



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 Chair*

**Regular Members**

Frank Hall  
*Richard Helmecki*  
*Jim O'Brien*  
*Mark Reeves*  
*Vacancy*

**Alternate Member**

*Roger Field*  
*Vacancy*

**Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes**

February 10, 2022, Room A, 7:00 pm

1. Call to Order and Roll Call. K. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7pm.  
Attending members (in alphabetical order): R. Field, F. Hall, R. Helmecki, J. O'Brien, K. Tucker.  
Absent: J. Lovelace, M. Reeves
2. Public Comments: No public comments.
3. Review and Approve January 13, 2021 Meeting Minutes: The following corrections were made to the minutes:
  - F. Hall: page 3, C. Viney Hill Brook Preserve: 3<sup>rd</sup> sentence: edit to read "Mike Callahan of Beaver Solutions, LLC, put a screened cover on top of the **exclusion fence enclosure...**"
  - J. O'Brien, page 3, D. Other: Stakes and Boundary lines: 1<sup>st</sup> sentence, edit to read: "...he noticed the iron pipe **and offsets were staked.**"
  - J. O'Brien, page 3, D. Other: Stakes and Boundary lines, **remove the last sentence.**
  - F. Hall: page 3, 6. New Business to Include: A. Poet Trail, 1<sup>st</sup> sentence: Edit to read: from **Shelton** to Monroe..."With a motion by J. O'Brien, and a second by K. Tucker, the minutes were approved with the above corrections.
4. Old Business to include trail reports and management issues in town preserves:
  - A. **Bushy Hill Preserve:** R. Helmecki reported that a large hemlock tree was leaning across the Red Trail leading to the Falls River. (See R. Helmecki's photo on next page.) He said he marked a way to detour around, rather than under, the tree. Terry Stewart of Essex Land Trust called to offer help. Discussion took place about the structural integrity of the tree, how best to cut it down, and the cost to remove the tree. R. Field will take a 2<sup>nd</sup> look and report back to K. Tucker, who will report back to Augie and the Town accordingly. R. Helmecki also noted that he re-positioned one of the Fire Department's markers to give Fire Department rescue vehicle drivers a more accurate route to follow.



Photo credit: R. Helmecki

- B. **Canfield Meadow Woods:** In a report submitted prior to the meeting, R. Field wrote: One dead oak tree fell across the Blue trail near the Dennison Road entrance. This was cut up and removed. As of this writing all trails are passable although there are muddy patches due to the recent thaw. The Essex Land Trust is in the process of creating a Steward's Handbook outlining responsibilities of stewards. This should be available on-line in the near future. During the meeting he reported that there have been no recent unleashed dog reports about Canfield Meadow Woods.

- C. **Viney Hill Brook Preserve:** F. Hall reported that he walked, with ELT member Dana Hill, along the southern part of the preserve (south of the power company's right-of-way off of Hillside Drive) along Turtle Nesting and the Forest Glade trails. He said there were adequate trail markers on all trails walked. The beaver exclusion fences in quarry pond and in front of the culvert under the right-of-way road pond are functioning properly. He did note that a privately owned fence/gate further up the ROW road was open. K. Tucker pointed out that the gate is on private property. F. Hall also noted that a few areas of Broadwalk near the Eagle Scout Bridge are flooded, but not badly. Additionally, K. Tucker said that J. Lovelace reported that the 8ft Christmas tree that had been illegally dumped behind the passive parking boundary fence had been picked up by the town crew on January 21<sup>st</sup>.
- D. Other: J. O'Brien said that he again requested that Bob Doane, PE, articulate in writing his staked findings for Bushy Hill and VHBP preserves. J. O'Brien will continue to follow-up with Doane's so that the project is finalized and the invoice for Viney Hill Brook and Bushy Hill Preserves can be paid in this 2021-2022 fiscal year's budget.
6. New Business:
- A. Essex Land Trust Strategic Plan: K. Tucker expressed appreciation for the outstanding work of the ELT on their Strategic Plan and thanked them for sharing it with the ECC. All commissioners agreed that it was well thought-out.
7. Financial Report YTD 2021-22 and Proposed FYE Expenditures:  
K. Tucker reported that no further funds have been expended since January. Beaver Solutions completed their annual inspections on NY's Eve. With a 10% discount, the cost is \$638. Their quote is \$670 to \$700 for FY2022-23. Further spring expenditures include: Doane's PE, LLC, Clarks's Custom Services (they will dormant mow the wildflower meadow in March or April) in addition to routine maintenance, and the purchase of new hedge trimmers. R. Field asked if we ever put contracts out to bid. K. Tucker said that commissioners can decide when preparing for FY 2022-2023.
8. Adjournment: With a motion to adjourn by F. Hall, and a 2<sup>nd</sup> by J. O'Brien, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46pm.

**Next Scheduled Meeting, March 10, 2022, 7:00 pm**

Respectfully submitted,

Susan K. McCann  
ECC Clerk