

Final / Approved

WALLINGFORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Thursday, March 14, 2019, 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

Present: Chair Mary Heffernon, Carl Arsenault, Jeff Borne, Mike Miller, Dianne Saunders, Jared McQueen, Brad Sammis, Erin O'Hare, Environmental Planner and Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe from Audubon CT.

Absent: Vice-Chair John Lathrop and Dianne Lendler.

Chair Heffernon called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Brad Sammis was welcomed to the Commission.

1. Audubon CT mapping – Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, Bird Conservation Programs Manager Audubon CT

Ms. Folsom-O'Keefe made a presentation to the Commission about the mapping project that Audubon CT has undertaken. The project seeks to understand how the bird habitats in CT can be used to bring nature closer to people, especially in areas where urban oases can be created to help address environmental justice issues.

Audubon CT is looking for ideas on how towns might use these maps to improve local environments.

Audubon CT has an In Lieu Fee grant program established through the Army Corps of Engineers that makes funds available for restoration, wetlands mitigation and bird habitats.

Ms. O'Keefe mentioned a website that allows you to put in your zip code and access Audubon's native plant database to find names of plants that can be used to attract birds: <https://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds>.

Possible areas for using these maps to help create urban oases included Doolittle Park and Grand St. Park near the Ulbrich Girls & Boys Club.

Commission members will give some thought to projects we might help facilitate in town with the help of these maps.

2. Approval of Minutes

Record-Journal reporter Lauren Takores last name was spelled incorrectly in the list of attendees at the February 14 meeting.

Motion by Commissioner Miller to approve the Minutes as amended; seconded by Commissioner Arsenault and approved unanimously.

3. Property Management

A. Tyler Mill Preserve

1. May 15 Storm damage

Commissioner Saunders reported that she has been told by Public Works that they will only be able to spend one more week clearing storm debris. When they are done, there will be a meeting with the Mayor and perhaps the Risk Manager to assess the safety of re-opening the preserve.

2. Stewards of Tyler Mill

DEEP will stock the river for fishing season at Northford Rd. this year instead of at the Tyler Mill Rd. bridge. The stewards have continued to clear hazard trees.

B. Fresh Meadows

1. Bluebird boxes

4 new bluebird boxes have been purchased.

Commissioner Arsenault will install the replacement sign and bluebird boxes as soon as possible and will check on the condition and placement of the other bluebird boxes.

2. Trees of Heaven eradication

Commissioner Arsenault will look into the location and number of trees of heaven at Fresh Meadows, and Commissioners Saunders will check Tyler Mill. This will be discussed at the April meeting.

3. Trail mowing bid proposal

The following parameters were agreed upon for the bid specs at Fresh Meadows:

A mulching mower with no side discharge should be used for the trail edges.

The trail edges should be mowed as needed from May 1st – October 1st to 5' on either side, height of growth in field should not exceed 18", fields should be mowed to a height of 6", and vegetation should be cleared from paths.

C. Ferguson Woods

Re-blazing will be done for the Big Event on April 6th from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Chair Heffernon is hoping all Commissioners will be on deck to help that day.

D. Mowing

Commissioner Saunders will request names of possible mowers from forester Eric Hansen for the bid to mow Fresh Meadows and fields 7E and 7F on Northford Rd.

E. Property Monitoring

Commissioners Arsenault, Lathrop, Miller and Saunders are scheduled to give their property monitoring reports at the April Commission meeting.

Commissioner McQueen has been assigned to monitor Marcus Cooke Park, and Commissioner Sammis has been assigned to monitor Main St. Yalesville,

4. Farmland Lease Properties Program

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

Ms. O'Hare will follow-up on this proposed bid waiver.

B. Proposed bid for Field 8B, Northford Rd

Ms. O'Hare will put the bid out.

C. Review of Leases for Periodic Reporting

Commissioner Saunders will highlight the leases to indicate jobs that need to be done periodically.

D. Farmland Committee

Commissioner Saunders will follow-up on soil testing on Field 4C, Northford Rd., when the ground thaws.

5. Budget FY 19-20

A. Mayoral Meeting, March 7th

The meeting went well and the Mayor approved our request.

B. Town Council Public Hearing – Council Chambers, Monday, April 8th, 6:00 p.m.

C. Town Council Budget Workshop – Council Chambers, Tuesday, April 16th, 6:30 p.m.

6. Executive Session pursuant to CT General Statutes Sections 1-225(f) and 200(6)(D) regarding real estate

Motion by Commissioner Arsenault to move into Executive Session; seconded by Commissioner McQueen and approved unanimously.

The Commission entered Executive Session at 9:24 p.m.

Motion by Commissioner Miller to move out of Executive Session; seconded by Commissioner Arsenault and approved unanimously.

The Commission came out of Executive Session at 9:28 p.m.

7. Other Topics

A. Climate Change Roundtable

Commissioners took turns sharing what actions they take in their lives regarding climate change.

8. Reports/Correspondence

Commissioners were reminded of the upcoming CT Land Conservation Conference on March 23rd and were given an update on plans for Community Pool.

Commissioners Arsenault and Miller have been appointed to the New England Trail Advisory Committee.

Motion by Commissioner Miller to pay dues to CT Forest and Park Association for 2019; seconded by Commissioner Arsenault and approved unanimously.

9. Next Meeting – April 11, 2019

10. Adjournment

Motion by Commissioner Bourne to adjourn the meeting; seconded by Commissioner Sammis and approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary G. Heffernan