



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  
Adrienne Forrest, Secretary*

**Regular Members**

*Frank Hall  
Richard Helmecki  
Mark J. Reeves  
Jim O'Brien*

**Alternate Member**

*Roger Field  
Jacob Wlochowski*

**Unapproved**

**Minutes Regular Meeting  
Thursday, March 14, 2019 at 7:30 p.m.**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, March 14, 2019 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

**Attending Members**

Kay Tucker  
Adrienne Forrest  
Frank Hall  
Jim O'Brien  
Mark Reeves  
Richard Helmecki  
Roger Field seated for R J Lovelace

**Absent Members**

Jeffrey Lovelace

Staff: Stella Beaudoin, Recording Clerk

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

**2. Welcome New Commissioner--Jacob Wlochowski**

K Tucker welcomed J Wlochowski to the Conservation Commission.

J Wlochowski stated that he purchased a house in Ivoryton in August and has been a resident of Ivoryton since 2003. He is an Eagle Scout, and he has walked and cleared trails at Bushy Hill and Viney Hill Brook Park.

### **3. Public Comment**

K Tucker stated that she attended a seminar at the Roger Tory Peterson offices in Old Lyme on Frog Watching which is comprised of a group of people nationally whom from February to October go out in various wetlands to survey the amphibian population because they feel that the amphibian population is decreasing badly due to the climate change. The identification process involves number of factors including being able to identify frogs by their sounds. One must take a test to be certified to participate with this group.

### **4. Review and Approve January 10, 2019 Minutes**

**MOTION** made by F Hall to approve the Minutes of the January 10, 2019 meeting with the following amendments: 1) Page 3, section 3, to indicate that Roger Field participated in the December 15, 2018 work party; 2) Page 3, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph, delete the word “rotting”; **SECONDED** by J O’Brien; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, R Field, J O’Brien A Forrest, M Reeves, R Helmecki, F Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

### **5. Old Business to include:**

#### **A Trail conditions and maintenance**

##### **1 Canfield Meadow Woods**

R Field reported that the trails at Canfield Meadow Woods are muddy but in good shape. R Field stated that there was a dead Oak tree at Book Hill Woods entrance which he reported to Tree Warden Augie Pampel; the Oak has since been removed. Jay Wolf, Animal Control Officer reported that there were bear sightings in the Canfield area.

##### **2 Bushy Hill Preserve**

R Helmecki walked Bushy Hill today and reported that one of the discarded bridges is in the Falls River. It appears that someone hauled and relocated the bridge.

M Reeves stated that he would need to see the bridge to determine the best way to remove it.

R Helmecki reported that there was a big log jam in the Falls River.

##### **3 Viney Hill Brook Preserve**

F Hall stated that he was at Viney Hill Brook Preserve on February 19<sup>th</sup> and based on the photos he emailed to members, the gate at the CL&P access road from Hillside has been fixed. The trench in the area of the intersection of Broadwalk and the access area to Tucker Pond was virtually empty. Over the last 3 weeks there have been only a few inches of rain and many dry days, so it is likely that conditions have not changed.

M Reeves stated that the ditch is deeper and wider than previous.

K Tucker visited Viney Hill Brook Park in early February and noted that the beavers have rebuilt in the area North of the Eagle Scout Bridge.

F Hall reported that the pond leveler adjacent to Robida's house is functioning properly.

## **B Discuss Annual Beaver Day Walking Tour**

F Hall suggested the delay of the Annual Beaver Day Walking Tour which previously was conducted in April, and proposed Saturday, May 4, 2019 at 7:30p.m.

## **C Schedule Site Walks and Work**

K Tucker suggested the formation of a work party to remove the detour signs at Viney Hill Brook Park, to relocate one bog bridge, and to flag the Autumn Olive trees. K Tucker reported that she walked with Ryan Walsh, Essex Town Crew Foreman, several months ago and discussed the scheduling of removal of Autumn Olive, placing of rocks to dissuade public access onto Broadway, and moving the Cedar meadow across from the Robida house

M Reeves suggested postponement of the scheduling of a work party until past the winter season. A date will be set at the April meeting.

## **D Other**

M Reeves stated that the beavers have felled a number of trees in the area that is west of the bridge on Comstock Avenue.

F Hall stated that he received a call mid-February from a Westbrook resident whose house is situated about six feet above a pond which is used as a water source for the fire department; the residents were concerned that the beavers were damming the area jeopardizing the fire department's need to access the water in the pond for fire control. F Hall suggested the callers contact the Westbrook selectman and/or the fire department.

F Hall took advantage of the website training the Town of Essex offered and he suggested the addition of photos to the section devoted to the Conservation Commission. F Hall asked commissioners to send pictures to him by April 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **6 New Business**

R Helmecki stated that on the trail map for Bushy Hill Preserve, in the area of the red trail, the Falls River is not discernable and suggested that the trail be shown on the map to extend all the way down to the river.

## **7 Financial Report and Expenditures**

K Tucker reviewed the expenditures made to date from the 2018/19 Fiscal Year budget. A brief discussion followed on projected expenditures to June 30, 2019.

## **8 Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by A Forrest to adjourn the meeting at 8:38PM until the April 11, 2019 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, R Field, J O'Brien A Forrest, M Reeves, R Helmecki, F Hall; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

**Discussion:** No further discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin  
Recording Clerk