

Essex Conservation Commission

Town of Essex  
29 West Avenue  
Essex, CT 06426

**MINUTES**

**Regular Meeting – September 8, 2011**

**Call to Order**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on September 8, 2011 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall. Members in attendance were Kay Tucker, Rich Helmecki, Doug Demarest, Jeff Lovelace, MaryAnn Pleva, Pam Bernardini and Susan Malen. Also in attendance, Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary.

Ms. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

**Welcome Alternate Susan Malen**

Ms. Malen stated that she was raised in CT and that she has lived in Boston and in Maine and has moved back to Essex one and one half years ago. While living in Maine, Ms. Malen served on the Parks and Land Commission and also served on the Harbor and Waterfront Commission. In addition to her newly appointed position as alternate to the Essex Conservation Commission, Ms. Malen is the Chair of the Essex Water Pollution Control and Sanitary Waste Commission.

**Review and Approval of the August 11, 2011 Minutes:**

The Minutes were reviewed and the following changes were noted in italics.  
Page 1, Old Business, strike last sentence of 2<sup>nd</sup> to the last paragraph.

Page 2 under Viney Hill Brook Preserve, second paragraph: “Mr. Lovelace suggested *an annual* plan for Mr. Macwhinney to include a spring clean up..”

**Motion** made by Doug Demarest to approve the August 11, 2011 Minutes as amended.

**Motion** seconded by Pam Bernardini and passed unanimously.

**Old Business: TRAIL REPORTS**

**Bushy Hill Brook Preserve**

Rich Helmecki visited Bushy Hill and he noted that post hurricane, there were several large felled trees on the trails. Mr. Helmecki stated that a tree had fallen over prior to the hurricane on the bridge that was constructed by the Boy Scouts.

Ms. Tucker also visited the trails and noted that down by the Falls River there are so many felled trees that the trails are barely visible.

Ms. Tucker contacted Joe Budrow to inform him of the felled trees in the Falls River waterway and to request permission for the Commission members take steps to remove the trees. Ms. Tucker also contacted Jason Wilcox who indicated that he will take a look at the damage in the next four weeks.

Ms. Tucker suggested that signage be posted noting that the trails are hazardous.

Ms. Pleva stated that the trails are always hazardous and Mr. Helmecki noted that pedestrian traffic can still get through.

Ms. Tucker stated that both of the oak trees survived on the Bushy Hill trail.

### **Viney Hill Preserve**

Jeff Lovelace walked all the trails at Viney Hill Preserve and he noted that there is one major tree down on the yellow trail. The forest glen trail is open. There are two or three trees down on the white trail which need to be removed. They are down in the area where the gate is located. There is one tree down on observation rock on the red trail. There are three large trees down on broadwalk and that trail is full of water. Mr. Lovelace put through a call to Tom MacWhinney, Mud River Services for assistance with the removal. Mr. Lovelace noted that the bridge looks fine.

Ms. Tucker stated that if Mr. MacWhinney is not able to do the work, Tyler Robida can do the work. Mr. Robida is fully insured and would be able to do the job.

### **Canfield Meadow Woods**

Al Macgregor and Dana Hill were at Canfield Meadow woods and working with chain saws, opened the trails from Book Hill Woods to Dennison Road and made those trails passable.

### **Other**

Ms. Tucker asked the Commissioners to re-visit her earlier suggestion to place signage on the trails.

Ms. Pleva and Ms. Bernardini both indicated that it was not necessary at this time to post signage on the trails warning of a hazard.

Mr. Lovelace suggested that in lieu of signs, commissioners should perhaps consider placing a disclaimer on the Town's website stating that the trails could be hazardous.

Ms. Tucker asked commissioners if they wished to schedule a date and time to meet for clean up of the trails.

Mr. Lovelace suggested that members walk the trails at Viney Hill Brook Preserve and remove sticks and debris.

Mr. Helmecki will contact Ms. Malen to discuss meeting on Saturday, September 17, 2011 for trail maintenance.

Ms. Tucker suggested that if Tom MacWhinney has the time, he might be able to clean up Viney Hill Brook Park.

Ms. Tucker noted that the submittal for the annual report was reviewed by the commissioners and all are in agreement for submittal.

**Motion** made by Pam Bernardini to submit the article Ms. Tucker wrote for the annual report.

**Motion** seconded by Goody LeLash and passed unanimously.

Ms. Tucker received a bill from Mud River Services in the amount of \$400.

Ms. Tucker mentioned All Habitat Services and the phragmite removal. A contract was signed and Ms. Tucker sent the request and the contract to the Town's Treasurer for payment. The cost for the phragmite removal is \$350 along with a \$200 DEP processing fee. The request for payment was held up by the Treasurer's office as there was a question about a DEP charge associated with this contract.

Ms. Tucker stated her wish to have the contract signed so that removal can begin in the fall. Ms. Tucker will contact the Treasurer's office.

Ms. Tucker commented on the framed aerial photos of Bushy Hill and Viney Hill Brook park. It is the Commission's wish to have these photos hung in Meeting Room B of the Essex Town Hall. Ms. Tucker stated that she was informed by the Essex Town Hall custodian that he was told not to hang the photos, per the office of the first selectman. It was stated that the photos were not framed correctly.

Ms. Bernardini stated that additional framing would be expensive. It was suggested that the photos be taken back to Joel Marzi for framing.

Ms. Malen will inquire with the Selectman's office what is considered to be suitable for framing.

Ms. Pleva suggested that the name of the park locations should be noted on the photos.

Mr. Lovelace met with Ann Penniman two or so weeks ago. Ms. Penniman is ready to go with Viney Hill Brook Park.

Ms. Tucker stated that Ms. Penniman committed to a verbal contract of \$750 for completion of the maps with a finishing point date of August 21, 2011. Ms. Tucker requested that this project could be completed before the first snow fall.

**New Business:**

Ms. Pleva has been trying to find out a little more about the Gateway Commission. Torrence Downes of the Gateway Commission offered a power point presentation to the Essex Zoning Commission. Mr. Downes stated that he would be willing to present the same to the

Essex Conservation Commission. There are two members from the Town of Essex who are appointed to the Gateway Commission. Anthony Chirrico was recently appointed and there is one vacancy on that Commission.

Ms. Pleva will contact John Guskowski, Town Planner to discuss the coordination of the various commissions and boards in Essex to meet with the Gateway Commission.

Mr. Helmecki presented an invoice in the amount of \$25.97 for the new blade for the weed wacker and for gasoline.

**Motion** made by Goody LeLash to approve reimbursement in the amount of \$25.97 to Mr. Helmecki.

**Motion** seconded by Jeff Lovelace and passed unanimously.

Jeff Lovelace referenced the member list which the commissioners received in their packets this week. Mr. Helmecki noted that on that member list, he is noted as an alternate. Mr. Lovelace is a full member.

It was noted that Rich Helmecki should also be noted as Vice Chair of the Conservation Commission.

Ms. Tucker asked members to look over this revised member list to be sure that the information is correct.

Mr. Helmecki will contact Darcy Roper in the Land Use office and ask her to update.

Ms. Tucker stated that there is one more vacancy and the list should be updated when the new alternate is appointed.

Ms. Pleva asked to have her work phone number removed from the member list.

Eve Potts, longtime Essex resident and noted writer will present a slide show and talk about the history of Cross Lots at the Essex Town Hall on Wednesday, September 14, 2011 at 7:30 p.m.

There will be a Swallow Cruise on the CT River on Tuesday, September 20, 2011 at 5:00p.m. sponsored by the Essex Land Trust. The cost is \$40 per person and there is a September 15, 2011 rsvp.

There is a Mushroom and Nature Photography Walk on Saturday, September 10, 2011 at 10:00 a.m., Bushy Hill Park, Ivoryton sponsored by the Essex Land Trust. The walk will be led by Jeff Sims, award-winning amateur nature photographer.

Rick Audett, Director of the Essex Park and Recreation Department emailed the water analysis to Ms. Tucker for Viney Hill Brook park. On two occasions the numbers were over the legal e coli limit.

**IWWC Report Goody LeLash:**

Joe Budrow, Essex ZEO/WEO has been keeping track of the maintenance at Viney Hill Brook park.

Ms. Pleva commented on an ad in the paper for bid to repair on Novelty Lane.

**Correspondence**

Invoice from Mud River Services previously noted at the meeting.

**Motion** made by Pam Bernardini to adjourn.

**Motion** seconded by MaryAnn Pleva and passed unanimously.

The regular meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

---

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin  
Recording Secretary

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission will be conducted on 10.13.2011.