



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  
Mark J. Reeves  
Jim O'Brien*

**Alternate Member**

*(2) Vacancies*

**Unapproved**

**Minutes Regular Meeting  
Thursday, January 11, 2018 at 7:30 P.M.**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on January 11, 2018 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

**Attending Members**

Kay Tucker  
Jeffrey Lovelace  
Frank Hall  
Adrienne Forrest  
Mark Reeves  
Richard Helmecki  
Jim O'Brien

**Absent Members**

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, J Lovelace, F Hall, R Helmecki, J O'Brien, M Reeves and A Forrest.

**2. Review and Approve Regular Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2017**

**MOTION** made by J Lovelace to approve the Minutes of the December 14, 2017 Regular Meeting with the following amendments: 1) Page 3, mid page, under item B to read: "*J Lovelace suggested making the beaver project a 2-year program. His proposal:*" 2) Under item 6, "Motion made by F Hall to obtain new signs *for new trail around new beaver dam on Broadwalk*"; 3) Page 3, under item 7 to read: "IWWC holds no statutory authority...*held by third parties*"; Page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph: "eliminate *surveyed the situation and*"; Page 3, third paragraph, 4<sup>th</sup> sentence, correct the spelling of *levee*; Page 3, second sentence under B, add after culvert, "*exclusion fence and pond leveler pipe.*" **SECONDED** by A Forrest; **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker,

J Lovelace, A Forrest, J O'Brien, M Reeves, R Helmecki, F Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

### 3. Public Comment

There was no public comment

**MOTION** made by J O'Brien to move financial report up after public comment, on the Agenda; **SECONDED** by M Reeves; **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, J Lovelace, A Forrest, J O'Brien, R Helmecki, M Reeves, F Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

### 6. Financial Report FY 2017-18

K Tucker reported on the remaining balance in this year's fiscal budget and designations for expenditures are as follows: Bushy Hill open meadow project; clerk's services; All Habitat mosquito control in Bushy Hill Preserve; All Habitat in Viney Hill Preserve for Phragmites, Knotweed and cutting of Knotweed and permitting. Remaining balance in this year's budget may be used for mowing or miscellaneous.

### 4. Old Business to Include:

#### a. Discuss and Finalize FY 2018-19 Budget Request

K Tucker discussed the anticipated expenditures for 2018-19 FY to include printing costs, office supplies, consultant fees; clerk's services; grounds maintenance to include: weed whacking and routine trail and meadow mowing, All Habitat professional maintenance of Phragmite, Knotweed cutting and Permitting, and mosquito abatement.

K Tucker commented on the need for remediation of the flexible drainage pipe on the west side bordering Broadwalk. F Hall obtained estimates for the cost of gravel. M Reeves will follow up with Bob Doane, P.E., to discuss plans for a two-year project to address the drainage issue on Broadwalk.

**MOTION** made by M Reeves to submit a budget in the amount of \$13,900 for FY budget 2018-19; **SECONDED** by F Hall; **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, A Forrest, J O'Brien, M Reeves, R Helmecki, F Hall; **Opposed:** J Lovelace; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 6/1/0.

#### b. Essex Events Submission

##### Beavers at Work at Viney Brook

Come visit Viney Hill Brook Preserve and see nature at work and what your commission is doing to keep the preserve safe for people to visit.

The beavers are working hard felling trees, storing food and fortifying their main lodge and secondary "guest" lodge for the winter. Their major, new project is the construction of a system of dams and large pond across Broadwalk blocking the trail. We believe they are building in this upstream area to control the water flowing into Quarry Pond and thus maintain a constant water level for their lodges. Whether they

will build a lodge in the new pond has yet to be observed. Because of this new activity, Conservation Commission members created a new, scenic trail around this area.

The Beaver Fund that was created to maintain this habitat is almost depleted and donations are needed once again. The public has been supportive in the past with donations that allowed the beavers to stay in their habitat. Donations can be made payable to "Town of Essex" with Beaver Fund on the note line. Please include your name and contact information if you would like to volunteer for this project.

Save the date Saturday, April 14, 2018 for the Second Annual Essex Beaver Appreciation Day.

--Essex Conservation Commission

K Tucker commended J. Lovelace who authored the article on behalf of the Conservation Commission on the history of Viney Hill Brook Preserve and of the Town's support of the beaver's habitat.

#### **c. Trail Reports**

**Bushy Hill Preserve:** K Tucker reported that she walked the entire snow covered Blue loop. It appears to be well traversed. K Tucker contacted the Town Maintenance Garage with a request to have the parking lots at Bushy Hill and Viney Hill Brook Preserve cleared.

**Viney Hill Brook Preserve:** J Lovelace stated that he walked Viney Hill Brook today and met K Tucker and R Helmecki who were inspecting the trails on snowshoes.

**Canfield Meadow Woods:** A Forrest reported that she took a mock-up of the signs for the new Viney Hill Brook Preserve trail to the vendor used by the Town. The 9 x 12 aluminum signs will read: "Beavers at Work, Enjoy Don't Destroy".

#### **Other**

F Hall spoke with an affiliate of the Boy Scouts and asked if an Eagle Scout could assist the Commission with clearing around the boulder garden. A brief discussion ensued and F Hall stated that there is a community service program at Valley Regional High School and he will contact the school to inquire about this program.

K Tucker reported that in response to an email blast sent by First Selectman Norman Needleman, one donation has been received for maintenance of the beaver habitat.

#### **5. New Business**

The regularly scheduled February 2018 Conservation Commission meeting will be cancelled due to lack of quorum.

#### **7. Inland/Wetlands Report**

J Lovelace reported that the IWWC conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on January 9, 2018, however there was no business or discussions that were relevant to the Conservation Commission.

## **8. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence.

## **9. Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by M Reeves to adjourn the meeting at 9:27 pm until the March 8, 2018 regularly scheduled meeting at 7:30pm, Essex Town Hall, Conference Room B, 29 West Avenue, Essex, CT; **SECONDED** by R Helmecki; **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, J Lovelace, A Forrest, J O'Brien, M Reeves, F Hall, R Helmecki; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin