

CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES
Regular Meeting of April 24, 2018 at 7:00 pm
Meeting Room #3, Municipal Center, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

These Minutes are Subject to Approval by the Conservation Commission

Present: Cindy Joyce, Karlyn Sturmer, Mark Boland, Gail Friedman

Staff: Robert Sibley, Deputy Director of Planning & Land Use, Dawn Fried, Clerk

Also Present: Corinne Cox, 31 Pond Brook Road, Linda Zukauskas, Voices, Dee Davis, 42 Orchard Hill Road, Newtown Bridle Lands Association (NBLA), Karen Adamshack, 47 Platts Hill Road, NBLA, Greg Carnrick, 49 Marlin Road

The meeting opened at 7:01 pm.

Ms. Joyce motioned to name Karlyn Sturmer as acting Chairperson for the meeting. Mr. Boland seconded. All in favor.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES for April 24, 2018

Ms. Friedman moved to approve the minutes from April 24, 2018. Ms. Joyce seconded. All in favor. The minutes from April 24, 2018 were approved.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Ms. Sturmer voiced her appreciation of Ms. Cox, P&Z Commissioner, attending the Conservation meeting. Ms. Sturmer stated that it's beneficial that the town Commissions stay apprised of each other's activities.

Ms. Davis and Mr. Carnrick had a lengthy discussion with the Commission regarding Cherry Grove Trail maintenance. Mr. Carnrick offered to remove the fallen trees on the trails and maintain the existing trail. Mr. Carnrick came to the Commission for approval due to the trails being on town-owned open space property. Ms. Joyce and Ms. Sturmer wanted to walk the property before giving approval. Ms. Sturmer stated that open space property is not just for trails but has many more uses, one being a wildlife corridor. Mr. Carnrick explained that he simply wanted to remove fallen trees and clean-up the existing trails at no cost to the Commission. Ms. Davis explained the history of the property and the NBLA easements. Both Mr. Carnrick and Ms. Davis agreed that cleaning up the trails would benefit the pedestrian trails as well as the horse trails. After much discussion Ms. Friedman motioned to allow Mr. Carnrick to remove the trees blocking the trail and clear the brush on the town-owned open space easements. Ms. Joyce seconded. All in favor. The Commission will coordinate a walk of the property.

AGENCY REPORTS

Ms. Friedman offered to monitor the Inland Wetland meetings going forward.

DISCUSSION

High Meadow – Ms. Sturmer stated that Ms. Kocet and she have been discussing purchasing native flowers for the High Meadow as well as using native plants from her garden. Ms. Sturmer would like to ask Parks and Rec for a water tank to keep them watered.

Native Plant Policy – Will discuss at the next CC meeting with Ms. Kocet in attendance.

Pole Bridge Preserve – Mr. Sibley stated that he made a request to Parks and Rec for the maintenance work and clean-up of the Pole Bridge property at no cost to the Conservation Commission. Separately, Mr. Sibley hired a surveyor to stake out the access points of the property which will be billed to the CC. Ms. Joyce questioned the current funds available in the CC budget. Mr. Boland will get back to the Commission with the amount. Ms. Joyce would like to spend the remaining funds in the CC budget before the fiscal year ends. Ms. Sturmer would like to purchase plants for High Meadow.

Website – Ms. Joyce gave the Commission an update on the website:

- Kevin from the Technology Department and Keith from Shiftclick.com have created maps of three open space properties on the CC website that are interactive through a cell phone.
- Ms. Joyce scanned the specimens from the High Meadow Study and will forward to Keith to be added to the website
- Ms. Joyce would like Laurel Trail added to the website.
- Ms. Joyce is hoping to identify native plants and add them to the website with corresponding pictures.

Kiosks – Ms. Sturmer discussed divvying up the kiosks among the Commissioners. Each kiosk should have the following “suggested” materials: updated maps, public information, history of property and native plant information. The information should be laminated for weatherproofing purposes.

High Meadow kiosk – Ms. Sturmer and Ms. Kocet

Pole Bridge kiosk – Ms. Joyce

Half Way River kiosk – Mr. Boland

Deep Brook kiosk – Ms. Friedman

Al's Trail – Ms. Sturmer would like to schedule a walk with the Commission. Ms. Sturmer will coordinate with Ms. Kocet.

Earth Day Recap - Mr. Boland stated that Earth Day was well attended. Many people were interested in Newtown's open space trails as well as the bike trails. Mr. Boland spoke with a Science teacher from Newtown High School regarding students looking for projects around the town. The Commission will reach out to her in the future.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Boland moved to adjourn the CC meeting. Ms. Joyce seconded. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dawn Friedman, Clerk