

TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

29 West Avenue • Essex, Connecticut 06426
Telephone (860) 767-4340 • FAX (860) 767-8509

Executive Board

*Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman
Frank Hall, Secretary*

Regular Members

*Richard Helmecki
Adrienne Forrest
Robert Ward
Mark J. Reeves*

Alternate Member

Jerri MacMillian

Unapproved

**Minutes Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 11, 2017 at 7:30 P.M.**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on May 11, 2017 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

Attending Members

Kay Tucker
Richard Helmecki
Adrienne Forrest
Frank Hall
Jerri MacMillian seated for Jeff Lovelace
Mark Reeves arrived at 7:32 p.m.

Absent Members

Jeffrey Lovelace
Robert Ward

Staff: Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary

Audience: There were no audience members.

1. Call to Order

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

Seated for the meeting were K. Tucker, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves, J MacMillian.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment

3. Old Business to include:

a. Trail Reports

Bushy Hill Preserve

No report.

Viney Hill Brook Preserve

F Hall stated that on the Broadwalk Trail was found to be wet during the month of April because the beavers clogged the culvert in the pond abutting the right-of-way road on Dennis Robida's property. The water level was at about 18" above the culvert. F Hall visited the site again in the past few days and he reported that a grate had been installed in front of the culvert, that the culvert appeared to be running smoothly and that there was a drop in the water level. F Hall took pictures of the site which he will forward to First Selectman Norman Needleman and if Mr. Needleman recommends, F Hall will contact Mike Callahan, Beaver Solutions LLC to remediate the site.

K Tucker stated that she spoke at length with Dennis Robida whom she noted routinely clears and cleans the culvert, extracting sticks and debris that the beavers have collected. The water level has flooded Mr. Robida's yard and he has expressed the concern that the accumulating water will eventually flood his cellar and his septic. It was noted that the culvert and the right-of-way road belongs to the Town.

F Hall suggested the installation of an exclusion fence and a pond leveler which will provide a long-term solution.

M Reeves stated that it is his opinion that this event could be occurring after extensive rainfall and he noted that the elevation of the pond and the ponding of the road could be as a result of the heavy rain the State has experienced in the past several weeks.

M Reeves suggested that the Commission write a letter to the First Selectman stating that after a thorough discussion, the Conservation Commission agrees that a long-term solution to this issue would be the installation of an exclusion fence. Due to budget constraints, the Commission has no funds available for this project, however if the Town wishes to handle the cost of the installation, the Conservation Commission supports that effort.

F Hall suggested that the Commission conduct a site visit and he noted that D Robida would like a plan in place to manage the beavers at that culvert.

M Reeves suggested that D Robida to be invited to the next Conservation Commission meeting.

Members will conduct a site inspection on May 21, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. and will meet at the passive area parking lot.

K Tucker stated that she visited VHBP on April 29, 2017 around 7:45 p.m. and visited the Eagle Scout area and she spotted a few beavers.

K Tucker attended a DEEP wildlife presentation on Bobcats in CT. Bobcats weigh between 18-20 lbs., can leap 15 feet and can take a beaver on land or in the water. Data current to 2013 revealed no Bobcats in Essex, however the person presenting suggested that if there is a sighting a report should be made to the DEEP.

F Hall stated that he, M. Reeves and R Ward set up a cam hoping to record beaver activity at the pond which is situated up Broadwalk where the Beavers have set-up and actually created another pond. The cam picked up a coyote and what may have been a fisher cat.

R Helmecki asked if the Commission wished to construct a few bog bridges. K Tucker recommended undertaking this project in the fall. M Reeves stated that the beavers took a large chunk out of the bog bridge.

Canfield Meadow Woods

No report.

b. Schedule Maintenance Work Party

Members will conduct a site inspection on May 21, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. and will meet at the passive area.

c. Discuss Kiosk Design and Construction

K Tucker stated that the Commission needs a construction plan so as to purchase the lumber needed for the kiosk.

F Hall suggested that the Commission look at the design of the kiosk used by the Essex Land Trust.

M Reeves suggested the installation of a pre-fabricated structure.

d. Other

There was no other business.

4. New Business

a. Financial Expenditures

K Tucker reported on a bill from Clark Services in the amount of \$1,935 for phase 1 of a section of the field at Bushy Hill Preserve. The Conservation Commission had a budget of \$11,900 with \$5,333 left remaining in the fiscal year. The Commission contracted with All Habitat Services for the adulticide inspection and treatment in the amount of \$500. Phragmite and Knotweed removal along with the DEEP Permit and application is \$1,650, with an additional \$300 to cut the weeds, for a total of \$2450. Annual fee to Shirley Malcarne of \$60 for an inventory and the Commission Clerk's salary leaving the Conservation Commission with a balance of \$238 until the end of June.

5. Review and Approve April 13, 2017 Special Meeting Minutes

MOTION made by A Forrest to approve the April 13, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes with the following amendments; 1) Page 2, top paragraph to read: *"The Deep River Conservation Commission submitted an application to the ERT and K Tucker co-signed on behalf of the Essex Conservation Commission to enter into an agreement with the ERT for Canfield Meadow Woods"* 2) Under C to read: *"M Reeves stated that he*

walked with K Tucker and with Ely to review the progress of the first mowing of the large meadows. M. Reeves and K Tucker showed..."; 3) Page 3 Under New Business, 3rd sentence to read: "The total for Knotweed and Phragmite permits and application is \$1650, cutting of Phragmite and Knotweed, add an additional \$550."; 4) Fourth sentence to read: "K Tucker reported that there is a \$150 fee for mosquito inspection and \$350 per application for adulticide and members asked K Tucker to authorize the work."; **SECONDED** by M Reeves; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves, J MacMillian; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

6. Correspondence

There was no correspondence.

7. Adjournment

MOTION made by M Reeves to adjourn the meeting at 8:35pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be conducted on June 8, 2017 at 7:30pm, Essex Town Hall, Conference Room B, 29 West Avenue, Essex, CT; **SECONDED** by A Forrest; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, M Reeves, J MacMillian.; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary