



TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

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

Executive Board

*Kathleen Tucker, Chair
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman
Adrienne Forrest, Secretary*

Regular Members

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

Alternate Member

*Roger Field
Vacancy*

Essex Conservation Commission
Minutes Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 14, 2021

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on Thursday, October 14, 2021 at 7:30 pm in Room A Essex Town Hall

Attending Members

K Tucker
R Field
R Helmecki
J Lovelace
M Reeves

Absent Members

A Forrest
F Hall
J O'Brien

1. Call to Order

K Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm. R. Field seated for A Forrest. R. Helmecki joined meeting after Roll Call and Approval of Minutes.

2. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

3. Review and Approve September 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes

M Reeves motioned to approve the minutes as recorded. R. Field seconded. **Voting in Favor:** All commissioners in attendance voted to approve. **Opposed:** None; **Approved:** 4/0/0. No further discussion.

4. Discussion of Administrative Matters:

Commissioners agreed to cancel November 11, Zoom Meeting. Special Meeting will be scheduled for November 10, 2021, Essex Town Hall Room A, 7:30 pm. K Tucker agreed to record and submit the October Meeting Minutes. A. Forrest will clerk for meeting in November, followed by J Lovelace, in December. The commission continues to seek a permanent hire for the clerk's position.

5. Old Business:

A. Bushy Hill Preserve:

R. Helmecki and K Tucker removed invasives from around the pond on one visit and chain sawed and cleared two fallen trees blocking the Orange Trail on a subsequent visit. K Tucker observed surveyors' pink markings along the tree line abutting the entrance path when she visited the preserve on Monday, October 11. M Reeves clarified that surveyors must work from a "known" point to establish a boundary. The ECC contracted with Doane's Engineering in June, 2021, so that the parking area for Bushy Hill can be officially marked. A "No Public Access, Town of Essex Boundary" sign will be placed on an unmarked trail and more vegetation will be cut back outside the pond. The dead apple tree in the parking area is to be removed under authorization of Augie Pampel, Essex Tree Warden. Date of take-down TBD.

B. Canfield Meadow Woods:

R Field noted that all trails were clear and that one Sunday there were a dozen cars in the Book Hill Woods entrance parking area. The woods are frequented regularly. R Field received a complaint that several bushels of limbs and tree debris had been dumped in the preserve. Roger to notify the First Selectman of this complaint. The ELT has scheduled a walk for Saturday, October 23, 2021, 10:00 am. Visitors are welcome to attend.

C. Viney Hill Brook Preserve:

F Hall, via e-mail, noted that trails were passable and recommended that Beaver Solutions, Inc., be contacted to clear right-of-way road culvert which the beavers continue to block with sticks and mud. M Reeves said he would look at the culvert and e-mail ECC as to whether we could clear the blockage or professional help would be required. Mark said if ECC could undo the blockage this would be preferable since asking Mike Callahan to make a special trip to inspect could increase our cost when the Beaver Solutions, Inc., contract is renewed FY 2021-22. K Tucker asked a hiker to help her replace the dislodged fence post bordering the wild flower meadow. She also reported that all trails walked were very dry and passable and that there was no evidence of recent activity at the large beaver lodge (i.e., mud mound dry and no new sticks had been added). J Lovelace suggested that the wildflower meadow remain "as is" to shelter and nourish birds throughout the winter and then in early spring the meadow be mowed to ground level.



D. The ECC reviewed a survey map, provided by R. Field, dated October 5, 1964 and Revised January 28, 1968, of the Earl L.Canfield Property, which detailed the land now known as Canfield Meadow-Woods, as well as the GIS survey that J Lovelace accessed on his computer. As R Field noted, there are no in-ground survey markers showing where the ELT (Meadow Woods) and the town owned (Canfield) properties begin or end. Roger stated that he, as ELT steward, and his team of volunteers are willing to and capable of maintaining and managing both the Canfield and the Meadow Woods portions of the preserve. After some discussion, the site-walk of Canfield with stewards of the Essex Land Trust, canceled on September 23, was not rescheduled.

E. Other:

The First Selectman will reappoint R Helmecki and K Tucker to the ECC when their terms expire on December 1, 2021. K Tucker notified Selectman Bruce Glowac that

there are two vacancies on the commission, one for a Regular Member and one for an Alternate, since these are Republican Party designated seats.

6. New Business:

Carey Duques, Inland Wetlands Officer, agreed to pay ECC's annual fee of \$35 for membership in CACIWC (Connecticut Association Conservation Inland Wetlands Commissions) for the 2021-22 fiscal year. K Tucker e-mailed the renewal form to Ms. Duques for completion.

7. Financial Report and Proposed Expenditures:

Clark's Custom Services, Inc., had yet to provide a September Invoice for work completed. Sixteen hours of work were budgeted for September with six hours allocated to October and November. The August Invoice for \$900 was paid under the ECC Grounds and Maintenance account. Additional stone/gravel for the Bushy Hill Preserve entrance trail will be ordered.

8. Adjournment

MOTION made by J Lovelace at 8:50 pm to adjourn until the November 10, 2021 Special Meeting;
SECONDED by M Reeves; **Voting in Favor:** K Tucker, R Field, R Helmecki, J Lovelace, and M Reeves.
Opposed: None. **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 5/0/0. No further discussion.

Respectfully submitted,

Kay Tucker, Chair