no hazards and the property is no longer  
5 closed.

6 2. Dumping of tree parts – (letter 6/21/18, surveyed 7/2/18)

7 Ms. O'Hare said Chair Heffernon reported dumping to her at the last meeting. Ms. O'Hare said she wrote a  
8 letter to the owner and the area was surveyed by the Town Engineering Dept. because the property owner  
9 had informed her that he wasn't aware of the exact location of the property line when tree parts were  
10 dumped. She said the property owner will move the tree parts. Vice-Chair Lathrop said he took a photo of  
11 the tree parts that were dumped and noted the debris was in the driveway of the old house.

12 **G. Field 4C, Whirlwind Hill Rd. open space property**

13 1. Mowing contract – report, staff – discussed under "Fresh Meadows" (C ) Item #d.

14 2. Autumn olive clearing work

15 Ms. O'Hare noted the work quote didn't include autumn olive work. Commissioner Saunders said this would  
16 be a job for Tom who enjoys clearing autumn olive. Ms. O'Hare said it cost \$4,000 for All-Habitat to clear  
17 the autumn olive and this is not sustainable. Commissioner Saunders said the following season the  
18 invasives had all grown back. She said stump work was done and the autumn olive grew between the  
19 stumps.

20 4. Management options

21 Not discussed at this meeting and will be discussed at a future meeting.

22 **H. 1245 Whirlwind Hill Road property – management options**

23 Ms. O'Hare said, as with the property above, a decision has to be made to either let this property go to  
24 forest or to lease it out for goat farming or another use.

25 **I. Open Space Signage – tamarack decals, J. Lathrop (for M. Heffernon)**

26 Vice-Chair Lathrop said Chair Heffernon reported decals were put on all the signs and it looks great.

27 **J. Other properties – Nothing to report**

28 **3. FARMLAND LEASE PROPERTIES PROGRAM**

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

30 1. Proposed Request For Qualifications – status – nothing new

31 2. Lease area boundary fence repair

1 Ms. O'Hare said she spoke with Colleen Auger, the farmer, and she will show her where the  
2 problems with the fence are located.

3 3. Eversource Energy Resiliency Clearing Program work

4 Ms. O'Hare said she went out with Eversource regarding the Energy Resiliency Clearing Program  
5 work. Commissioner Saunders reported that Eversource is constructing an access road from  
6 Tamarack Swamp Road down to Powers Road past the horse field on Eversource property. Ms.  
7 O'Hare said she walked the stream corridor and down the road Eversource built nine years ago.  
8 She said Eversource representatives stated this road has not been maintained but will maintain it  
9 now. She said Eversource has a policy to cut down any sapling tree that will grow more than 15  
10 ft. high and will take care of invasives but she stopped their plan to spray the entire stream  
11 corridor.

12 **B. Fields 7E & 7F**

13 1. Mowing contract – discussed above under Fresh Meadows, item d.

14 2. Consideration of removal from Program – not discussed.

15 **C. May 15 Storm damage to fields – status report**

16 Commissioner Saunders said Andy Bozzuto finished his hay and nothing more, but Anastasio has  
17 not touched anything.

18 Commissioner Saunders said Gary Kondracki has mowed a lot of his fields but not all of them;  
19 Colleen Auger and her husband have mowed almost all of their fields. She said the Auger's are  
20 baling their last two fields 11A & 11B today (Thursday). She said Commissioner Arsenault helped  
21 remove a 35 to 36 inch wide tree. Commissioner Saunders said the tree canopy was cleared this  
22 past Sunday. She showed a photo of Commissioner Arsenault near the tree.

23

24 **D. Proposed lease bids – 19 hayfields – terms expire Dec. 2018**

25 Commissioner Saunders said most of the lease on the 19 hayfields could be renewed because  
26 they were new bids last time the last five years and can have the five year option to renew. She  
27 said they are all good except for Anastasio whom she didn't recommend renewing. *Ms. O'Hare will*  
28 *send a letter asking the Lessees if they want to renew for the next five years.* The Commission  
29 agreed with having Ms. O'Hare sent the letter.

30 Commissioner Saunders said she did the monitoring on Field 8B and reported that nothing is ever  
31 mowed and there has been no maintenance. She said this field has not been touched and the  
32 Anastasio's have not been seen since Nov. 25. Commissioner Saunders said she also did the  
33 monitoring reports for Bozzuto on Fields 2A, 3A, 7B, 7C, 7D and 7H, everything except Beseck  
34 Meadows. She said all of these fields were fine but Bozzuto does not do the edging.

35 Commissioner Saunders recommended that Bozzuto get a letter from Ms. O'Hare that the edges  
36 are not being mowed and the swales are filling up with invasives. Commissioner Saunders said for  
37 Anastasio she did monitoring reports for Fields 8B, and 4A and 19A. She said she is recommending  
38 for Field 8B that this be put out for re-bid for 2019-2020. She showed a photo. Ms. O'Hare said  
39 this lease ends Dec. 18, 2018. She said Field 8B should be put out for bid and noted that the Field  
40 4A (pasture), lease extends to 2021.

1 Commissioner Saunders reported that someone mowed the front of the barn and said there has  
2 been a little more dumping at the barn. She said the Commission should consider terminating the  
3 lease and taking the pasture and the lower level of the barn and take Fields 4C, 8B, 4A and 19A  
4 and make this a lease for someone else.

5 **Motion: A motion by Commissioner Saunders second by Commissioner Miller to proceed**  
6 **with asking farmers (with the exception of Field 8B), to continue for five years with the**  
7 **lease which is up December 2018. Ms. O'Hare will process the letter.**

8 **Vote: Unanimous**

9 **4.SANDPLAINS – July 9, PZC Public Hearing**

10 Ms. O'Hare reported the special Permit applications in front of Planning & Zoning were withdrawn  
11 but may be re-submittd. The sub-division application was withdrawn and recently resubmitted.

12 **5. USE OF BUDGET FUNDS FY 18-19 – Professional Services: Natural**  
13 **Resources**

14 Ms. O'Hare said she has \$6,000 in the budget for FY 18-19 for Professional Natural Services. She  
15 asked the Commission to come up with ideas on how to spend this money. Ms. O'Hare noted she  
16 has approximately \$40,000 in the Open Space Resource's Management Fund. She said money  
17 could be taken out of this fund instead of spending the Professional Natural Services fund.

18 **6. OTHER TOPICS**

19 **A. Choate students**, October community involvement event; Environmental sustainability

20 Commissioner Saunders discussed possible projects for the Choate students, i.e., providing  
21 habitats for certain species.

22 **7. REPORTS & CORRESPONDENCE**

23 **A. CT Butterfly Association newsletter, Summer, 2018** – distributed by Ms. O'Hare

24 **B. CT Greenway Council Trail Symposium – proposals due by July 31, 2018** –  
25 mentioned by Ms. O'Hare

26 **C. CT Farmland Trust – winery tour, Woodstock, CT (date not provided)** –  
27 mentioned by Ms. O'Hare.

28 **D. CT Land Conservation Council, membership renewal**

29 **Motion: A motion by Commissioner Miller second by Vice-Chair Lathrop to renew the CT**  
30 **Land Conservation Council membership for \$125. The vote was unanimous**

31 **8. NEXT MEETING** – August 9, 2018

32 **9. ADJOURNMENT**

33 Commissioner Lendler made a motion to adjourn the Meeting at 9:30 p.m. Commissioner  
34 Saunders seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

35

36

- 1 Respectfully submitted,
- 2
- 3 Cynthia A. Kleist
- 4 Recording Secretary