



TOWN OF ESSEX  
**Conservation Commission**

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**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  
Vacancy*

Essex Conservation Commission  
Minutes of the Special Meeting  
Wednesday, November 10, 2021

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted a special meeting on Wednesday, November 10, 2021 at 7:30 pm in Room A Essex Town Hall.

Attending Members (in alphabetical order): Roger Field, Adrienne Forrest, Frank Hall, Richard Helmecki, Jim O'Brien, Kay Tucker

Absent Members: Jeff Lovelace, Mark Reeves

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
  - A. Kay Tucker recognized that the meeting had a quorum. She also welcomed Susan McCann as the new Conservation Commission Clerk.
2. Public Comments: There was no public business.
3. Review and Approve October 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes: With a motion by Roger Field to approve the minutes, and a second by Richard Helmecki, three members agreed to accept the minutes, and three members abstained since they had not attended the October 14 meeting. The minutes were approved.
4. Old Business:
  - A. Trail Conditions, Management, Maintenance
    1. **Bushy Hill Preserve:**
      - a. Richard Helmecki reported that he and Kay Tucker had received an email from the Essex Land Trust that a tree was down and blocking the blue trail at the Bushy Hill Preserve. Kay and Richard cut up the tree and removed it from the trails. Richard reported that they put up the Essex Town boundary signs on a private trail near the Wolf Tree. He also reported that the trail and pond look good. Kay reported that Clarks Custom Service mowed the meadow and picnic table area. The

invoice for October has been approved. Kay reported that there is a dead apple tree in the parking area for which she contacted Augie Pampel, Tree Warden, who will have it removed.

b. Update on Parking Lot Survey: Richard reported that there are survey flags all over the property. Kay and Richard pointed out that the survey shows that the property boundary is not straight and that it skews. Kay said that Doane's Engineering has not yet completed their work.

## **2. Canfield Meadow Woods:**

a. Roger Field reported that the property is in good shape and that there have been no complaints about dogs.

b. Roger noted that the ELT Fall Foliage Hike was successfully enjoyed by 16 people. Kay said that this was a good opportunity to meet the Canfield Meadow Woods stewards and ELT coordinator Jim Croyle.

## **3. Viney Hill Brook Preserve:**

a. Update on Boundary Line Survey: Frank Hall reported that they have done some work on the survey. Kay suggested the placement of Essex Town boundary signs after the survey is completed and ECC knows where the town's boundary abuts the immediate neighbor's property.

b. Downed Trees: Kay said she heard from Ryan Walsh, Director of Public Works, at 8:15 am that his crew would be removing one downed and one leaning trees in the Right of Way road. Frank Hall reported that he removed some small branches at Upland Woods. Frank reported that there is one tree down close to the end of the Forest Glade Trail and Right of Way. Richard asked the question if the downed trees should simply be left on the property once they are out of the way and let nature take its course. Frank brought up the point that the trees were blocking the Right of Way.

c. Right of Way Culvert Clean-out: Frank reported that there are many fallen leaves, which sometimes makes it difficult to follow the trails. More white markers are needed to make the trail easier to follow. The north end of the quarry pond is filled up with debris. Adrienne Forrest reported that Mark Reeves sent an email that he had talked to Dennis and Susan Robida and that they felt that the culvert was releasing water properly despite the clutter.

**Next steps: Monday, November 29 at 1pm meet at passive parking area at Viney Hill Brook Preserve to cut back and open the Green Trail around Wollocks Pond. Bring your hand tools.**

## **B. Other:**

1. Overview of ELT Forest Management Workshop: Roger reported on the Essex Land Trust Management meeting featuring the Branford Land Trust and CT DEEP. Forestry experts discussed The Young Forest Project, which involves developing a mixture of young saplings, 40- to 50-year-old trees, and 100-year-old trees. Oak trees have a high protein level and attract higher forms of wild life. Large trees can be logged, which opens up space for young trees to grow. Roger noted that there are Federal grants available for these kinds of projects.

5. New Business: Kay reported on an email she received from Bob Nussbaum where he suggested the need to make the blue and red trails more accessible for fire and EMT rescue teams at the Bushy

Hill Preserve. Discussion was held that ECC invite the fire department to visit the trails with commissioners in order to assess the feasibility of making successful rescues and what would be needed (in terms of clearing brush or trees). Richard will connect with the Essex Fire Department and Bob Nussbaum, Essex Land Trust, to schedule a walking inspection. Adrienne Forrest suggested to also invite EMT's to walk the trails and see what would be needed to make a successful rescue of an injured hiker.

6. Financial Report and Expenditures: Kay noted that the invoices for Clark's Custom Services are paid through September. Outstanding is the CCS October invoice of \$450 for both Bushy Hill and Viney Hill Preserves. She will contact Beaver Solutions to contract for their annual inspection service.

7. Other Commission Business: Kay reported on the town's contract with Susan McCann, the new conservation commission clerk. Susan will organize the commission's 2022 meeting schedule, to be voted on in December and submitted to the town clerk. K Tucker thanked A Forrest for her service. Richard read an email sent by Mark Reeves. Mark wished Adrienne Forrest the very best and thanked her for being a valuable member of the commission and that she will be missed. Ms. Forrest served on the commission nearly a decade. Adrienne turned over Bushy Hill and VHVP maps to R. Helmecki and F. Hall commission stewards for those preserves.

8. Adjournment: With a motion by Jim O'Brien and a second by Frank Hall, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00pm. **Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting is December 9, 2021**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan McCann, Essex Conservation Commission Clerk